

Pennsylvania Department 144th Annual Encampment
June 28th & 29th, 2024
Crowne Plaza Hotel, King of Prussia, PA
Dane DiFebo, Commanding
Official Proceedings

(Some names and spelling errors may occur due to failure to use the microphones resulting in loss of audio recording.)

Meeting called to order 1:00 pm

Commander: The officers and members of the 144th Annual Encampment of the Pennsylvania Department Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War will now come to order. Guard determine if all are present are entitled to remain. Color bearer assist on the right.

So please draw your membership cards out and if you do not have your cards please vouch for your fellow brother.

Guide: Commander, your orders have been obeyed.

Commander: That's good.

You may be seated. The secretary will call the role of officers of the encampment.

Secretary: Department Commander Dane DiFebo.

Present. Department Senior Vice Commander William Fisher. Here.

Department Junior Vice Commander Michael Peter. Here. Department Secretary and Treasurer Robert Konegsberg.

Here. Department Counsel Ivan Frantz. Absent.

John McNulty. Here. John Gibson.

Absent. Department Patriotic Instructor Ted Zaman. Here.

Department Chaplain Clark Brock. Here. Department Guide Josh McMillin.

Here. Department Guard Steve Indan. Here.

Department Color Guard Mark Schlegel. Here. Department Color Bearer Alternate Alex Johnson.

Here. Department Commander role has been called.

Commander: Thank you, sir.

Brothers, upon what principles is our order founded and what duties do we inculcate? Fraternity, Charity and loyalty. Brothers, we meet again as the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, an annual session to review the work of the past and plan for the future. May our conduct and our deliberations be marked by mutual tolerance and fraternal courtesy, ever keeping in mind our duty to our country, to our order, and to ourselves.

The Chaplain will invoke the divine blessing.

Chaplin off mic: delivers blessing

Commander: Amen. Brothers, we will now give the Pledge of Allegiance.

Color Bearer, present colors.

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

By the virtue and authority vested in me, I now declare the 144th Annual Encampment of the Pennsylvania Department Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War duly open for the transaction of such business as may legally and properly come before it.

The Guard will admit all brothers qualified to enter. Post the colors, please. Okay.

Before I officially begin my second encampment as your Department Commander, I'd like to make two housekeeping notices for everyone in the audience and all the brothers assembled. We have provided you at registration with voting cards. And those will be held in the air to vote for really any measure in encampment.

They are signed and dated with today's date. Tomorrow, when you come into the encampment, you can stop at the registration table and we'll date them for tomorrow, if you're here for tomorrow as well. If somebody did not get one, please see our Secretary Treasurer, Brother Rob Konigsberg, and he'll happily provide you with the appropriate cards based on the voting power of every camp.

The other matter of housekeeping business I wanted to notify you about is Brother Clark, our chaplain, has some get well sympathies, et cetera, cards for various members of the order that he is requesting that brothers sign for those individuals, and make sure you get a chance to see him as well to do that. So that would bring us to our next order of business, which is the appointment of a committee on credentials, which the way we're handling that, Brother Rob has it all on his computer, so he'll be announcing how many brothers are present of each rank as well. And that brings us to the recognition of guests.

So our first guest is the National Secretary, Brother Dan Murray, from the Department of New Hampshire. And if you'd like to have some time to address the encampment, you're welcome to do so.

Dan Murray: Good morning.

I would like to bring greetings from the National Commander and the Council of Administration. The National Commander regrets that he couldn't be here for your encampment. Originally he had planned to be here, but I was notified a month or two ago that I would be the member coming to represent you.

He didn't really ask me to bring anything up. The only thing that's been coming up in the last year that's really important for most of the camps is to use the current forms. We've been told as National Secretary, we've told the Department Secretaries and the Camp Secretaries should know it too, that if you don't use the correct forms, they should go back to whoever they came from, because they've got to be the correct forms by the time they get to David Demmey.

General Order 2, it hasn't come out yet, and I don't know how much I should be saying about it, but I think it has passed for those. I don't know if you were for or against it. I don't remember how the Pennsylvania Department voted, but there's 11 departments against it, two that are no votes, and pretty much the other 18 voted for it.

So until the Commander puts it out, it won't be the law of the land, but I thought I would pass that on to you. Thank you.

Commander: Thank you, Brother Murray.

So that brings us to our first report on the Committee of Credentials. So I don't know if you can come up here if you want.

Secretary: In attendance or registered, I should say, we have one past Commander-in-Chief, one Department Commander, five past Department Commanders, two Camp Commanders, 13 past Camp Commanders, 27 Delegates, and two Alternates.

And we also have 12 camps that are representative.

Commander: Thank you, Brother Rob. That brings us to the roll call of members as appointed, as recorded.

We'll skip that. So for housekeeping measures, we need to appoint some committees for the encampment, the Constitution and Regulations Committee, the Resolution Officers Reports Committee, and the Fraternal Relations Committee, which would be visiting the various other orders. So are there any volunteers for either of those three committees? Yes, Brother Mike.

Okay. Brother Bill? Fraternal Committee? Okay. Thank you, Brother Nick.

Okay. So we have for Constitution and Regulations, Brother Michael Paquette, Brother Bill Fisher. And for Fraternal Relations, we have Brother Nick Rebbeca.

Okay. Any others? Brother Wayne? Yep. Yep.

So Brother Wayne Blattner will be also on Fraternal Relations. Brother Michael Peter for Fraternal Relations. So that committee looks to be filled.

Essentially three brothers. We need probably one more for Constitution and Regulations, one more for and three for Resolutions and Officers Reports. Yes.

Resolutions and Officers Reports will be Brother Michael Peter and Brother Rob Konigsberg for Resolutions and Officers Reports. Yes. Okay.

And Brother Douglas McMillin for filling the final spot in Resolutions and Officers Reports. Could probably use one more for Constitution and Regulations. Okay.

Brother Kyle Waite for Constitutions and Regulations. Okay. So that fills all those positions.

It's a good opportunity for brothers attending the encampment to serve in those roles going forward in the future. And you're willing to get an understanding of how things work on the department level if you do that as well. But thank you for all of those who decided to step forward for that.

So that brings us to the Reports of Officers. And those packets have been provided by some of the – well, they were handed out by some of the brothers in Camp 101 to get – we have 25 copies of that. They are costly to print, but they're printed double-sided.

And please be sure to share with the brothers who are seated next to you for that as well. So that would – the first page, of course, is a cover page. Second page shows the layout of the packet and where each report is found in numerical order.

And then the back component includes all of the recommendations where you can keep track of whether those recommendations passed or were rejected from the encampment. So that would bring me into my report, correct? So I will read my entire report as is required, and then we'll proceed as follows. So it says, in the beginning, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War Pennsylvania Department Commanders Report to the 144th Department Encampment, Dane DiFebo, past Department Commander.

“Greetings, brothers. It has been an honor to serve as your Department Commander this year. I would like to begin by thanking the Corps of Officers, committee chairs, and members for their steadfast service and devotion to the principles of the order and the duties, traditions, and good works of the Pennsylvania Department.

The following is a summation of my participation in departmental activities since last year's Department Encampment. The weekend following last year's Department Encampment, I attended the Battle of Gettysburg reenactment at the Daniel Leidy Farm, where I had a table in the living history section. There I displayed some artifacts from the National Civil War Museum and handed out literature about the museum and the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

On July 8, 2023, I attended and introduced Civil War historian Scott Mingus at his presentation about his two-book series on the Gettysburg Campaign leading up to the battle, titled If We Are Striking for

Pennsylvania at the National Civil War Museum. On August 12, 2023, I introduced speakers and researched and assisted in the presentation of research about the collections of the National Civil War Museum pertaining to George Armstrong Custer at the 2023 George Armstrong Custer Symposium hosted by the museum. On September 9, I attended a camp meeting for Joel Searfoss Camp 273.

On September 16, I visited Gettysburg to tour the battlefield with members of Searfoss Camp and participated in the historic Gettysburg-Adams County Barn Tour. On September 22, I attended and assisted with the National Civil War Museum's gala, and on September 23, I did the same with the National Civil War Museum's living history event called Civil War Saturday. On October 7, I attended and presided over a special encampment and midyear meeting for the Pennsylvania Department, which was held at the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

On Sunday, October 15, was the date of my testimonial, which was held in Lenhartsville, Pennsylvania. Both the Pennsylvania Department and Allied Orders were well represented at this function, and I'm very appreciative of the efforts of my fellow brothers and sisters to organize this. Saturday, November 11, was spent at the National Civil War Museum's Veterans Day Free Admission Day.

On Saturday, November 18, I made the pilgrimage to Gettysburg for the Remembrance Day, proudly displayed the Pennsylvania Department colors at the General Meade Society Service at General George Meade's equestrian statue. I laid a wreath at the Albert Wilson Grand Army of the Republic War Memorial, representing the Pennsylvania Department's Sons of Union Veterans. I also marched in the Remembrance Day parade with Pennsylvania Brothers right behind the National Organization's Officer Corps.

To appropriately cap off the day's events, I participated in the 21st Annual Remembrance Day Illumination by reading the names of fallen Union soldiers buried in the Gettysburg National Cemetery with Brother Greg Klein, PDC. Following the Remembrance Day Illumination, I attended the Remembrance Day Ball. It was great to see brothers of the Department and sisters of the Allied Orders well represented and in full force that day and evening.

Over the holiday season, I served as an installing officer for the newly elected officers of Major General John F. Hartranft Camp No. 15 in Harrisburg. On December 10, 2024, I provided a behind-the-scenes tour of the National Civil War Museum Archives and Artifacts Storage Area for J.P. Brindle Camp No. 50 in Carlisle, PA. On March 16, I hosted Isaac Rice Circle No. 233, Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic, from Bedford County, for a group visit to the National Civil War Museum.

On Sunday, April 14, I provided a behind-the-scenes tour of the National Civil War Museum for Salome M. Stort Tent No. 55, Gettysburg. On Saturday, April 27, I attended the Camp Geiger Civil War reenactment in Whitehall, PA, where I had a table near the entrance to hand out literature on the Sons of Union veterans in the National Civil War Museum.

On May 2, I hosted a book discussion over Zoom with Dr. Robert K.D. Colby about his book titled An Unholy Traffic, Slave Trading in the Civil War South as part of the National Civil War Museum's Civil Conversation book talk. Saturday, May 4, I attended a meeting of Joel Searfoss Camp No. 273 to plan a Memorial Day observance.

On May 9 and 10, I participated in an online professional development program through the American Association for State and Local History, AASLH, about interpreting enslavement in school programs. On May 16, I assisted the Education Department of the American Battlefield Trust in shooting videos about the artifacts in the collections of the National Civil War Museum. On the Saturday before Memorial Day, I participated in Joel Searfoss Camp No.

273's service at the grave of Conrad James Christian Beitel. Beitel was Lehigh County's last Civil War veteran. He served as a sergeant in Company A of the 153rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry and as a member of the regimental band.

He is buried in Fairview Cemetery in West Catasauqua, Pennsylvania. I delivered the welcome and biographical account on Conrad Beitel's life for the day's service. From June 7 to 9, I attended the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College to man a table of artifacts in the collections of the National Civil War Museum that related to presentations planned for each of those days.

On Saturday, June 15, I attended and introduced Civil War historian Dr. Brad Gottfried at his presentation about the maps of Spotsylvania and Cold Harbor at the National Civil War Museum. On Tuesday, June 18, 2024, I welcomed the Brothers of Mount Union Church Camp No. 502 and the Sisters of the Auxiliary for a tour of the National Civil War Museum.

Thank you again for your opportunity to serve you for my second year as the Pennsylvania Department Commander. I look forward to participating in events of this organization around the state of Pennsylvania for many years to come. There are no further recommendations.

Yours in fraternity, charity, and loyalty, Dane DiFebo, Pennsylvania Department Commander, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. “

John McNulty off mic: (Unheard motion referring officer reports to committee)

Commander: So there's a motion on the floor. Is there a second? Second from Brother Michael Paquette.

And the motion was made by Brother John M. McNulty. All those in favor, any discussion? Further discussion? So the motion was that the reports would be sent to the Officers' Reports, Resolution and Officers' Reports Committee for, as properly referred and to be voted on, referring it back to us to be voted on. We just have to take this vote before Brother Scott will address us.

So that was the motion. We had a second from Brother Michael Paquette. All those in favor? Show your voting cards.

Everybody who raised their hand, please show a voting card. Okay. All opposed, please show your voting card.

Okay. So motion carries. So Brother Mike saluted me.

That's Brother Scott saluting me. Yes. Yeah, we can provide him with a card right here.

We'll have to probably take a motion to recess.

And then, we'll recess for a restroom break for five minutes. That'll take us until we'll reassemble back here at, well, I'll give you a little more than five minutes. A quarter to two we'll go to.

So 145, we'll reassemble right back in here for the remainder of the meeting.

Recess 1:30pm to 1:45pm

Commander: So, based on the opening, I just have one additional housekeeping measure just to remind everybody about. If any of the brothers would like to address the encampment here, please be sure to use the microphone located behind our Senior Vice Commander, Brother Bill Fisher, and be sure to state your name and what camp you are from, so it will assist with the recording of everything. So that brings us back to the item of Officer's Reports, in which, based on the table of contents, I'll be going down each officer and asking them if they have any additions, corrections, or retractions for the said report.

So that brings us to the Office of Department Senior Vice Commander, Brother Bill Fisher. No changes? Department Junior Vice Commander, Brother Michael Peter. Changes? Department Secretary Treasurer, Brother Robert Konigsberg.

Secretary: Would you like me to read the report, since it has the financial information?

Commander: Yeah, that actually would definitely be beneficial. Okay. May 29, 2024.

Secretary: Brothers of the Pennsylvania Department, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. I'd first like to thank Brothers, Department Commander DeFebo, and Department Counsel for the assistance over the past year, for answering all my questions, as well as their guidance, as this was a trying year with many issues. For the 2023-2024 year, the Department has 22 camps in good standing, 492 members, of whom 58 are life members, 41 associates, 3 junior members, 1 junior associate.

A grand total of 561 members, which 27 are dual members. This is 100 fewer members than last year, and we have one camp that is suspended. We do have, for storage fee from archives for the Philadelphia GAR Museum, which we received last year, the year before, we spend \$165.26 per month, which comes to \$1,983.12 for the year.

As of the writing of this report, Department financial funds are as follows. Checking account, \$34,097.23. Savings, \$134.49. Six month CD, is \$22,945.59. Three month CD, \$11,557.83. In our money market, we have \$1,816.56. The site's committee checking account is \$8,544.50, for a total of \$79,096.20. We are actually up from last year, \$5,648.84. As secretary, I did have one recommendation. Howel Camp 48 has now been delinquent on all of their paperwork for two years.

It is my sad duty to recommend that their charter be pulled, and the camp monies and belongings be returned to the Pennsylvania Department. This is my report for the 2023-2024 year. I do have a redaction, and I redact my recommendation.

Department Commander DeFebo will explain why.

Commander: Thank you, Brother Rob. The reason why Brother Rob is redacting his recommendation is because I have managed to get in contact with the camp commander who referred me to the treasurer of howel Camp 48.

I informed him of the situation they were in, and told him that if they submit all of their paperwork, pay all official dues to the department, that we could manage to get them back on the road to good standing as a camp. The commander agreed and complied with the measure, and referred me to the secretary treasurer, and we're in the process of working everything out with that. That's the reason why Brother Rob agreed to redact that measure, or retract that measure.

That brings us to the consolidated reports of Brother John M. McNulty.

John McNulty: It includes the report of the Department Counsel No. 2, Department Counselor, Parliamentarian, Long Range Planning Committee, Department Bylaws Committee, and Fraternal Relations Committee.

I do have a few additions to this. For Pennsylvania Department Counsel Member No. 2, I have spoken at length with Ivan Franz, Jr., who is Counsel Member No.1, who would normally give this. I told him basically what I had done, and he is in agreement. He has nothing to change, so we're good that way.

As far as my comments about the situation with Gettysburg Camp, I am hoping that we have put this issue to rest, but I am very serious about my recommendations after what has happened because a couple of days there, my blood pressure hit the ceiling. I had spasms, which opened an old wound, and it just was not fun at all. But my recommendations I am very serious about.

Treat one another in a mature way, as you would hope to be treated yourself, that are by the grand principles, which everybody who knows me knows I am insistent on those, of fraternity, charity, and loyalty. They are the grand or cardinal principles of the Grand Army of the Republic. And they expected us to live by them.

My comments are not intended for almost all of our brothers at Gettysburg Camp 112. They are good, devoted brothers of our order. Unfortunately, there are one or two brothers whose silly behavior, and there was some silly behavior, as far as I'm concerned, makes no sense.

But please, live by the grand principles. Our fathers gave them to us, and we should honor them by doing that. Thank you.

Commander: Thank you, Brother McNulty. That brings us to the Department Patriotic Instructor Report found on pages 15 and 16. Brother Ted Zeman.

And our Department Chaplain, Brother Clark Brock. Department Graves Registration Officer, Brother Bill Fisher.

Bill Fischer: Thank you, sir.

Next page, page 4. Bottom of page 3, page 4. Make sure, if you are requesting VA headstones, you follow the rules so that we don't get cut off at the knees. There's a photo there. And we've all seen them.

That violates the VA rules. If somebody has a blind headstone, which is a name, and their date, that's all that's required. The VA will not provide a headstone that raises a mark.

So, make sure you're familiar with the rules.

Commander: Thank you. GAR Memorial Officers Report, Brother Ted Zeman.

So, our Department Eagle Scout Certificate Coordinator, Brother Don Houston's report is found on the 28th page in there. He is unable to join us today, but I would like to open the floor to Brother Albert L., who is also the Eagle Scout Coordinator for Philadelphia County in regional area. Is there anything you would like to say before the encampment, Brother Albert? Please feel free to use the mic up behind Brother Fisher.

Albert El: (off mic, unheard)

Commander: Can you please use the mic? Thank you.

Albert El: To the comrades, with the Eagle Scouts Certificates, I noticed that my counterpart said they need to enhance it a little bit. That's what I just read.

We're still active. In Philadelphia, as you know, things went a little haywire a couple of years ago. But we still have churches.

I haven't run into any schools that have scouts around now. But it's going down, but I'm still on the move. By the next convention, we'll have the whole report.

I do have a report on some scouting, which I wanted to bring in. I didn't think about it. Tomorrow, I'll bring it in.

Is that okay? Thank you. Put it up for display.

Commander: That brings us to the Cadet Award Coordinator, Brother Bill Fisher.

Bill Fischer: (off mic lost audio)

Commander: Thank you. Brother Steve. (audio lost, off mic discussion of fraternal visitation protocols)

So our brother for fraternal relations, brother Nick Ribbecca, brother, Wayne Blatner, and brother Mike peter you can assemble in the back of the room and we'll get you to go over there.

So we will have to fill the chairs. Brother Scott would you fill the chair? (off mic, appointing fill in positions for officers leaving to visit DUVCW)

I also have another announcement for the officers on the floor here. When you are speaking just come around to the mic behind brother Bill. That will pick it up clearly on our recording.

That will bring us to the... we did the cadet award so that brings us to the GAR highway award of page 33. I have no additions or corrections to make to that.

That also brings us to the public relation committee report. I have no additions or corrections to make to that.

For public relations I made one recommendation that camps continue to use various forms of media to promote and advertise, events in their respective communities and share this information with the department. Especially posting on the department facebook page. Our brothers are the best advocates. Our media outlets are the best mean to raise awareness of the organization's mission, objectives, and participation and even new members.

Then the next report is also on that page. Its on revitalization and development. It is to remind brothers that there are two camps to be organized. The numbers are Camp 276 in Greensburg Pennsylvania which received a request to reorganize on February 9th, 2024, and Brother Esenwein, Richard Esenwein, past department commander, is the camp organizer.

Additionally, forms have been submitted to organize a brand new camp, Sergeant George W. Mears Camp 505 in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, and Brother Lee Miller, past camp commander of Sunbury Camp, is the camp organizer for this camp. And, oh, so that is a, okay, yeah, that is a correction, actually. So the correction is Eric Staley is listed as the, and he's a past camp commander of Sunbury Camp, is listed as the official camp organizer.

So that's the only correction I have to make to that. The recommendations for camp revitalization and development is to seek out and pursue efforts to participate in the community events, to increase public visibility, and promote membership recruitment. Among the promotional items available from the Sun's Quartermaster online store are SUV CW pamphlets, a free brochure that is available, and packs of 50 for just the cost of postage.

So that is the only correction to that report as duly noted. Memorial Camp number 300, and the secretary is our executive director, Brother David Demmy, that is found on page number 35. Nothing additional to report or correct? The chief of staff report, Brother Chris Carty.

Please use the mic, Brother Chris.

Chris Carty: Commander, the only addition I have is I believe I forgot to mention that I went to the National Encampment last year.

Commander: Okay, so the addition is National Encampment, and that is found on page number 36.

And then all the recommendations are listed out in the last two pages, front to back, equals four pages in total. And then there's also a listing of all the reports that were not submitted, as well as the vacant positions in the department. And that would bring us to the next order of business.

That'll bring us to the communications.

Secretary: This is a retraction in reference of communications. I did receive one communication, however, that individual is no longer running for national office, so we have no communications.

Commander: So we have no official communications, and that'll bring us into unfinished business.

Actually, our visiting committee is back, so our fraternal committee is back.

(Discussion on procedure with parliamentarian.)

You may be seated.

Okay, Brother Wayne? Yeah, I have another gift for you guys to deliver to the auxiliary, so if you want to.

So the committee will be proceeding to the auxiliary, and that'll address that. That brings us to unfinished business. Is there any unfinished business to come before the department? Any unfinished business? Okay, Brother Chris.

Chris Carty: I believe there were some outstanding recommendations that were approved at the last department encampment that have not been acted upon. Okay. So I don't know how you want to handle that.

Commander: We need to identify those. That would technically be. Because it wasn't technically.

Okay, so we'll need to review those recommendations probably in that committee, and then to identify which ones weren't acted upon. Unless you have a list of them now, Brother Chris.

Chris Carty: I know we didn't acquire the Pennsylvania flag for the department, and the holsters we were gonna get for them, and all of that.

Commander: That was a recommendation, and I believe Brother Bill had a question about a recommendation that was approved last year that wasn't followed through on. And that was actually in one of his recommendations. Okay.

Secretary: The reason the flag was not purchased is because there's still a bill on the floor of the Senate and Congress in Pennsylvania that they're gonna change, or trying to change the state flag, and we just weren't buying one just to have to turn around and buy a new one.

Commander: We still could have gotten the other things, the holsters to carry them in the Remembrance Day parade. Are we having Baldricks again? We don't have any Baldricks.

Have they lost them again?

Chris Carty: I don't think we ever had any. We do? Well then, I don't know when they were lost.

We've lost them about three times since I gave the order. I always used our camp Baldricks. I know, but there were Baldricks, so we need to buy Baldricks.

Commander: Okay. So we would need to put in an order for Baldricks. We would have to order three of them officially when we get the other flag, and then there's technically no kind of Baldrick that would support that banner, right? In case we wanted to parade with that banner.

Not that I know of. That's not for parade. That's only stationary.

Okay, so we'll have to put in an order for three Baldricks then.

Chris Carty: Do you want my Baldricks or Civil War staff Baldricks? Well. Let me just review the recommendation and see what was all approved in it, because it was actually approved back in 2019.

Right, and I'll just leave it at that for now.

Commander: Okay. Yeah,

Bill Fischer: Commander.

On the first page of the recommendations, the first one is my recommendation, that last year the encampment agreed to purchase a Zoom Pro account for \$150. That was never acted upon, and there's still that need. However, I believe, I'm not 100% positive, but I believe the cost has gone up to \$175.

John McNulty: Brothers, for the last year, we have been using a Zoom account provided to us by Brother Kevin Kuhn, our signals officer. Kevin's very kindly allowed us to use the account, and he's there to make sure that it works, which most of us couldn't do, and there's been suggestion of a motion that we provide him with the money since he's providing us with the Zoom program, and I would make that as a motion. Thank you.

Commander: Thank you, Bill.

Bill Fischer: Okay, we have a motion.

Commander: We need a second.

Is there a second for Brother Theodore Zeman seconds that motion? Motion made by Brother John McNulty. Yeah. Okay.

All right, discussion then.

Bill Fischer: All right. Informally, I spoke with Rob about this several months back, but there, and you said that's been happening, but there was no notice that went out to the department about that to be able to use that account, and I think that's critical to improve the communications across the department, so if that's gonna be the case, and if Brother Kevin has no issue with it, and he's gonna manage the scheduling, then that's fine with me. I just want to make sure that if it's gonna be that way that Brothers are aware that it's there to use.

Commander: Thank you. Are there any you would like to discuss that further? Okay.

Okay, so we have the motion on the floor. Is there any further discussion?

John McNulty: As a note, Brother Kevin has agreed to this if we wanted to do it, and believe me, he probably knows more about this stuff than most of us put together.

Unidentified speaker: First of all, what we're talking about here, so this is Brother Kevin's personal account you're talking about? And it's a pro account? As opposed to the department having its pro account?

Secretary: Correct.

Unidentified speaker: yeah, he said he'll provide that for us. But we're gonna pay for it as a department? Yes. Okay.

Bill Fischer: Okay, if the Brothers agree to vote on this, then I will include that in an order assuming that something happens tomorrow. Okay. Brothers, the reality is, since Kevin Kuhn is our signals officer, he'd have to run the darn thing anyhow.

So since he does it for us and provides the service, if we're going to pay for the service anyhow, why not pay one of our own?

Mike Paquette: Mike Paquette, past commander-in-chief, Crowther Camp 89. Brothers, if we're paying for another Brother's personal account, I think there's a questionability of putting those funds towards some, understandably, he's making us available to the department, but to keep everything clean, my recommendation would be have him have the, if we're gonna pay the money anyways, have the department get the account in their name and let him run it for us. Otherwise, we stand the risk of showing financial favoritism, however you want to define it, to fund another Brother's personal account.

Now, if the Brother wants to donate this to the department, that's a different matter. But if the department's gonna pay monies to someone's personal account, I think that's questionable.

John McNulty: That's a point well taken.

He was willing to let us use it last year for a couple of things that came up. I'm withdrawing my initial proposal, and Brother Ted will have to. Are you willing? All right, and then I'm gonna make a substitute

motion that the department buys an appropriate Zoom account and designates Kevin Kuhn, who is our signals officer, as the person who will control it.

Commander: A motion made by Brother John McNulty to designate Brother Kuhn to purchase a departmental account and administer it. For the Pennsylvania Department to purchase a Zoom Pro account and have it administered by our webmaster, Brother Kevin Kuhn, and seconded by Brother Bill Fisher. Is there any further discussion? No? Brother.

Unidentified speaker: Commander, if we could just qualify this. I wasn't here last year, but it was my understanding that the department in Camden last year agreed to purchase a Zoom Pro account for \$150. Why are we motioning to do it again if it's already been approved?

Commander: We'll just carry out last year's approval then, but if it's not \$150, if it's more than \$150, we have to change it. We have to amend it.

And it was up to how much? Brother Bill, how much did you say it might have gone up to? Brother Bill?

Bill Fischer: I just did a quick look. I think it's 175.

I'm not completely correct on that with all the other things going on pre-encampment.

Commander: We're confirming that,

Dan Murray: Yeah, Commander, I'd like to follow up on what Brother Bill Fisher said. I handle a Zoom account for the Delaware Valley Civil War Roundtable.

They ran into the same dilemma here. The account is in the Delaware Valley Civil War's name. The bill comes to me, I pay it, they reimburse me.

That's the way we handled it, but it is the DelVal account. And any member of our board has access to that. So I would suggest if we're doing what was just recommended, it's probably the most appropriate way to do it.

The account, ultimately the company's gonna bill somebody. It has to be in someone's name, but the account, the billing name has to be to somebody. So that could, although that could go to Brother Konigsberg.

That's something that you would have to work out. But to follow up with Brother Fisher, I just paid the bill for Delaware Valley for this year, and it was about \$174, somewhere in that range.

Secretary: Yeah.

John McNulty: So we have clarity.

We're going to put a substitute motion in that we authorize Kevin Kuhn to purchase an account from Zoom. He will then tell us the amount we will pay him to substitute for the Zoom account. In the name of the Pennsylvania Department of Civil and Union Veterans of the Civil War. So there's technically a revision of the motion. Whoever made the motion has to accept that.

Commander: And then you accept that, Brother Bill? All right, then we're good. We're good. Discussion.

Okay. Is there any further discussion on the new, the amended motion?

David Demmy: Commander David Demmy, Camp 15, Harrisburg. My concern is that that individual has access to it.

What if he gets run over by a bus tomorrow? Is there going to be a backup? Is someone else going to have access to it in the future? Is there password control? I don't believe one person should have control of it if they become incapacitated. We don't have an assistant webmaster. There is no assistant webmaster.

Commander: So technically there is no assistant webmaster. So that would mean that we should have somebody with control of the purse to be able to... Should go to the treasurer.

Secretary: Brother, Commander, through you to the encampment. I have the Zoom plans and pricing pulled up. If we were to pay monthly instead of yearly, it's 159.84 for the total year.

Well, 159.84 would be for the year.

So 190 for monthly.

Commander: Another point well taken.

That puts it into a question of usage also as well. Another consideration we have to make how regularly we want to use it, how frequently we want to meet on Zoom. One.

One to nine users.

Secretary: The pro account for Zoom, we could have up to one to nine users, and the users are considered the admin, so we could have multiple admin, which would be no problem to have.

We could have up to 100 participants in each meeting, which I think that would suffice your concern, Brother David. How many meetings?

Meetings are up to 30 hours per meeting. It doesn't say how many meetings we could have.

No limit on the meetings. Okay. Brother Bill?

Bill Fischer: Commander getting back to Brother McNulty's concern about usage.

Assuming something happens tomorrow, my plan is to have council meetings every other month via Zoom, and on the off months to have Zoom meetings with camp commanders and camp secretaries, and to make it known to the camps that they will have the ability for Kevin to schedule them if they need to or want to try to bring in members of their camps who can't make it to meetings. So it would be used, and again, if we find at the end of next year, we don't renew it at the next encampment, but it's worth looking into and trying. Okay.

Commander: Thank you, Brother Bill. We're going to call for a vote. So that we have a vote on this, and we're going to have the vote will be on a motion to purchase a Zoom Pro account by the Pennsylvania Department, which will be administered by our webmaster, Brother Kevin Kuhn, and have another brothers as well as our Secretary-Treasurer, Brother Rob Konigsberg.

All those in favor?

All opposed?

Motion carries.

So is there any other unfinished business? Is there any other unfinished business? Is there any other unfinished business? Is there any other unfinished business? Okay.

That brings us to the report of committees, and we basically did the officer's report. We need to have a breakout session for the committees to review all the paperwork.

It's 2.30 now, and we're here until 4.30 when we have to adjourn.

So we're going to recess for an hour. We're going to recess until the committees have met and reassemble then after that. We're going to give an hour's time for the committees to assemble, so that will bring it up to 3.30.

We're going to recess and then the committees can make their reports. All rise. We are in recess and return at 3.30.

Meeting recessed at 2:30 pm.

Meeting resumed 3:30 pm.

Delegation from the DUVCW visitation.

Commander: If you and the rest of the Fraternal Relations group would like to proceed and bring them up on the left-hand side, our left-hand side here. Yeah, this left-hand side. Looking that way.

(DUVCW off mic, comments unheard)

Commander: Yes. Well, it's a pleasure to have you join us for this part of the encampment. Is there any words that any of you have for the encampment? Thank you.

Does anybody want to do a response? OK, Brother McNulty.

John McNulty: Brothers, consider the request, go to the raffle and look in the box. Thank you. Thank you.

Commander: Well, we wish that you have a very successful encampment here, and that you get a lot accomplished, as well as all the other orders. And we pass forward our greetings to the other sisters of the order. And thank you, and have a great meeting, as well.

DUVCW exits.

Meeting resumes

Commander: So that brings us to the reports of the committees. And since we had the Fraternal Relations Committee join us and officially present the representatives from the Daughters of Union Veterans before us, that kind of puts their work aside to a later moment. But that'll bring us to the report of the Constitution and Regulations Committee, as they had met in the last hour.

Brother Bill.

Bill Fischer: The only one that the only recommendation that we thought might kind of work into this Constitution and Regulations Committee was the last one by the Chief of Staff. "I recommend that the national organization should update their policy on nepotism to set limits on how many people from an immediate family can hold elected or appointed offices in a primary and secondary camp, so that we don't have single families controlling entire or multiple camps and abusing their positions."

We're a bottom-up organization. If a camp is operating within the parameters of the Constitution and Regulations, they're not violating anything. Now, if there's other issues, criminal issues, fraud, whatever, that is a totally separate issue.

But if they are operating within the parameters of the established Constitution, regulation, and bylaws of the national organization, the department, and then their camps, then there really is no reason to change this, establish a policy about nepotism. The camp should try and work it out at the local level. If they can't, there's always the option, if a brother can't find resolution, to transfer to another camp, transfer to a member at large camp.

So we disagree with this recommendation.

Commander: Thank you. OK, so the view of the committee was that they did not concur with the recommendation, so that needs to die.

Douglas McMillin: Commander, there should have been a motion to take the committee reports ad seriatim and if no objections, approved or rejected at the sound of the gavel.

John McNulty: Probably. Unless they don't concur, you don't. Do we agree with that?

Commander: Brother Paquette.

Michael Paquette: Michael Paquette, past commander-in-chief, Crowder Camp 89. Correct, if there is a motion to do it ad seriatim, then it can be done if there's no discussion at the sound of the gavel.

So it would be possible to do that now, or just have the encampment vote on the recommendation now.

John McNulty: Brother commander, I will move you, as well as Ivan would have, that all subsequent reports be brought up ad seriatim, and that there's nothing being heard from the membership at the sound of the gavel that they've seen. OK.

Commander: Is there a second? So the motion was made by brother John McNulty, and seconded by brother Ted Zeman to, at the sound of the gavel, and ad seriatim, move forward with the recommendations. All those in favor, please show your cards. All those opposed? Motion carries.

And then I'll gavel down the prior recommendation. Is there any discussion? When it's ad seriatim, unless somebody stands up, that's it. Is there any discussion? Now gavel.

Being there's no discussion, that would bring us to the report on resolutions and officer's reports.

Secretary: Recommendation from senior vice commander.

"Last year, the PA department camp agreed to purchase Zoom Pro account for \$150, which allows for meetings of up to 30 hours in length. Free accounts are limited to 40 minutes for up to 100 attendees. Among other perks, recommend that the department signals officer manage the account and serve as the scheduler so the department officers and the C of A could meet virtually to address department concerns in a timely manner."

John McNulty: That's what it's written here. No, that's wrong. C of A is financial.

It's not ours. OK. Virtually meet to address department concerns in a timely manner.

In addition, camps could, in advance, request use of the account to increase attendance for camp meetings. This recommendation has already been taken care of at this encampment.

Bill Fischer: Excuse me.

And Brother McNulty is correct. I used the wrong terminology of C of A instead of council.

John McNulty: Let me explain briefly, brothers, just so everybody understands.

At the national level, the council is the Council of Administration, C of A. At the department level, it's department council. And at the camp level, it is camp council.

All the same things. But only the Council of Administration is C of A. And that's only at national. Recommendation number two, paragraph four of general order number seven.

Commander: So you concur to answer this one?

Is there any discussion on the senior vice commander's recommendation? There is one point of discussion from the senior vice commander.

Bill Fischer: Commander. Yes.

I thought we had already passed that before we went to break. That's what I said. We had already discussed it.

Commander: Yeah. So that's OK. So that is passed.

Secretary: Number two, paragraph four of general order number seven. Revised series 2021-2022 reads as follows.

"It is ordered that the following statement be noted on the official program for all SUVCW events, ceremonies, and meetings, along with the posting on any SUVCW website, home page, and photo galleries. Individuals attending events hosted by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, by virtue of their attendance, agree to the usage of their likeness in the banner, any camp or department newsletter, any SUVCW website, and or any SUVCW social media outlet, promotional brochures, or any other SUVCW material. Recommend as a best practice that the above requirement statement, required statement, be added to the PA Department website as a footer that appears on every page of our website.

Such a footer can be found on the Department of New York website. It is found on every page of the Department of Kansas and Department of Tennessee websites. And it is on the home page and possibly other pages of the Departments of Chesapeake, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, and New Jersey, which should be the minimum for all Department home pages."

We concur.

Commander: So the committee concurs. Any discussion? Seeing no discussion.

Recommendation by the Secretary-Treasurer has been retracted, so no action was taken.

Department Council No. 2, "treat one another in a mature way as you would hope to be treated yourself, guided by the grand principles of fraternity, charity, and loyalty."

We concur.

Commander: The committee concurs. Is there any further discussion?

Secretary: Graves Registration Officer, same as last year, “the camp's replacing last veteran flag holders on graves first engraved the name of the last veteran on the back of the flag holder so that it can be returned to the proper grave should it get moved either intentionally or unintentionally.”

We concur.

Commander: The committee concurs. Is there any further discussion? Brother Bill.

Bill Fischer: Commander, I'm starting to feel like Don Darby at National. In my report as Graves Registration Officer, that is just a suggestion.

It is not a formal recommendation. Just something for folks who are doing last veteran ceremonies to think about in case the flag holder gets kicked out by a lawn mower or whatever, somebody just is jacking around and moving things around. So I really did not mean for it to be intended as a recommendation.

Commander: Being that it is not a formal recommendation, I will surpass the gaveling process. Next recommendation.

Secretary: This was previously submitted to National on 24 April, 2024, said it could be reviewed in advance of the National Encampment Award and needs no action by our PA Department.

“Given that I have received more than a few complaints this year and previous from PA camps and from JROTC instructions of award packages not arriving in time for presentation at ceremonies, even though the completed applications have been submitted weeks or more in advance of the presentation date, that National either A, develop a set of regional cadet award coordinators who have stockpiles of awards packages and have either funds of advance from National for mailing the packages or submit receipts for reimbursement from the National Awards Coordinator. The awards shall continue to be submitted to ROTC at www.suvcw.org and the National Coordinator will then forward an email to the respective regional coordinators or action. Or B, allow camps to request up to 10 cadet award packages in advance in order to have them on hand to present when needed and then submit the completed award applications to the National Coordinator so National has proper accounting of the award packages sent to camps.

Camps that do not fulfill this requirement shall not be allowed to request award packages in the future. “

As it said, it was previously submitted to National, so we did not need to take action on that one.

Bill Fischer: COMMANDER.

Commander: Brother Bill?

Bill Fischer: Commander, yes. For those who had a question, that is on page 4 of my cadet award coordinator report. And since it didn't deal with Constitution and regulations or really policy and programs, I had done that unilaterally.

If anybody here thinks that I did that incorrectly, then say so, but I never got any feedback from National that it needed to go through the encampment. Thank you.

Commander: Thank you.

Secretary: G.A.R. Memorials Officer. "I urge that the camp G.A.R. Memorials Officer make an inspection of the memorials near them and submit their findings to the department G.A.R. Memorials Officer so that a report can be compiled for each encampment."

We concur.

Commander: The committee concurs.

Any further discussion?

Secretary: Memorial Camp 300 Membership at Large. "Brothers who desire to report additional ancestral information to National must complete a new Form 30 with a \$5 fee for each supplemental report of a Civil War ancestor. Due to increased costs of postage, photocopying, and handling, it is recommended that the fee be increased to \$15 for each submission of a Supplemental Ancestor Application Form 3, and that the camp may keep \$5, the department keep \$5 fee for their handling, and subsequently, all Supplemental Ancestor applications must be reported from camp to department to headquarters.

If approved by P.A. Encampment, the resolution must be submitted to the following officers for consideration at forthcoming National Encampment in Kentucky. 1. Commander-in-Chief. 2. Chairman of C.C. and R. Committee.

3. National Counselor."

We feel that this should be referred to the incoming commander to act upon with counsel due to the timing of reporting to National for the National Encampment. "

Commander: Brother Michael Paquette.

Michael Paquette: Commander, just as general information for the encampment, I was the national officer representing and doing installation at the Department of Missouri meeting last month, and Missouri also passed a \$5 additional tag-on for department processing of supplemental ancestor fees. So there is recognition in other departments that the burden for submitting supplementals is something currently being absorbed, at least the mailing expenses, completely by the camps and departments.

So you are not alone in this consideration, and especially with the cost of mailings and everything else today. My opinion is this is perfectly appropriate. And even if National were not to adopt this, to my knowledge, there is nothing against the department adding that fee on.

But this is something that the national organization should probably address and include on that form.

Commander: Any further discussion? Is there any further discussion? Is there any further discussion? So that recommendation is referred to the incoming commander to act upon with counsel due to time of importance to National.

Secretary: Okay. That brings us to the public relations committee.

It recommends that the "camps continue to use various forms of media to promote and advertise camps, events in their respective communities, and to share the information with the department, especially for posting on the department's Facebook page. The brothers of department are our best advocates and our visibility in our community media outlets pays big dividends, i.e., more public awareness of the organization's mission and objectives, participation, and even new members."

We concur.

Commander: Committee concurs. Any further discussion?

Secretary: Camp revitalization development committee.

"Please seek out and pursue efforts to participate in community events to increase public visibility and promote membership recruitment. Among the promotional items available from the SUVCW quartermaster online stores and or are SUVCW pamphlets, a free brochure that is available in packs of 50 for just the cost of postage."

We concur.

Commander: The committee concurs. Is there any further discussion?

Secretary: Chief of Staff. "I recommend that the national organization should update their policy on nepotism to set limits on how many people from an immediate family can hold elected appointed offices in a primary and secondary camp so that we don't have single families controlling entire multiple camps and abusing their positions."

For the reason that some of our camps are just families, we do not concur.

Commander: The committee does not concur.

Is there any further discussion? That brings us to the report of department counsel, which is usually handled the next day. We have the new business nomination of officers, election of officers, approval of minutes. We're proceeding to do an approval of minutes.

We're going to move to recess a half hour early, and then we're going to rejoin after registration tomorrow. At registration, you'll get your voting cards dated for tomorrow's date, and then that starts at 8 o'clock, and then at 830, our business session will be in this room tomorrow. Is there a second? Second, Brother Mike Peter.

And just for the record, the motion was moved by Brother John McNulty. All those in favor? Please raise your card. Okay.

Well represented there. All those opposed? Okay. Motion carries.

And then we'll move to adjournment.

Friday Business session closed at 4:00 pm

Saturday Business Session opens at 8:30 am

Commander: Okay, so we're reopened from yesterday's business and we have just a quick set of announcements from our site committee and they're at the door so we'll let them in to begin with. Okay, they went on to the next room I guess, okay, sit down, sorry about that.

So we have a few housekeeping announcements, measures to address before we get started in business.

First, all of you who were here yesterday, you would have received a voting card that should be dated with today's date and you'll use that for voting today as well. For those of you who came today, you would have received a new voting card with today's date on it and that is what you're going to have to hold up when we vote on any motions. We also have on Brother Clark's table here a group of get well cards including a new card for Brother Lowell Alcorn as well as a photo of myself that you're welcome to sign when you get a chance to as well, especially when we recess.

We also have on the back table by the water cooler, Brother Dave Brzozowski brought some extra badges from past encampments and past honorary badges and they're available for those of you who'd like to collect them as well. As far as additional housekeeping items to cover, I'd like to address what was last night's campfire money was collected and I'd like to recognize the brother who collected money last night to come to the mic and tell us about how much was collected.

Harry Blackwell: My name is Harry Blackwell from Camp 502 and Operation Santa Claus.

I'm on a mission and I made a collection, but before I tell you, I'll introduce you to my brother coming up, Bob. I'm from the South Pole because it's too cold up north and this is my brother, he's from the North Pole, so you got Santa at the north and the south at 502. Last night, we collected \$423, thank you very much.

Commander: Very good work brothers and hopefully we can get that on to a good cause and it's going to a good place. So we also have, I'd like to turn the mic over to Brother McNulty for a few housekeeping measures as well.

John McNulty: Brothers, it's a tradition in the Pennsylvania Department that we have a lunch, sometimes it was a dinner, but this year it's a lunch for the brothers who are past department commanders.

We discuss some things, we figure how we're going to take over the world, of course, and we have lunch together. It will be at our brunch, our lunch today, there will be a table set aside for us. All Pennsylvania past department commanders, I hope, will be there and visiting past department commanders will be as well.

As of now, I have two coming. Dan Murray, who is, he makes us look bad, he's been past department commander of Massachusetts twice and New Hampshire five times. The man is a glutton for punishment.

And also we have Brother Jeff Hagee, who is a past department commander from New Jersey. If there's anyone in the room who is a past department commander from another department, please let me know. But you are all welcome to come.

Also, I have a personal complaint of something I really don't like, this stupid platform. I don't like looking down at you, makes it look like we're here and you're there. Normally the platform is right on the floor.

I'm not here to run the place, I'm here to help take care of the department, take care of the camps that need taking care of, and any brother that needs help. I'm not here to run things, neither, well, he runs things officially, but we're not here to be the lords. So I hope the encampment committee has done a great job, but I hope they get the message that next year we're back down on the floor with the rest of you guys.

Thank you.

Commander: Thank you.

Oh, here they come.

Oh, now we have our visitors.

Just for the women, is there three individuals who are willing to step up for that? Thank you, brother. Yeah, we'll provide two more escorts for the men as well, because they have to be introduced.

So if two other brothers would like to volunteer.

Guide: Commander?

Commander: Yes.

Guide: This is the site committee.

(Sites committee greetings were off mic. Unrecorded)

Mike Paquette:

Commander: Just have one last housekeeping announcement here. Before we go into the report on the credentials.

I just want all of the brothers sitting in the audience to model brother Mike's good behavior when you're using the mic. Announce your name, your camp, and speak clearly into the mic so that everything gets recorded. That's the main important thing that had to be grappled with yesterday in developing the proceedings.

Those were fortunately completed over the night. Brother McMillan put in some excellent work and put in a lot of extra hours burning the midnight oil through the night. And managed to get that for us here today.

We'll take a report from the committee on credentials, which is brother Rob has the official report right here. And brother Carty is sitting out at the desk.

In case anybody does show up later today.

Secretary: Past commander in chief. One.

Department commander. One. Past department commanders.

We have four. There are two camp commanders. 11 past camp commanders.

24 delegates. Two alternate delegates. And 13 camps represented today.

Commander: Thank you, brother Rob.

John McNulty: Brothers. We have two members here who are.

Alternates. They may or may not have the number of people they needed their camps. But we have more than enough delegates overall. With a total number of the of the department. That we can make those two Delegates.

Convert them over to delegates. And I propose. I make the motion that we do just that.

Commander: Okay. We have a motion to convert the. Two alternates to delegates.

It was made by a brother. Seconded by brother Franz. Is there.

Any discussion.

Being there's no discussion. All those in favor, please.

Raise your card. All opposed. Same sign.

Motion carries. Okay. Brother Steve.

If you'd like to call brother Chris in. He's temporarily relieved.

For now. Thank you, brother Chris. Thank you, brother Steve.

We're going to. Use this time. To for the encampment.

To introduce themselves to everyone. Please state your name. Your camp affiliation.

And your any rank. Or your involvement with the order. I'll begin with myself and proceed to my right.

With brother Rob. And then we'll just go down. Across.

We'll go down across. And finish with brother McNulty. And then we'll start in the audience.

With brother Dave. And we'll just kind of go back. The rolls or back the rows.

And then. Start from the back on that side. And finish up front.

That's probably the easiest way to do it. I think. I'm.

Department commander for my second year. I'm a member of Joel Searfoss. Camp number 273.

In Banger, Pennsylvania. I've been a member of that camp. For since the early 2000s.

And I also. Attend meetings at. Camp 15 in Harrisburg.

John F. Hartranft camp. Because I live now in Harrisburg. And work at the National Civil War Museum.

As a director of education and programs. Thank you.

(Introductions in place go around the room off microphone. No audio recorded)

Commander: Thank you brothers.

We're going to move into new business and as far as, so as far as we'll open the floor for new business. Is there any new business to come before the encampment? Please feel free to stand, salute, and then proceed to the mic. Brother Fisher.

Bill Fischer: Bill Fisher, department senior vice commander. I'm just checking to see when the bylaws proposals will be reviewed and brought up. Okay.

Commander: We can bring that up now. Yeah, we can bring that up now if you're prepared.

Bill Fischer: Sometime in late March or early April I sent an email out with proposed department bylaws changes to all the elected officers, past department commanders, and there were several here and then I also sent them out to the camps to review.

So proposed change number one is kind of pretty simple. Wherever the word bylaws capitalized or lower case where it's spelled B-Y (dash) L-A-W-S, which is how it is listed in our department bylaws, wherever the words bylaws or bylaws are used in the approved Pennsylvania department bylaws they be changed to read bylaws and bylaws without a hyphen to mirror the spelling in the charter constitution and regulations of the national organization. So that was proposal number one.

Pretty simple. I mean bylaws with a dash is kind of archaic nowadays. So do you want me to go through all four or do we want to deal with each one individually?

Commander: Each one individually.

Bill Fischer: I don't know if the bylaws committee had a recommendation or not.

John McNulty: I just have John McNulty, past department commander. I do have one notation.

You are correct because I checked it and the standard for the English language, the Oxford English dictionary says bylaws one word.

Commander: Did you make that a motion please?

Bill Fischer: I make a motion that that proposed change as read be accepted.

Commander: Brother Bill Dixon seconded it.

Is there any further discussion? We will now move on to a vote. All those in favor please raise your cards. All opposed same sign.

That motion carries.

Bill Fischer: Proposed change number two. Article two meetings section one.

Currently article two meetings section one reads as follows. Section one the department shall meet annually during the months of May or June. A quorum shall consist of ten members of the department.

The proposed change section one. The department shall meet annually during the months of May or June but not later than June 10th so that encampment recommendations can be forwarded to the national organization to meet its minimum 45 day advance deadline in parentheses 60 days preferred for receiving recommendations for consideration at the national encampment annually held in August. Subsection A ten members of the department shall constitute a quorum.

The rationale that I put down was that the 2024 this Pennsylvania department encampment ends only 33 days before the 2024 national encampment therefore no Pennsylvania department recommendations that if we would forward them should not be considered by the brothers gathered in national encampment in Lexington Kentucky. Similarly the 2023, 2021, and 2019 in parentheses no

in person meeting in 2020 so the 2023, 2021, and 2019 Pennsylvania department encampments fail to meet the 45 day advance deadline. I had spoken on the phone with past commander in chief frail about this issue of timing and he's the one who told me 45 days 60 days preferred.

Of note the national encampment has begun after August 15th only four times since 1975 hence the Pennsylvania department encampment hence a Pennsylvania department encampment not later than early June is needed for the department to be relevant by having its recommendations debated at the national encampment.

Commander: Is there any second of that?

Bill Fischer: I'm sorry I make the motion that this be accepted.

Commander: Seconded by brother law.

Any discussion?

John Franz: John Franz past department commander York Pennsylvania camp 33 I speak in opposition of this recommendation strictly from the speaking of a site committee perspective I am not on the site committee for the department but I am very well versed as far as events being held at hotels due to other non profits I'm involved with and in contract negotiations the issue at hand specifically for the department is,

- 1) We have members of our order that are educators so we're asking them then to sacrifice time that they might be needed for their employment
- 2) As far as contract negotiations for hotels are concerned trying to have an event of our type in May is strictly insane because there's a lot of college graduations going on all around the country and we play second fiddle to that because that's a guaranteed moneymaker for a hotel for us to try and have it have an encampment on a for a hotel that's hosting a college graduation there's no way we'd get a room discount there's no way we'd get a cut a discount on anything because they'd make sure money is just not great economically you know I understand the bureaucratic procedure upon which national makes their decisions but we've survived this way for over you know 50 years doing it this way I understand the need for change in the you know that but to that regard is just not feasible to enact what Brother Fisher is proposing.

Mike Paquette: Mike Paquette, past commander in chief, Crowther Camp 89. Brothers I stand in favor of this motion as I mentioned I'm on the National Site Committee if anything we're going to move the national encampments forward not further back so you know this self-imposed limitation of you being able as a department to bring resolutions to the floor of an encampment or other changes is really a self-imposed penalty in counterpoint to Brother Franz's statement about educators my wife had just retired from being a speech pathologist traditionally in Virginia we didn't start schools up until the beginning of Labor Day and then Virginia changed its rules so I don't know how Pennsylvania stands in all this when school starts but we're seeing more and more pressure from our educators that they're actually done with classes at the end of May so I think there is potentially some wiggle room for your encampment committee to find some room in there in the sweet spot.

The point I want to make here is Missouri who meets in April is also proposing moving their encampment dates up in March so they can get their recommendations into national in a timely manner and here we are a month and a half later in Pennsylvania so it's really your choice to come up with something on the floor of this encampment and then make a proposal that you have to wait an entire year to get that on the floor of a national encampment memory is short and I think a lot of times things have the potential to fall through the cracks. Thank you Brother.

Doug McMillin: Commander Doug McMillan past department commander J.P. Brendel Camp 50 in Carlisle I'm not really here to speak for or against it but to give a little contrast or some perspective to it Pennsylvania as I was always told being it was the largest and the oldest department in the country had always had a very powerful voice at national.

When I joined we wielded no less than six past commanders and chiefs we had a thousand brothers and when we spoke we carried weight. That is no longer the case. Those men have either died or through infirmity and other reasons have left us.

Our membership is nowhere near the thousand it was at that time. We are facing a very serious paradigm shift in what the hospitality industry is willing to work with. At the same time we are dealing with a situation where backing up into May I don't see is feasible.

Memorial Day is our big time for every single camp. We are maximum effort in our own communities. We can't be free for that.

A lot of vacations don't start for folks until after Memorial Day and of course a lot of our membership as we've said are educators. This has often been the deciding factor in why we are in June aside from the fact that Pennsylvania, prideful as it was, always liked to have the last word. We are a changing department.

We are in changing times. The face of who we are regrettably is no longer the face of who we are now. I think we are all going to have to weigh this very carefully and that if we are to move this encampment to another time I believe May is not the target.

I believe we may have to actually consider moving it further back earlier than that, earlier than annual reporting because we don't want our encampment to land right in the middle of the secretary treasurer crunching the numbers for the entire department which is quite frankly huge.

John McNulty: To the official John Michael McNulty past department commander which is what the national organization calls me since I'm a life member. There are several problems here.

First of all is teachers. It's always been our tradition that we wait so we have a lot of teachers that were members. I'm not sure what it is now.

In the county you're standing in, Montgomery, which is my own county the public schools finished anywhere from the 18th to about the 22nd this year. A lot of them. Most of them.

There's a lot of districts in our county. You're running into that problem. Second problem is hotels.

That's a very serious problem. If you think we have problems now it will only get worse and quite frankly I'm beginning to think that what Charlie Kuhn pushed for, for years, that we abandon this process and go to a one day encampment. We may be forced into it financially.

This year being on council I've heard so many we need this, we need that, we need the other. We could run this department into trouble and the big word increases in dues, which none of us want could be necessary if we are not careful. My concern is every time we increase dues we lose membership.

We can't afford that anymore. We never could afford it. The next problem is our sisters.

As at least for now the fraternal relations officer, by charter, the auxiliary meets where we meet. They don't like that and they complain and they've thought about changing their charter. For now they're with us.

The other three organizations and granted the only one that really has a lot of membership now is the Daughters of Union Veterans. We have to work with them. If the five orders don't meet together there is no way financially that we can run an encampment like this.

It's done. We'll never see it again. If we start pushing the Daughters in particular if we start pushing any of them too hard and don't ask them first and work with them to develop this we're going to have a revolt.

I've been through too many revolts with our sisters. I really don't want another one. Most of you have never been in one of these uprisings.

It can get pretty nasty. That's another thing to consider. The other departments I don't know what they do.

We in Pennsylvania have always worked the five owners together. We're one of the few if not the only who still has us meet together most of the time. We can't just say we're meeting in another time frame without consulting with our sisters.

If we do it's not going to be pretty.

(Unheard question to McNulty from off mic)

John McNulty: Our school districts here still meet fairly late. They usually mostly don't start until after Labor Day.

Bill Fischer: Bill Fischer, Senior Vice Department Commander. I understand what Brother Franz and Brother McNulty are saying. It's a pleasure for us even if we gripe to have the allied orders with us.

It is rather unique in that situation. However, I don't have the constitution and regulations in front of me but I believe it says that a department can meet in encampment any time from January 1st until the end of June. As Brother Mike said, Missouri met in April.

I've been to the last three Department of New York encampments. They meet in early May. I understand the issues with May.

When I was in Kansas they meet in March. As Brother Doug said and I know that our department moves as quickly as the dinosaurs sometimes. All I was trying to say here was we need to move it sooner to be relevant. The 10th of June not later.

Obviously, next year we have it scheduled later. I agree with Brother McNulty. We should probably talk with the daughters.

If this was to go into effect, that's not going to change anything because next year is already set. I think as Brother Doug said, we really need to consider April, maybe March. We don't have a thousand members.

We're barely 60% of what that was. We don't have a voting block at the national encampment. Not that we are pushing brothers for national office or anything but we still need to have a say in what's going on with the national organization.

Jeff Heagy: Jeff Heagy, Anna Ross Camp 1. I rise in support of Brother Fisher's recommendation. I just want to speak from my experience over the last 12 or 15 years in the Department of New Jersey. We always meet prior to June 10th.

In addition to that, our secretary treasurer who runs the show, he does all the work, is assistant principal at Petty School which is one of the top boarding schools, prep schools to Princeton actually. He's got a lot of work to do as assistant principal. We work around his schedule but we make it happen.

We've in the past run into situations where our resolutions didn't quite make the timeline and that's a concern. When we put together a resolution to be addressed at national, we need to get in there. They say we need 45, we need 60 days.

Whatever you decide but we can work around this. This business of working around educators, it's a weekend. Thank you, Commander.

John Frantz: I'm just bringing up point of order for everybody in the room. This discussion stays in this room. We don't need a repeated Williamsport incident where the mere thought of us discussing having a one day business meeting causes the sisters to have quite a tizzy.

We don't need to have rumors leave this room and start getting uppity already just because we're talking about this today.

John McNulty: I've been the paternal relations officer ever since Bud Atkinson died. Bud could bully the women.

None of the rest of us can because Bud's main thing was Margaret and she would push them. Anna and Ross Camp only has an auxiliary and they're fairly quiet. The daughters are another whole issue.

I was involved in the middle of that mess and got sent sort of feeling like I was going to get my head what's left of my hair scalped. It was not fun. If any of you want to deal with the daughters sometimes the ladies of the Grand Army and sometimes the auxiliary because the auxiliary and the daughters were saying to hell with it.

Just the two of us will meet and screw the sons. You do not want to deal with the women lightly. If you do, I'm going to quit as the paternal relations officer and somebody else can go in there and get murdered.

I walked in and the daughters were ready to scalp me. I brought a couple of members with me. We were lucky we got out of there without getting pelted with something.

They were furious. I want to remind you that in 1953 and I don't remember whether it was the daughters or the ladies of the Grand Army got into a fight with the National Organization when General Ulysses S. Grant III was commander in chief. They still gripe about it now.

I hear General Grant did this. He was this. They all say hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.

Believe it.

Doug McMillin: Doug McMillan, J.P. Brindle Camp 50. Just was made aware of one point also to consider in the debate that we do currently have a contract for the 2025 encampment set for the date.

If any change is made at this point it cannot go into effect until after the next contract has been met or it will have to be renegotiated.

Mike Paquette: Everything I have heard so far this morning I still am in favor with the idea of moving or adding that language but I would have a question to Brother Fischer. Has any of this even been mentioned to any of the allied orders about us having a discussion about a change in the date? No.

So to Brother McNulty's point since you have a committee made up of all the allied orders.

John McNulty: I haven't dared mention it to them yet. Right.

I'm a bachelor. I can run away. I don't have a wife to deal with.

Mike Paquette: If the department truly wants to consider doing this and I think we should. I do also believe there should be some involvement with the allied orders about changing the date that you all meet because as Brother John pointed out your department is relatively unique that you have that committee and in consideration for the ladies it might be expedient on the part of the department to have at least a general discussion before you actually vote on doing this change. So it might be wise in the grand scheme of things having that discussion over the next year and bringing that particular aspect of the bylaws change back to the table next year.

So I'm not going to make a motion to change it. What I'm saying is in the grand scheme of things for the Pennsylvania department because you all are involved with the encampment with four other organizations that it would probably be a wise thing to do to have a what if discussion with the other allied orders.

Commander: I believe Brother Dave was standing first.

Did you have something to say, Brother Dave?

Dave Berzoski: Dave Berzoski, camp commander of Garfield Camp 34. Whether I'm for or against the proposal is irrelevant. I just think that it should be tabled and discussed as whether a committee or the council or whoever to determine whether or not it's feasible or whether or not we want to involve the ladies.

They have to be involved first of all. We just can't vote right now and say we're changing our bylaws to meet before June 10th and not discuss that with them. So I would just think it would need to be tabled at this point.

Maybe bring up again next year after some discussion with the other organizations and what their feeling is.

Commander: Thank you, Brother Dave. Is that a motion, Brother Dave?

Dave Berzoski: Recommendation.

Bill Fischer: Commander, I rescind proposal number two so that we can do as has been mentioned, discussing it with the allied orders.

Commander: Thank you, Brother Bill.

Bill Fischer: I don't know what the protocol is, but if people from the front table want to speak, there's an extra mic up there instead of having to come back down here all the time.

John McNulty: Brothers, listening to all this and realizing that change is necessary even in Pennsylvania, I would move you that we form a group, preferably suited in armor, to have a discussion with our sisters to see what their thoughts are before we say we're going to do whatever. See if they would be willing to move forward. Explain to them why and take it from there and bring that back to next year's encampment and they can discuss it.

It may take two or three years to do this unless we just want to go away from what we've been doing. This has been Pennsylvania's pride that we still do it the way the Grand Army and the other orders did it. When there were the five allied orders and the Grand Army, we always met together.

If you look at 1927 in Bethlehem, we had every hotel in the place tied up. There were a lot of hotels in Bethlehem at that time. This has always been our pride that we work together as five orders.

I would really hate to see that go away, but if we don't work with them and realize that the idea of men tell the women what to do and the women behave themselves is long gone. I think everybody in the room knows that. It's not the 1920s anymore.

I think we need to have a group to reach out to them and take it from there. As I said, if we make a change it may take a couple of years, but that's my motion.

Commander: We had the motion made by Brother John McNulty, seconded by Brother Mike Peter to discuss the matter with the other orders and move incrementally as need be.

Further discussion?

Bill Fischer: Commander Bill Fischer, Department Senior Vice Commander, I would just recommend that this be left for the incoming administration to work out.

Scott Teeters: I'm going to take something that John, I know he's made a motion, and I want to clarify something because I think it's important. Based on what we have experienced over the last several years, to take Brother John's idea, we're going to form a committee, we're going to meet together as brothers and sisters.

I fully think that's a good idea. I think the one thing that we typically miss is that we don't put any type of deadlines or time frames into this sort of thing, and what happens is it kind of gets missed and it gets on to the next encampment and we go, oh, look, we forgot about that, and see that can take us too far. Because this is a logistics issue and we want to be able to make recommendation to the National, I think this kind of needs to be something that's pretty high up as far as how we do it.

I'm thinking a deadline time frame, like meeting within two months after the encampment to start this discussion, some sort of a deadline like that is probably what we should do. Now, I know Brother Bill's just mentioned about wanting to let this go into the next administration, which is fine, but I think we need to set that kind of a date that we start meeting together to discuss this, because there may be all kinds of, I don't want to say contention, but discussion points that we may not be aware of, but we're all in this together, all the men and women, we're all in this together, and I think we can come to an amicable solution here without some of the things that we've had happen in the past, but there has to be some sort of a framework to this. If not, it may just be completely missed and skipped over until next time, and then we've lost an entire year, and that's my point.

Jeff Heagy: Brother Commander, Jeff Heagy, Anna Ross Camp Number One. The original motion that was made by Brother Bill, and then of course the subsequent motion by Brother McNulty, addressing the initial motion, I'd like to move that it be tabled in conjunction with Brother McNulty, not a group, but it be referred to the incoming commander to form a committee to address the issue.

John McNulty: Brother Jeff, you realize that if we table it, it disappears at the end of the encampment, so you're basically killing it.

I don't know that tabling it is the right motion to make.

Jeff Heagy: Well, then I would ask Brother McNulty to change his motion from a committee, I mean from a group, to a committee as appointed by the incoming commander.

John McNulty: I'm agreeable to that amendment.

Commander: Thank you. There's an amendment to from Brother McNulty.

John McNulty: I think what it comes down to is we leave the next department commander, whoever he may be, to deal with the job, and we don't know who that might be. I'm just following the old tradition of saying it that way. I'm going to withdraw my motion altogether, and you can do what you want.

Bill Fischer: I just think we leave it alone and let the next commander deal with it. Bill Fisher, department senior vice commander. Yeah, I have already rescinded proposal number two to the bylaws for all those reasons that we've had a good discussion on.

If it's all right, I'll move on to proposal number three, which will inspire more discussion.

John McNulty: One point of order I just realized. Since Brother Hagee suggested a modification, are you willing to withdraw the modification, Jeff? Yes.

You made a modification to the motion. I withdrew the motion, but you have to withdraw too. But you made a modification to my modification.

Commander: Okay. Fine. We're good.

Bill Fischer: Point number three. Proposed change number three. Bear with me.

I won't read through the entire how it reads. Currently article 11 committee section one reads as follows.

"Section one, the department commander shall appoint the following standing department committees whose duties and responsibilities are listed."

So these are standing committees. A fraternal relations committee, which is to consist of three members. Legislative committee to consist of three members.

Department encampment site committee to consist of one representative from each allied order provided, however, the committee member is from the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War will serve as chairman thereof. Does anyone need any further discussion of how that reads?

John McNulty: Yes, sir. I have a question on that right off.

Your third one. Would you read that again, please?

Bill Fischer: The department encampment site committee. This is C under section one article 11.

The encampment site committee said committee shall consist of one representative from each active allied order provided, however, the committee member from the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War shall serve as chairman thereof.

John McNulty: Would you make an addition to that?

Bill Fischer: This is how it reads already. Okay.

John McNulty: I'm sorry. I misunderstood.

Bill Fischer: And the proposed change section one, the department commander shall appoint the following standing department committees whose duties and responsibilities are listed herein.

Delete the fraternal relations committee. Delete the legislative committee. And then renumber department.

I'm sorry. Add department bylaws committee.

I'm sorry. Let me go back.

D in the existing bylaws now reads D digest committee shall consist of three members or associates who shall review the proceedings of the encampments of our department. So we have A fraternal relations committee, B legislative committee, C department encampment site committee, and D digest committee.

The proposed change delete fraternal relations committee, delete the legislative committee, renumber and add department bylaws committee as A1. The purpose of the committee is to review and or propose changes to the department bylaws as may become necessary. This includes reviewing changes to the national constitution and regulations of the order as passed by the national encampment for any effect they may have on the department bylaws.

The committee shall ensure that all required requirements found in the department bylaws are complied with concerning all proposed amendments to under the department bylaws committee. Said committee shall consist of up to five but not less than three department brothers with the department commander selecting a chairman and members. B department encampment site committee.

The purpose of the committee, one, the purpose of the committee is to provide for and ensure that the requirements for department encampment are met. Said committee shall consist of up to five but not less than three department brothers with the department commander selecting a chairman and members. Three, committee duties shall include the following, encampment planning to include confirmation of the encampment site and facilities for the immediate upcoming department encampment and advising potential host camps in selecting possible encampment sites and necessary facilities for the following year's department encampment.

Sub letter I, it shall prepare an information sheet containing encampment details including date, times, hotels and meals information and other specifics deemed useful for those planning to attend

and timely distributed across the department. B, encampment preparation. To coordinate preparation and printing of encampment programs working with the department chaplain for preparation and printing of memorial service programs as needed.

Providing for encampment name tags and fulfilling other requirements as they arise.

Sub letter I, the committee chair shall periodically coordinate with the department secretary concerning the names and numbers of brothers registered for encampment.

Sub letter C, encampment.

The committee shall oversee the encampment registration desk, ensure all brothers are properly credentialed, report encampment attendance and status of brothers and fulfill other requirements as they arise.

Sub letter D, reporting. The committee chair shall submit a written report to the department commander within 30 days of the encampment's conclusion.

He shall submit the committee's recommendations for locations of future encampments to the department council.

Sub letter I, all receipts for reimbursement of approved expenses shall be submitted to the department treasurer throughout the year. Final receipts shall be submitted within 30 days of the encampment's conclusion.

Sub letter E, Pennsylvania allied orders encampment slash conventions committee. The Pennsylvania department encampment site committee chair shall meet jointly when practical with all representatives, one each in parentheses, from active Pennsylvania allied orders for encampment conventions planning with the Pennsylvania department brother serving as chairman thereof.

Sub letter I, or 1.

Said committee shall be a permanent committee, shall receive, hold and dispose of funds to recognize Pennsylvania allied orders encampment slash conventions committees in such limited amounts as shall be agreed upon if, as and when needed and for such purpose or purposes as shall be specified by said committee with the chair seeking guidance from the department council as needed.

Sub letter I, I or 2. Said committee shall secure in advance of and prior to the annual department encampment slash conventions sites that are interested and capable of entertaining future department encampments slash conventions and complete preliminary arrangements to be turned over to local encampment slash convention committees as exists.

Sub letter III, or 3. This was fun working through this. Said committee shall attend to such other activities pertaining to department encampment slash conventions sites as may be required and or directed from time to time.

Sub letter IV or 4. Said committee shall meet annually at the same time and place as the department encampment slash conventions for the purpose of conducting any and all business at hand and prepare reports for each allied order.

Subsection V or 5. The action of said committee shall be subject to the approval of the Pennsylvania department encampment when in session or subject to the approval of the department council during the interim of department encampment sessions.

Subsection VI or 6. Should it be necessary to hold the Pennsylvania department encampment slash allied orders conventions in an area where there are no affiliated organizations or where the allied orders through their members do not wish to assume the responsibilities of sponsoring encampment or conventions, the department site encampment site committee is hereby authorized to assume responsibility of a local encampment committee.

Sub number one of that.

The necessary funds for conducting such an encampment shall be raised by said committee or the funds presently held by the department encampment site committee shall be available for such use but only on the same basis as it would be for any local encampment committee. Provided however that any unused funds if raised by the department encampment site committee and a full and complete written report including a financial statement shall be submitted no later than 30 days following the encampment slash conventions with a copy forwarded to the department council. Essentially all of that is already in the existing order but it is in one big paragraph.

I'm just trying to I'm really not changing things other than making it more clear to read and that our site committee member chair will be the chair of any allied orders effort to put together such an encampment. My rationale for this, that the fraternal relations committee, the legislative committee and the digest committee shall be dropped as standing committees. First off, fraternal relations committee.

Brother Doug McMillin PDC well explained his rationale for resigning from said committee and why he thought that said committee usurped the authority of the department commander. It makes sense that the department commander can himself or use on his authority his chief of staff and or aide de camp to further fraternal relations with the Pennsylvania allied orders with those specific brothers given in quotes marching orders from the department commander for any discussion with our sisters. They shall report back directly to the department commander and the department commander can then bring forth any concerns to the department in encampment or the department council when not in encampment.

Two reason for dropping the legislative committee. It is difficult enough to get brothers to volunteer to fill offices at the camp and department level. There is no reason why the department commander cannot appoint a brother to serve as a legislative affairs officer with limited responsibility to monitor Pennsylvania legislation and report findings to the department council as they arise.

But to mandate a three brother committee is not useful if those brothers have little interest in monitoring and reporting on Pennsylvania legislation and we have not had any reporting back that I'm

aware of from the one brother who's on the committee and our bylaws say it's a standing committee of three members. The reason for doing away with the digest committee and I had some good responses from members of our camps concerned about that. In my seven years in the Pennsylvania department I do not recall however I could be in error ever hearing of or from a digest committee and it was noted in last year's proceedings which were just transcribed a few weeks ago that there has never been a digest committee established however in our bylaws it says it's a standing committee of three brothers so we're violating that.

The department council should already be reviewing the proceedings and department orders for accuracy and impact as well as reviewing edicts from national about how they may impact the department and its camps. The department council as a body already acts as counselors to the department commander and each other for keeping the Pennsylvania department focused on its mission. The bylaws committee having said bylaws committee be authorized up to five members instead of three allows more brothers especially those who have not been involved in bylaws review to gain knowledge and experience from more experienced brothers.

Understanding bylaws parameters are essential for successful department and camp operations and that work needs to include brothers who can knowledgeable continue its work when experienced brothers step aside. Having it said up to five just allows more participation but again it does not change it from a three member standing committee. The department site encampment site committee having said committee be authorized up to five members and I've had many correspondence with Bob Wrigley our chairman of our encampment site committee that he's overworked he needs more help I appreciate brother Steve Johnston stepping up and helping Bob with planning for next year's encampment in Cranberry Township and I'm sure there are other brothers from Eaton Camp and Davis Star and the Catanning Camp that have been involved with that but having said committee be authorized up to five members allow for more brothers especially those who have not been involved in encampment planning to gain knowledge and experience from more experienced brothers.

Annual encampment, annual encampments are typically the one time each year when the department comes together. Successful encampments enhance fraternity charity and loyalty among brothers and here in Pennsylvania with our allied order sisters. Having responsibilities better defined in this bylaws amendment supports that effort.

For the Pennsylvania allied orders encampment slash conventions committee some reporting has been changed from only one reporting to the department commander to reporting to the department council. The varied experience of department council members allow for enhanced discussion and more informed decisions. So again going back the proposal because these are listed as standing committees.

It doesn't mean that a department commander cannot establish a temporary committee during his term for these things but to have it listed as standing committees we're essentially violating our own bylaws if we're not filling those positions. So again and brother McNulty has pointed out very clearly the importance that we discuss things with our sisters and I was in agreement and removed that second proposal dealing with the change of the encampment because they should be brought into

that discussion. And I think with this with our encampment site committee having things a little further refined that helps but we don't need a standing fraternal relations committee.

That is just another burden. Removing the legislative committee again the commander if someone if a brother is really interested in Pennsylvania legislation and wants to volunteer for that that's great but to have a standing committee just doesn't make sense if we can't even get three brothers to fill that let alone one who's actively engaged. The department commander can put somebody in that position.

The digest committee agreed that the digest committee in theory is a good thing but I see any of the stuff that the digest committee would review is really an issue for the department commander and department council. The elected officers need to be the ones who are doing this. I mean that is not an extra burden.

That's what they should be doing. And to have a separate digest committee that is in our bylaws and has never been filled makes no sense. We need to put the responsibility on the council and as brother Scott Teeter stated we need that accountability.

So that is proposal number three change to the bylaws. Thank you for staying awake.

John McNulty: Brother commander point of interest.

Point of issue. Point of issue. Council is responsible for the money primarily.

And that's the only thing that's really said. Council department council handles the money when anything that is not made a motion for at encampment. The rest of that is just stuff that's been added on.

Money is the main thing we deal with.

Bill Fischer: Proposal number four will deal with department council.

John McNulty: The department council is set by all that is set and dignified by the national organization.

They say what the departments do.

Commander: Brother McMillan.

Doug McMillin: Commander Doug McMillan J.P. Brindle Camp 50 Carlisle.

Wanted to just speak in the discussion section here about the fraternal relations committee. It's been a bit of a hot button topic this year. I started most of the trouble with the whole thing by resigning, pointing out that it was a usurpation of the power of the department commander and the reason for that, and I will not name names, but some of the ladies, one or two in particular, began to find that this was an opportunity to create a separate organization within the organization.

They wanted it to become an organization with its own EIN number. They wanted the sons to transfer some money into creating a fund for the fraternal relations committee to do jobs with. This was absolutely beyond any scope of what we planned.

It also primarily became a gripe session. We wound up with five brothers on the committee and when we got into the Zoom meeting and the ladies representatives found there were five members of the sons on the committee, the next meeting we had suddenly we had five members almost of every single one of the ladies committees or organizations on it. We went from a Zoom meeting with about a dozen people on it total to a Zoom meeting of 15 to 20 people.

It degraded into a gripe fest where certain tents and auxiliaries were angry at the camps that they were close to and they began airing these grievances in the meeting. Those grievances then became general knowledge among all the other tents, all the other camps, all the other auxiliaries, and being that this was supposed to be fostering fraternal relations, we wound up doing the exact opposite. We wound up poisoning fraternal relations.

I realized at this point that if the ladies have a gripe with a local camp, it's between the camp president or the tent president to go to the camp commander and resolve it locally. If they cannot resolve it locally, it is their duty to report it to their department president who will then report it to the department commander who will go down his chain and resolve it in-house through the appropriate chain of command. It was not appropriate to just spread the garbage around and let everybody see it and it caused a great deal of disaffection which is why I resigned because I did not want to be a part of spreading what could have been a disastrous poison into this department.

That is the reason that we pulled it back. I did make the point at that time that I do believe that a fraternal relations committee can be a positive force if it has set rules under which it works and set numbers of representatives in it. The bylaws of the department state absolutely nothing about the office of fraternal relations.

There are no instructions, no directions, no guidelines. Traditionally the office of fraternal relations in the department has been one man who has been nominated by the department commander or appointed I should say by the department commander during the encampment to oversee the fraternal relations between the orders during the encampment only because it's too much work for the commander to deal with all of the little background mess that happens when these things are running. Then at the end of the encampment it goes away.

What we need if we do decide that a fraternal relations committee should be retained we really need to readdress the bylaws with maybe a committee should be appointed that should really look at how can it be structured so that it works, it respects the sovereignty of the commander, respects the sovereignty of each individual organization's presidents, and understands that it's simply people coming together to talk and it's not become some massive thing that just blew out of proportion.

Commander: One second brother Mike. Being that we're still in discussion parliamentarian informs me we can't stop the discussion.

John McNulty: Brother commander I move you that we table all these discussions so that we can have the visitation by the auxiliary and that after they leave you can take everything off the table. I will make that motion.

Commander: Seconded by brother John Frantz I heard. Brother Fisher seconded it. All in favor.

Aye. All opposed. Motion carries.

That will be tabled. Discussion will be tabled until we have a meeting from the auxiliary.

How many sisters? Four sisters.

We'll need four brothers to escort them into the room.

Visitation of the Auxiliary to Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Thank you. I have a motion to take the motion off the table to resume discussion. Seconded, all in favor. Discussion will resume.

Brother Paquette.

Brother Paquette: Mike Paquette, Past Commander-in-Chief of Crowley Camp 89. Brothers I have one concern about what's being discussed with the duties of the Fraternal Relations Committee but I don't believe our bylaws will apply to anyone except our brothers on that committee.

The ladies groups will not be bound by our bylaws. This discussion specifically on the duties of the Fraternal Relations Committee, if our expectation is the lady is going to abide by those responsibilities, I think we're mistaken. And if we were to do something to compile responsibilities of the Fraternal Relations Organization or that committee it needs to be done with the participation of the ladies in defining those responsibilities so we can get their buy-in.

So this may be the wrong approach for that specific committee.

Commander: Brother John.

John McNulty: Brother Commander John McNulty, Past Department Commander.

I want to give you a little bit of background on this whole thing because Brother Mike was involved. At Williamsport we went and visited all the ladies in the visiting committee and Brother Mike spoke to them and something we say got them all fired up. I don't know what it was but they thought gee, maybe we should all be talking together.

The next morning I was walking into the Genetti Hotel from my room over by the pool and Sister Linda Snook waylaid me and said well we're going to have this committee and I'm like what is Linda talking about? And then other sisters from other orders were all excited and they said we should have a committee. So Mike was standing in the lobby and I went over and asked him is there any

authorization because I didn't know of one and he said he didn't know of one but he thought it was a good idea. Well it started from there and it grew as the old saying would be like Topsy.

The sisters all assumed that because we had said it that I was going to be the head and it's like there's no authorization for it. That would be stepping on everybody's sovereignty. So I took a line from our old Penn State stuff and it said convener.

So sort of just organizer but we always used that when we didn't know what else to call a committee. It went from there and it evolved and evolved and evolved and some of the there was a problem within one of the allied orders that was part of the cause of all this committee and that some of the people involved in that decided that they were going to run everything and that's where as Brother Doug said it went downhill. We then looked at everything in Pennsylvania that we could find.

Can't find any authorization for it. We can't really even find an authorization for the fraternal relations officer. Bud was fraternal relations officer for as long as I could remember and when he was getting towards the end he asked me if I would help him.

Well I was never going to turn Bud Atkinson down for anything so I helped him. Then when he died I got it and I had Lowell Alcorn, a few others, Doug help me with things. It was all sort of unofficial.

I think this was one of those Pennsylvania tradition kind of things that's really not in there. We also could never find it in the national organization anywhere. A fraternal relations officer, nothing.

So we sort of invented this thing. I know at least a couple of the women's orders would like to continue something. The LGAR specifically said we helped them straighten some things out.

I don't know if I was speaking out of turn on that or not but they did. This whole thing worked to an extent. If we had continued we would have had a meeting here at some point.

We figured we'd have Zoom meetings and then meet here. It does to some extent step on the authority of the commander and the presidents but it sort of worked. Whether it should go on or not I don't know.

If it did we've got to have a way of stopping people from taking control. I'll convene. I don't want to run anything.

That's not my style with this. But if we do it we have to have some authorization from all five orders. That's for sure.

Beyond that I'm not sure what to do with it except maybe I would hate to see us lose the little bit of progress we've made but I'm not sure if we can do it.

Bill Fischer: I'm all for fraternal relations. We have a unique opportunity here.

I have visited many other departments not as many as brother Mike or brother Dan but we have a great opportunity with some departments three of the four orders don't exist of the allied orders. I'm all for that but to have it in our bylaws as a standing committee I think it needs to be up to the

department commander with guidance from the council on how to proceed during that department commander's term. I'm not against fraternal relations whatsoever and I want to encourage them but as brother Doug also stated that this needs to be a lead by the department commander and with advice from the council.

Mike Paquette: Commander Mike Paquette, past commander in chief. Brothers I don't mean to prolong this discussion but we have dealt with this a similar issue at the national level. When I first joined the national site committee I said well why can't we have all the allied orders meet together at the national level and Jim Crane who was the chairman at the time had the national presidents from all the other four allied orders basically in a meeting.

This was at the encampment in Richmond. For one reason or another we couldn't get the time frame down but what came readily apparent to me in that discussion was there were four of them and one of us. The challenge would be for the allied orders that didn't have representation in a specific department would never vote to have an encampment where they didn't have a presence.

There are challenges working with the ladies and I am on board totally with brother John that life is a lot easier and a lot more pleasant when we all get along and we should endeavor to do so but as I stated earlier for this specific committee if we want to come up with a charter or some ground rules that we will all abide with then those rules need to be established by all five organizations and agreed to. I think this is a good first effort that brother Fisher came up with to try to delineate some of the responsibilities and there may be specifics we can put into the Pennsylvania department bylaws about what our duties are as they fall out from that discussion with the ladies but that discussion needs to happen and it's going to be bilateral between all five organizations.

John McNulty: To mark what brother Mike said it became the four orders and us.

In Pennsylvania it became four of the orders and one of the orders and we were with the four. It was one of the women's orders that was the us.

Commander: Brother McMillan.

Doug McMillin: Brother commander Doug McMillan JP Brental Camp 50 Carlisle. I approach the microphone reluctantly every time. You guys got to hear it once.

I'm transcribing it. I hear it twice to three times. I don't want anyone to think that I'm opposed to fraternal relations or the concept of it.

I only want to make the point with all of this that we need guidance and very set guidelines. We cannot have the sites committee business bleeding into the fraternal relations committee meetings. We cannot have other committees business bleeding into that where decisions wind up made in the fraternal relations committee that really belong to other committees.

That was also happening. There was one other point that I thought really needed to be mentioned because it's oddly enough become forgotten. I'm sure brother John can back me up on this.

The term "allied orders" is a generic term in Pennsylvania. It does not officially exist anywhere. It's a term that was created to describe our relationship between the sons and the ladies organizations.

John McNulty: The allied orders of the Grand Army of the Republic was invented by one of our department commanders. I'm probably out of my line here but I think it was Lowell Hammer back in the 40s. That sounds right John.

It would have been Lowell Hammer.

It's never been official. It's never been recognized by any national organization.

We've accepted it here in Pennsylvania. Like the Pennsylvania closing that other people like and they use it now, they use this term. It is another one of those things that I've tended to call Pennsylvania-isms.

There's no authority to it. Rich Orr, God bless him, would always say I never want to hear that again. We should outlaw it.

Typical Rich. It's something that goes back to the 40s. It was an expression of what we believe.

Now in 1947, Commander in Chief Round listed the order of creation of the five orders and put them in line. It had been spoken a couple times by the Grand Army of the Republic before that. In 2004, Brother Steve Michael reissued that.

I was one of the people who helped do the research for that. Saying that we have a relationship and the orders and their order of seniority, which the GAR said and Commander Steve said was, surprise, surprise, the Women's Relief Corps is first because they were the official auxiliary to the Grand Army. They still exist, but they are the auxiliary.

Second was the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic because they were at the same time and they were always treated as the second auxiliary to the GAR. Third, Daughters of Union Veterans, even though they were founded after us. Fourth, Sons of Union Veterans.

Fifth, Auxiliary. Even though we are the legal descendants, the daughters are listed ahead of us in the standard that the GAR did and Steve reissued that. We're not at the top of the pile, guys.

We're one of the smaller dogs.

Douglas McMillin: That's precisely the point. We are actually all separate sovereign organizations.

With the exception of the Auxiliary, all of our organizations have the one thing in common that we were all recognized by the Grand Army of the Republic, but we were never recognized as one group. We have to remember that we have to respect the division between our command structure and the command structure of the Daughters and of the LGAR and the WRC. I've noticed that it becomes the one thing that most people generalize the fastest.

They see it on a program that were the Allied Orders. Boom. We are one group.

We are not. We have to respect that.

John McNulty: We are related to the GAR, but none of that, even Commander-in-Chief Round, never said that there was any question of sovereignty.

We all have our own sovereignty. That's why I borrowed from some of this gobbledygook at Penn State and used the word convener instead of chairman because chairman would have said that we all, all five orders had surrendered some of their sovereignty. We never did that in this committee.

That's why I just sort of listened and said, okay, well why don't we try this? Why don't we try that? There is no firm structure. It would have to be made by all five orders, and I don't think that will ever happen.

Bill Fischer: Thank you for working through this.

I would like to amend this proposal to remove the I would like to remove under the Encampment Site Committee Subsection 3 E, which deals with the Pennsylvania Allied Orders, Encampment, and Conventions Committee so that based on things that everyone has said.

I need to have discussions with them, but to have this laid out in our bylaws when we have no legal standing with the other orders, I think that with this proposed change, therefore we would have, again, bear with me, only two standing committees, the Bylaws Committee and our Department Encampment Committee. Again, removing that subsection E, dealing with the Allied Orders, Encampment, and Conventions Committee.

Commander: So your proposal is to remove all those committees except for the Department Bylaws and the Department Encampment, or known as the Site Committee, correct?

Bill Fischer: The Department Encampment, Site Committee, but removing that subsection 3E, dealing with the Allied Orders, Encampment, and Conventions Committee.

It doesn't mean we're not going to work with them, but again, having something in our bylaws that states that our Chairman of our Site Committee is going to be the Chairman of that combined committee, again, based on not having standing with the other orders.

John McNulty: You have to accept the change.

Commander: Is there any further discussion?

John McNulty: I'll tell you one thing right now, those poor guys who wrote Parliamentary Procedures, they're all ready to knock their heads out right now listening to this stuff.

Roberts, whoever Roberts really was, he's saying, why did I do this?

Commander: Any further discussion? Is there any further discussion? We're doing them individually. So all those in favor, please raise your cards. All opposed, please, same sign.

Motion carries.

John McNulty: Brothers, if I might make one comment here, and I know I may be out of order, but we should probably still use the term Allied Orders of the Grand Army of the Republic here in Pennsylvania, remembering that we all are tied back to our fathers, to the comrades of the GAR. It has no real legal authority, but if we stop using it, I think the four other orders might misinterpret, and we don't need that.

Bill Fischer: Proposed change four, Article VI, Department Council. Currently, Article VI, Department Council, reads as follows.

Section one, the Department Council shall meet immediately after the installation to elect a Chairman and Secretary to fix the amount of bond required of the Department Secretary-Treasurer, and to transact such business as may be brought before it.

Section two, the Department Council shall meet prior to and at the same place of the annual meeting of the Department Encampment, and perform such duties as are specified in the Constitution and Regulations, and transact such other business as shall be necessary. Section three, the Department Council shall meet upon the call of the Department Commander, or a majority of the Council members. The proposed change, section one, the Department Council shall consist of the Department Commander, Senior Vice Department Commander, Junior Vice Department Commander, Department Secretary, Department Treasurer, three elected members of the Council, and the immediate past Department Commander.

Subsection A, five members constitute a quorum. Section two, all past Commanders-in-Chief, past Department Commanders, and Department Counselors shall be non-voting advisory members of the Department Council. A, non-voting members of the Department Council have full rights to attend all Department Council meetings, in person or electronic, including while in executive session.

They shall be recognized and heard on all issues brought before the Department Council. However, they shall not be counted for the purpose of establishing a quorum, nor shall they be able to make or second motions.

Section three, the Department Commander may invite other non-voting brothers from whom he or the voting members wish to receive advice, counsel, or information.

Section four, the Department Council shall have and shall exercise all powers of the Board of Directors, except as so far as such powers may be assigned to other persons in the national regulations or the Pennsylvania Department.

Section five, the Department Council shall meet immediately after the installation to elect a Chairman and Secretary to fix the amount of bond required of the Department Secretary-Treasurer and to transact such business as may be brought before it.

Section six, the Department Council shall meet prior to and at the same place of the annual meeting of the Department Encampment and perform such duties as are specified in the Constitution and Regulations and transact such other business as shall be necessary.

The Department Council shall meet upon the call of the Department Commander or a majority of the Council members.

My rationale is that the CCNR Article 10 Department Council states that the purpose of the Department Council Section 1 is to devise and recommend measures to help ensure the financial stability of the Department and to fill vacancies as they may occur in elected department offices.

A, the Department Council immediately after the installation shall meet and elect a Chairman and Secretary.

Subsection B, the Department Council shall devise and recommend such measures as will enable the Department to meet its necessary expenditures.

C, the Department Council shall audit the receipts, expenditures, and books of account of the Department and make a report thereof to the Department Encampment.

D, the Department Council shall fill the unexpired term by a majority vote of the Council any vacancy which may occur in an elected department office.

The three elected Council members' enumerated responsibilities out of the CNR are limited to verifying the Department's financial accountability and to fill elected office vacancies, not broader department governing on their own.

At the national level, and these are just, again, my comments.

At the national level, the Commander-in-Chief does not rely solely on the advice and consent of the elected Council of Administration, which in parentheses have broader responsibilities than the three elected Department Council members, but also relies on the elected officers of the Corporation, as noted in our Charter,

Section 200304, Governing Body, which states that the Council of Administration,

One, during the intervals between the National Encampment, the Council of Administration is the governing body of the Corporation and is responsible for the general policies, programs, and activities of the Corporation and that it will consist of at least seven members elected in the manner and for the term provided by the Constitution and bylaws.

The next subsection,

C1, the officers of the Corporation are the Commander-in-Chief, a Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief, a Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and other offices as provided in the Constitution and bylaws. One individual may hold the office of Secretary and Treasurer.

So by following the example of how the Council of Administration conducts its business with the officers of the Corporation, the Commander-in-Chief, Senior, Junior, Secretary, and Treasurer participating as full members with voting rights, the Department Council should reflect the same with the elected Department officers, Commander, Senior Vice Department Commander, Junior Vice Department Commander, Secretary, and Treasurer joining the three elected Department Council members and the immediate past Department Council, I'm sorry, past Department Commander as voting members of a broader Department Council to conduct Department business.

You know, the bottom line is how are we going to develop our future Department leadership? Are we going to elect brothers who have little or no knowledge or experience and hope they're fast learners? Or should we involve them, i.e., mentor brothers who have an interest over several years to allow them to grow in their understanding of Department operations? I believe the change to include all the elected officers with the three elected Council members and the immediate past Department Commander better reflects the example of the National Council of Administration. Including all the past Department Commanders and past Commanders-in-Chief and Councilors and essentially anybody else that the Commander wants advice from or the Council wants advice from can come and speak in a non-voting capacity. We need to have, if we have more brothers who've been involved in the Department, our elected officers being involved in decision-making, we're going to have better informed decisions.

Commander: Thank you. Brother John.

John Franz: Brother Commander, per National Regulations Chapter 2, Articles 9 and 10, which both clearly specify there is a three-member Council and that is how the Department and National are governed, this proposal is out of order.

Because even if we do approve it, the Commander-in-Chief will strike it down. So while I agree with the wording of the proposal in principle for having more people involved, it's really up to the discretion of the Department Commander to involve more than just Council when it comes to these kind of matters. So as far as the proposal itself, it's actually out of order and if we don't kill it here, it'll get killed by the Commander-in-Chief even if we do approve it.

Bill Fischer: Commander. Bill Fisher, Department Senior Vice Commander.

The enumerated responsibilities of the Department Council specifically deal with financial matters, auditing the books, and filling elected vacancies.

That we don't have a better term such as Council of Administration at the Department level makes this confusing because I agree with Brother Franz how it's enumerated, but their ability is strictly limited to audit receipts, expenditures, books of account of the Department, etc., but not to be making decisions on their own without the input of the elected officers of the Department. The Commander-in-Chief

doesn't rely on strictly the Council of Administration. The Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief, the Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief, the Secretary, and the Treasurer all have voting rights.

Past Commanders-in-Chief, except for the immediate one, do not. They have advice and consent, but a Commander-in-Chief in the past could be overruled by all the past Commanders-in-Chief who had voting rights. I'm not trying to, because I'm, maybe not after now, but presumably I'm taking over, and I would hope that I could have some input from Brother Dan and Brother Mike.

Commander: Brother Dan's going to address some of this.

Dan Murray: There's no place in the regulations for a Council of Administration at the department level. And number two, the past Commanders-in-Chief don't all have voting rights.

No, I agree. In the past, they did. I don't know about in the past.

They haven't in the last 20 years. Right. I've been on the Council of Administration in the last 20 years, and they have no voting rights.

Right. They have a voting right when they're a Commander-in-Chief, and they have a voting right when they're an immediate past Commander-in-Chief. Right.

Other than that, they're only to be advised. I mean, you can call them all in and have all the advice you want, but I just don't see where you can establish a Council of Administration. It's not helpful in the regulations.

I'm not changing the name. I'm just saying that the Department of Council has specified in the regulations only to give them a limited parameter for financial responsibility and electing elected officer positions. And that at the Council of Administration, the new Vice Commanders-in-Chief, Vice Commanders-in-Chief, Secretary of the Treasury all have voting rights.

Is that correct? They do. But that's the Council of Administration. It's different to the department.

Commander: I understand. Brother McNulty?

John McNulty: John Michael McNulty, for the moment, Council Member Number 2. I have served on the Council of Administration. It is totally different from anything we do in Pennsylvania.

If you haven't been at a Council of Administration meeting or actually been a member of Council of Administration, you don't know squat. You do not know what you're talking about. It's a totally different world, and it's running a whole organization, and it has powers that any department council does not have.

This man doesn't know what he's talking about, to be blunt. I have also served on Pennsylvania Department of Council for probably at least 20 years off and on, in between when I was department commander. We have specific functions.

We govern the Brothers Assembled. All of you control the money. Everything that you budget is budgeted.

If something comes up beyond that, we speak for you. We are your representatives in the government of this department. Every time that I've been on Council, we have always thought that way.

I've been on camp councils where they tried to push things around to the Brothers. I won't mention which camp it was. I kept saying, no, no, no.

This has to be spoken on by the Brothers, but they meet every month. The Brothers Assembled here are only once a year, maybe twice. Legally, you can't do it unless it's a special encampment.

We act for and in the name of the Brothers. We do not make rules. We do not do any of that kind of stuff that Council administration does.

Council administration, if you're ever on there, what you really have to do is make your head spin. The first couple of months I was on there, I was like, oh my God, this is a lot more serious. Council, by definition, the longest serving man is Council number one.

The second is Council number two. The third is Council number three. They're not elected.

They're just that way. Ivan Frantz is Council member number one because he has more years on it than I do. Then whoever is, if I'm elected and that would be next year, then however it changes, whoever has the most service is Council number one.

The next year is Council number two. The next one is Council number three. This year, assuming that Ivan is reelected, he will still be number one.

I will be number two. If Dane is elected as the third member, he will be Council member number three. All this stuff from the Council administration does not apply to Pennsylvania or any other department.

It's simply the matter of, it's apples and oranges. Our responsibilities are totally separate from Council administration. Council administration has awesome power in the national organization.

Not total power. The national encampment is still the most important thing. It's the authority.

Council administration has a lot more authority than any department council does. Having advisors and all that stuff is gobbledygook. Pardon my French.

That's not anything nasty. We talk with the commander. We talk with Brother Rob.

We talk with the other officers. We discuss things. But the commander is the final authority, except in certain things.

The bonds, the financial, financial is us. We advise on other things. If something comes up, we advise on it.

But the commander is the boss and nobody else is. And I wish Brother Bill would know what the devil he's talking about before he starts to talk. Because half of what he said today, or more than that, he reads a book and he doesn't understand it.

Bill Fisher: Bill Fisher, Department Senior Vice Commander. I agree, I don't know everything, but I was on the Department Council for four years in another department.

John McNulty: In the department that is a podunk.

You have more corn than you have people.

Bill Fischer: Commander, I just have one question. We're still talking about my good friend, Brother McNulty, saying that the council members represent the department.

We held a special election, or a special encampment last October with very little notice. And no notice was given in advance of selecting a date that went out to the department. And that was a critical special encampment.

And I believe I couldn't make it because I had a church commitment in another state. If the council is to represent the department brothers, then they should have offered several dates in advance.

John McNulty: We represent the brothers assembled in terms of money.

If somebody wants to spend money that's not in the budget, we have to approve it. Otherwise, we advise. It's the department commander who calls the shots.

Mike Paquette: Commander, Mike Pockett. I'll second the bloody motion. Commander, Mike Pockett, past commander-in-chief, Camp Crouther, Crouther Camp 89.

So the current wording of your bylaws ends with, and transacts such business, it may be brought before it. Now, Brother McNulty, you just suggested that the council has authority to spend money if it hasn't been identified in the budget?

That does not fall within the CCNR, the authority that department council has. That exceeds the department council's ability to advise. The only people or the only bodies that can approve expenditures is the encampment, the department encampment, as you stipulated in the budget, and the department commander.

So I would suggest you review that section, your department constitution and regulations committee, review that section, because I believe section one of your existing bylaws that states that the responsibilities of department council is out of order and does not follow national CCNR. This came up over the past year with another department, and the national counselor stated exactly what I'm telling you.

John McNulty: Well, then there's no reason for department council, and I move that we abolish it.

No, the department council is to say exactly what it is in the CCNR. I just believe that somewhere along the line, you all believed someone, I'm not pointing any fingers, but this department exceeded the authority based on the wording and the interpretation of that wording.

Further discussion?

Jeff Hagey: Jeff Hagey Anna Ross Campone.

Mr. Allen, could you please restate the motion? At this point, I'm kind of confused as to where, what were we about to vote on?

Commander: I think we're all confused. I have no idea what we're about to vote on. Can you restate the motion, Brother Fisher?

Bill Fischer: It was my fourth and last bylaws proposal.

Commander: Fourth and last bylaws proposal regarded department council, and it was the proposed change section one. The department council shall consist of the department commander, senior vice department commander, junior vice department commander, department secretary, department treasurer, three elected members of the council, and the immediate past department commander. Five members constitute a quorum.

Section two, all past commanders and chiefs, past department commanders and department counselors shall be non-voting advisory members to the department council. A, non-voting members of the department council shall have rights to attend all department council meetings in person and electronic, including while in executive session. They shall be recognized and heard on all issues brought before the department council. However, they shall not be counted for the purpose of establishing a quorum, nor should they be able to make or second motions.

Section three, the department commander may invite other non-voting brothers from whom he or the voting members shall, members wish to receive advice, counsel, or information.

Section four, the department council shall have and shall exercise all powers of the board of directors, except insofar as such powers may be assigned to other persons in the national regulations of the, or the Pennsylvania Department.

Section five, the department council shall meet immediately after the installation to elect chairman and secretary to fix the amount of bond required of the department secretary and treasurer and to transact such business as may be brought before it.

Section six, the department council shall meet prior to and at the same place of the annual meeting of the department encampment and perform such duties as are specified in the constitution and regulations and transact such other business as shall be necessary.

Section seven, the department council shall meet upon the call, meet upon the call of the department commander or the majority of council members.

That's what the motion was.

Bill Fischer: Bill Fisher, department senior vice commander.

The encampment will vote this up or down.

That's fine.

National regulations chapter two, departments,

article 10, department council, section one. The purpose of the three-member department council is to advise and recommend measures to help ensure the financial stability of the department and to fill vacancies which may occur in elected offices.

The department council immediately after its installation shall meet and elect the chairman and secretary. The department council shall devise and recommend such measures that will enable the department to meet all necessary expenditures. The department council shall audit the receipts, expenditures, and books of account of the department and make report thereof to the department encampment.

The department council shall fill the unexpired terms by a majority vote of the council any vacancy which may occur in an elected department office. Those are the regulations enumerated responsibilities of a department council. Whether you agree with the way I was looking at it to try and ensure that we had better dialogue and discussion among our elected officers and council or not, you can vote it down, that's fine.

But these are the responsibilities of council. They are not a little cabal with the department commander to make decisions for all of us.

John McNulty: How dare you say that I would make a decision for them.

I'm always responding to what they said. You don't understand squat of how this department works.

Bill Fischer: Well, obviously, if I misunderstood, brother, what you said, I thought you said here that you represented the brothers when you're talking to the commander.

John McNulty: I represent them when they're not in session.

Bill Fischer: Exactly. But you need to let them know what's going on and what you're going to discuss with the commander.

Commander: Brother McMillan.

Doug McMillin: Brother commander, Doug McMillan, J.P. Brundle Camp 50, Carlisle.

With deepest respect to two men in this room, brother McNulty, whose experience, passion, and knowledge of this organization is invaluable and should never be ignored, and to brother Fisher, a man who day by day has been earning my respect tremendously. I would like to, in the interest of all concerned, I call the question.

Commander: There's been a motion to call the question.

Is there a second? In the back. Brother Law had his hand up first there. Any further discussion? All those in favor, raise your card.

Okay. We have pretty well represented. All those opposed, same sign.

Motion carries. Yes. Again, you have to be able to vote on the motion.

Yeah. So. You have to vote on the motion itself.

John McNulty: All the questions for Robert's rule means that all discussion ceases when we immediately go to vote. That first vote was for calling the question, which cuts off discussion. The next vote will be as to whether we accept proposal number four or not.

So that first one has nothing to do with what brother Bill said. This one has everything to do with what brother Bill said. Okay.

Commander: So his motion for brother Bill was section number four.

Proposed change regarding the department council, article number six, department council. And that was what was previously read in section one.

Department council must meet immediately after the installation to elect a chairman and secretary. Or section one. The department council shall meet immediately after the installation to elect the chairman and secretary to fill the amount of bond required of the department secretary treasurer and to transact such business as may be brought before it.

In section two, the department council shall meet prior to and at the same place of the annual meeting of the department encampment and perform such duties as are specified in the constitution and regulations and transact such other business as shall be necessary. In section three, the department council shall meet upon the call of the department commander or a majority of the council members. So that was the article as read.

The proposed change is section one. The department council shall consist of the department commander, senior vice commander, department commander, the junior vice department commander, the department secretary, and the department treasurer, three elected members of the council, and the immediate past department commander. A, five members constitute a quorum.

Section two, all past commanders in chief, past department commanders, and department counselors shall be non-voting advisory members of the department council. A, non-voting members of the department council shall have full rights to attend all department council meetings in person and electronic, including while in executive session. They shall be recognized and heard on all issues brought before the department council.

However, they shall not be counted for the purpose of establishing a quorum, nor shall they be able to make or second motions. Section three, the department commander may invite other non-voting brothers from whom he or the voting members wish to receive advice, counsel, or information. Section four, the department council shall have and shall exercise all powers of the board of directors, except in it so far as such powers may be assigned to other persons in the national regulations or the Pennsylvania department.

Section five, the department council shall immediately, after the installation, to elect a chairman and secretary to fix the amount of bond required of the department secretary, treasurer, and transact such business as may be brought before it. Section six, the department council shall meet prior to and at the same place of the annual meeting of the department encampment and perform such duties as are specified in the constitution and regulations and transact such other business as shall be necessary. And section seven, the department council shall meet upon the call of the department commander and the majority of council members.

So that was the motion. We will now proceed to vote. All those in favor, please hold up your cards.

All opposed, same sign.

We're going to have to count it out because it's close.

John McNulty: Yeah, I call for a roll call.

Roll call? So what we'll do is for all those in support, please stand and hold your card and we'll count it out. It'll be Brother Wayne. What did you get? Wait, count the number of people.

Fourteen.

Okay. You may be seated.

Okay, all those opposed to the motion, please stand and raise your card. Okay, so now we're going to. No, motion fails.

Something that had to be visualized. Motion fails. Brother Paquette.

Mike Paquette: Commander Mike Paquette, past commander-in-chief. I would advise the body that the department commander can call a meeting of his department officers at any time desired to get advice on how to proceed with any decision in the order. So whether you have something that's, my exception with the proposal was you can't redefine what the council is because it's already stated in the CCNR what a department council is.

But what that proposal was trying to get at, the department commander at his discretion can get advice from any of his department officers if he wants to call a meeting or whatever to get advice on a matter. It's within his powers already.

Commander: Well, before we proceed on, I just want to remind you all we have four minutes until we have to recess for lunch.

So, Brother Fisher.

Bill Fischer: Bill Fisher, senior vice department commander. I appreciate all of you and your indulgence and discussion.

We need to talk out things. And yes, I don't have all the answers. I acknowledge that.

But we need to have discussion to sort things out. So thank you all, Brother John especially. Thank you.

Commander: Brother John.

Bill Fischer: Brother commander, I wanted to bring this up to all the brothers out here in the audience for point of order so this way they're aware of the way we do business here. Although we did discuss these three proposals today, they do not become effect until the commander in chief reviews these amendments and then he will sign off on them.

So just letting you know, this does not take immediate effect today. That being said, I understand that Mr. Fisher's concerned with the last proposal. I think it's a matter of semantics.

There's department council which deals with the money side of the department. Then there's counselors which is what the department commander assigns to assist him in making decisions. Because at the end of the day, the buck stops with the department commander.

His name is on that department order. He's the one that makes those big decisions.

Commander: Brother McNulty.

John McNulty: John Michael McNulty, PDC. I have never told a standing department commander what to do in 20, almost 30 years working with the department. They are the boss.

It's simple. Any number of people who have been department commanders, they have heard me call them boss. I have served on department council off and on for over 25 years.

Most of it with John's father, Ivan Frantz, and other brothers. We have always worked with the other officers. We've talked back and forth quite regularly.

Sometimes I've talked to four or five people a night. Brother, don't rub your eyes too much, Rob. We are a cohesive unit.

We've always been. I've had other department offices as well. Been chief of staff to Chris Carty.

Counselor, parliamentarian, all those things. Counselor or parliamentarian are different from council. To suggest that we ever did anything that was not in the interest of this department and in the interest of our brothers is an insult.

An absolute serious insult.

And one that quite frankly could probably be brought up on charges. Which I will not do because I'm not going to drag this department through that.

But I want the brothers to know we have always worked, and we work hard, in your interest. And for anybody to suggest otherwise is not acceptable.

Commander: Being it is 11.30, going to call recess for lunch.

We will reassemble here for the business session at one o'clock.

Recess for lunch at 11:30am

Meeting reconvened at 1:00pm

Commander: OK, we're going to, before we go back into new business, we're going to do a few things for the good of the order. So I first wanted to turn the floor over to Brother Clark to make an announcement before the body assembled.

Clark Brocht: I'm Clark Brocht from Mount Union 502. What I wanted to address the brothers about, this past year, two auxiliaries ceased to exist. And I really think, as brothers, some of the camps don't have an auxiliary.

I think you should think about it. We want to keep our auxiliaries going in Pennsylvania. And at Mount Union, and John will attest to this, we're very close to our auxiliary.

And we work very well together. So I really think, and Mercer is one, I think you'd be a great area for an auxiliary. And Pittsburgh is another one.

So do think about this, brothers. And contact the auxiliary if you're interested in starting one. And I think it's something we really need to keep considering.

Especially, I know there's two new groups starting. And maybe an encouragement there. Another thing while I'm up.

We had a lot of fun last night at the Daughters with their drawing. And I really think us sons need to do something like that. I don't know how you raise your money for the money you give away.

Usually, it comes through the patriotic instructor. But I think if you ask the camps for a basket, or things like that, I think you could have a lot of fun with it. And that, I think, would be very important.

Thank you.

Commander: Thank you, Brother Clark. OK, I wanted to open the floor to, oh, brother.

Harry Blackwell: Harry Blackwell, Camp 502. And what I want to say, don't take it personal, gentlemen. United we stand.

And I was always taught, everything starts at the head. And the reason why I brought this out, because I see everybody going back and forth, back and forth. Can we leave the personality at the door and discuss this in a timely manner? Because we're going over the same thing over, and over, and over again.

And I'm looking at time relevant. We really didn't leave for lunch, and you know I don't miss one, until actually 1130. So at the head, can you put a time restriction on this? It's just a question.

I'm not trying to take over anything. But put a time restriction on how many times they come to the floor and state their statements. Thank you.

Commander: Yeah. I believe Brother Mike had something to share under the good of the order.

Mike Peter: Mike Peter, junior vice commander, PA department.

Commander, for the good of the order, back in 2017 in proceedings, that encampment was brought before that encampment, a motion by Brother Rich Orr, seconded by Brother John McNulty, that proper recognition be given to the past commanders-in-chief, Charlie Kuhn from this department, and Bud Atkinson from this department. And at that time, the committee was to be appointed to consult with their widows and establish a proper memorial for both those past commanders-in-chiefs. And the amount that was given at that time was \$500 each.

I don't know if that was ever followed through, and I would like to make a motion. I guess I don't want to amend this motion, but I would like to see that followed through. And I don't know if this is good of the order or new business.

I would like to make a motion that we recognize past commander-in-chief Rich Orr, who has since left us, and also Reverend Richard Pardington, who's also left us, with the same \$500 each memorial. And we consult with their families as to the best way to do that or add that to the committee, if that makes sense.

Commander: So we have a motion by Brother Mike Peter.

It was seconded by Brother Paquette about making sure that the memorial for Charlie Kuhn and for Reverend Pardington. Well, yeah, Charlie Kuhn, Bud Atkinson be upheld and to also include the Reverend Pardington and Brother Richard Orr. Yes.

OK. Is there any discussion? Hey, Rob, where did that mic come from? Yeah, it was in the vicinity of the community. So the mic came from the desk.

Yeah, that was fine. Any further discussion? Is there any further discussion? Is there any further discussion? Being there's no further, oh, Brother Paquette.

Mike Paquette: Commander Mike Paquette, past commander-in-chief, Carousel Camp 89.

If we can't identify money in the budget, or should we hold this decision in abeyance until that discussion on the budget occurs? Yeah. OK, so there's a, is that in the form of a motion? I move that we table that motion until we've had the discussion on the budget. Seconded.

Commander: OK. Is there any further discussion? We'll move to a vote, then, on tabling the motion as brought up before the encampment. All those in favor, please raise your cards.

All opposed, same sign. OK, so the motion to table is approved.

All right, we'll move, open up to further new business, unless if there's anything else that any brother would like to say for the good of the order first.

OK, so that brings us to, we're still stuck on new business. Is there any further new business to come before the encampment? Is there any further new business to come before the encampment? Brother Michael.

Mike Peter: Commander Mike Peter, Pennsylvania Junior Vice Commander Baker Fisher 101, past camp commander.

As mentioned yesterday, Baker Fisher 101, Camp 101, is sponsoring the last veteran project in Newtown Bucks County, September 14th. I wanted to put it out to the department and invite all the camps to that ceremony that we're going to do. Private Duckworth is the last Pennsylvania veteran, not just the Bucks County, but the last veteran from Pennsylvania.

And we're going to honor them. So we will send out correspondence through the secretary, if that's OK, with date and time. But I did want to get it into the proceedings as inviting all the camps in the department.

Thank you. So thanks for the notification.

We'll proceed with further details. and hopefully, we can make another great last veteran memorial event out of that. Is there any other new business to come before the department? Is there any? Oh, Brother Don Houston.

Don Houston: Don Houston, Camp 273, and Eagle Scout coordinator.

Just for the good of the order, and I've discussed it with our members, the Eagle Scout ceremony is sometimes the only place that the Sons of Union veterans are seen by the public in a very positive manner. So I've requested some camps, and I've had some great cooperation when I cannot get to a ceremony. And not everybody is comfortable making a presentation.

But if I ask some of the camps, especially if there's something to do with the Civil War, a restoration of a cemetery or something, we really want to be there. So if I ask your camp if you can find someone to make a presentation, it really helps us, and it looks great for the scouts. Thank you, Commander.

Commander: Thank you, Brother Don. Is there any other new business to come before the order? Is there any other new business? Is there any other new business?

Being no further new business to come before the organization, we will move on to the nomination of officers.

Oh, we didn't give out awards.

So then we'll do the awards first, and then we'll move into budget. So I'll turn the floor over to Brother Rob here.

Secretary: Before we do the department awards, I believe Brother Fisher has some ROTC awards to hand out.

Brother Fisher?

Bill Fischer: Thank you, Bill Fisher, Department Senior Vice Commander. And these are actually Graves Registration Awards. And I'll ask a representative from the camp to come forward.

And if it's to an individual who's not here, to please have a member of the camp come forward to accept it. And please stand up between my desk and the altar and face this way so we could get a nice photo, if you wouldn't mind. I'm going to move the microphone a little forward.

These are the certificates that I've made up. We have a great Graves Registration and cemetery work done by all of our camps. I've been the Graves Registration Officer for six years, I think, for the department.

And I've never really thought about awards, but I've been to the Department of New York encampment for the last three years. I've known Brother Dennis Duffy, who's the New York Graves Registration Officer. And New York does a great effort there.

And he always presents a certificate to a brother for their work. I thought I would kind of catch up. So he sent me his template, and I modified it for us.

And I just think that it's important that we recognize the good work that's being done across the department. So again, if you're representing a camp, please come forward, or an individual who's mentioned, please come forward. The first one I would like to do is the first certificate that I made out was for Brother Ken Long of Seven Shays Camp 7 that I presented at their camp meeting in the spring.

And I appreciate that. So Brother Long has recorded almost 1,900 graves in Lebanon County, and was well deserving of that. So he already has his certificate.

And I'll read the certificates.

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, legal heir to the Grand Army of the Republic, 1861 to 1865, Pennsylvania Department. In recognition of exemplary work done in advancing our mission, does hereby present a graves registration certificate of achievement.

This one to Sean Bernsell of Davis Star. I don't think anybody from Davis Star is here, who by diligent research and yeoman effort has provided critical leadership to honor those Union Civil War veterans buried in Allegheny County in Pennsylvania, and with find grave recognition. In testimony thereof, and by authority as department graves registration officer, I do hereby confer this certificate.

And they're all kind of similar to that. In recognition of exemplary work done advancing our mission, does hereby present a graves registration certificate of achievement to Sergeant Jones Bradbury, Camp 149, who by diligent research and yeoman effort has visited all cemeteries in Chester County, Pennsylvania to ensure that Civil War veterans buried in the county are recognized and remembered. Is there someone from Camp 149?

There was somebody here earlier. That's all right. Graves certificate, graves registration certificate of achievement to William Bray, who by diligent research and herculean effort has provided critical leadership for the restoration of veteran headstones and monuments, including at Brush Creek Cemetery in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.

He has made his own tripod of aluminum and has a wench on it with chains. And that cemetery, Old Brush Creek, was essentially an abandoned cemetery. And he got permission from the township or whomever.

And he's officially the sexton for that cemetery and has raised scores of stones there from the Revolution forward. And there was a fabulous ceremony done there last spring by the Kitanning Camp and some of the sisters that were there. And there were American Legion.

There were at least 100 people there. And it was fabulous. And you can find some of that background information in last year's department newsletter.

And there's another story there with Brother Bray and Brother Tim Ryan from Davis Star. They had a request from a brother in a different department who found a stone that was down. And this cemetery was at least an hour and a half away from Pittsburgh.

They went out there, cleaned it up, lifted the stone, reset it, cleaned it, played taps. And nobody else there except the two of those brothers with some nice photographs of a clean stone and very sweaty brothers. Well done.

Graves Registration Certificate of Achievement to John T. Crawford Camp 43, who by diligent research and yeoman effort has actively engaged cemeteries in Western Pennsylvania to place headstones on more than 200 weathered, damaged, or unmarked Civil War veteran graves. And unfortunately, past Department Commander Rich Essenwein couldn't make it. This one's to Davis Star Camp, which by diligent research and yeoman effort has given thousands of hours to locate and catalog Union Civil War veterans buried in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, and coordinate with cemeteries to mark their graves.

It's always the best practice to coordinate with cemeteries before you get in trouble. In recognition, Graves Registration Certificate of Achievement to General JPS Goban Camp 503, which by diligent research and yeoman effort has actively reached beyond their home county to honor the last Civil War veterans of Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union counties. Great work.

Registration, Graves Registration Certificate of Achievement to Private Silas Gore Camp 141, which by diligent research and yeoman effort has been conducting a multi-year systematic review to catalog and geo coordinate all Civil War veterans buried in Bradford County, Pennsylvania cemeteries. Graves Registration Certificate of Achievement to Joel Sear Foss Camp 273, which by diligent research and yeoman effort has actively reached beyond their home county to honor the last Civil War veterans of Lehigh, Monroe, and Northampton counties, as well as Lincoln's representative recruit.

And my last one. Graves Registration Certificate of Achievement to General George H. Thomas Camp 19, which by diligent research and yeoman effort has become caretaker for the Civil War veteran graves in the GAR plot of Lancaster Cemetery and has led the effort to restore the historic Reynolds plot there.

General John Reynolds, his family, his brother was a Civil War and later Admiral in the Navy. And it really needs some care. So again, our department has really stepped up in honoring our boys in blue.

The bottom line here is remembering the boys in blue. That's what we're all about. So if I missed anyone, please let me know what you've been doing.

I've reached out to the camp GROs and asked for reports from them. Some I received back, some I didn't. Thank you, Commander.

Commander: Thank you, Brother Fisher. OK, wait till the mic gives you a turn. While the mic's getting returned, I want all of you to pay close attention to our departmental flag.

I added a new streamer on the flag that was sent to us by Brother Brian Pearson, which acknowledges our hosting of the 2006 National Encampment. For each National Encampment hosted by a department, the national organization has decided to recognize each of those departments with a streamer. So that's just a point of order.

Now I'll turn the mic over to Brother Konigsberg for further announcements.

Secretary: The departmental awards that we give out are for those camps that grew. This year, we had eight camps that grew.

Five stayed the same. Nine camps suffered losses. And as a department, we fell by 0.79%.

The first award for the highest number of new members, the Ivan Frantz Senior Award, goes to Lieutenant Ezra S. Griffin, Camp 8. Is there a member of the camp that would like to accept this award? The second award, which is the Donald J. Rosenberg Trophy, goes to the camp with the highest percentage of new members.

This year, it is Camp 120. They had a percentage increase of 30%. What you need to remember is they only have a few members.

So just getting one member bumps them. I do not believe there's anybody here from 120, so I will have to mail this to them.

Thank you.

Commander: With the awards being done, we're going to move on to the budget. Moving to the budget. Yeah.

So this is the, oh, let me move up further here.

This is the Pennsylvania Department SUVCW budget for the year 2024 to 2025.

In income, we have per capita 584 brothers at \$33 and at \$8. And that is \$23,773.

Encampment registration fees, \$200.

Interest, \$20.

Love gifts, \$150. And miscellaneous, \$150.

Leaving our total income at \$24,293.

Under expenses, to the national organization,

National Per Capita, with 584 brothers at \$33, costing us \$19,272.

Commander in Chief Courtesy Gift, \$100.

Commander in Chief Courtesy Expense, \$100.

National Patriotic Instructor Fund, \$50.

Adding to the National Encampment Program is \$40,

leaving national expenses to \$19,562.

On the departmental level, there's the expenses for headquarters of \$1,000.

Says 216 proceeding. That's the 2023 proceeding preparation. It's meant to say \$200.

Campfire presentation, \$300.

Department encampment appropriation, department commander appropriation, \$600.

Past department commander badge and engraving, \$100.

Department commander for national, \$1,000.

Senior vice commander expenses, \$150.

Junior vice commander expenses, \$150.

Wreaths for Lincoln's birthday and Remembrance Day, \$100.

Postage and supplies, \$300.

Love gifts for the auxiliary, \$100.

For the LGAR, \$50.

And the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, \$50.

Camp assistance, \$150.

Mid-year meeting luncheon, \$150.

Eagle Scout program, \$400.

Miscellaneous, \$500.

Mary Walker awards, \$80.

Recruitment awards, \$100.

Internet fees, \$350.

Youth programs, \$1,000.

Charity bond for every three years is \$225.

Archival boxes is \$250.

ROTC, \$200.

Storage, \$2,000.

And for the Zoom account, \$150.

Leaving the total for the department at \$8,585.

Total expenses, \$28,147.

With a projected deficit of \$4,211.

Mike Peter: Brother, just a question on the motion I made earlier with the respect to the past commanders and chiefs, the money in the budget. Is that something we need to do before we approve? It would be \$2,000. The two were approved in 2017 already.

John McNulty: But the money disappeared long ago. Money doesn't carry over like that.

The next year, it's gone. There'll be a new line under the commander in chief. So, commander, the only thing that can.

Mike Paquette: Mike Paquette, past commander in chief, Crowther Camp 89, the only thing that can undo that vote of the 2017 department encampment is another vote by this encampment.

So whether the money has been spent or not, it was already approved. So this encampment would have to override that decision to either change the dollar amount or nix it. Yeah.

So I would move that the department fund each of those memorials one at a time starting this year and the next three years forward so they would have to be added into the budget, but that we could address what was voted on at the 2017.

So I move that the department add to the budget \$500 this year and for the next three years for the memorials for those three past commanders in chief. Well, this year and then the next three years for the additional three, for a total of four.

Commander: There's four past commander in chiefs we're honoring. There were two. No, I understand.

Mike Paquette: If I'm not saying it correctly, it's a total of \$2,000, which I'm proposing we address \$500 at a time so it doesn't hit the budget all at once.

Commander: Second. OK. OK, so I was informed by the parliamentarian that we cannot budget for the next four years.

John McNulty: It has to be per annum, \$500. So it could be. We can't put something in here that says for the next four years, this part of it is it.

The budget's for one year. If we can either put the full in, or we can do one at a time. The problem is when this was done, we only had two dead past commanders in chief.

Now we have four. So you can't budget something now and carry it on for four years.

Mike Paquette: So I'll withdraw, or I'll propose an alternate proposal to mine, if Brother Michael will agree to this, that we propose \$500 this year with the intent to do the same in the next three years, even though we won't actually add it to the budget this year.

But the intent, so it gets captured in these proceedings, that we will repeat this each year.

Commander: OK. That's seconded.

We don't have anything. We're just talking about the budget here.

Mike Paquette: Brothers, if we're having a problem coming up with the money, we passed the hat last night for a charity and raised \$400.

I can't imagine across the department that we couldn't get donations to honor four past commanders in chief from this department if the need arises.

John McNulty: It's not that we're broke. We're just trying to figure out where to put it. Planned out.

Ongoing discussion off mic between council, commander, and treasurer

Steve Johnson: Steve Johnson, PCC. Isaac Eaton, Camp 504. Will there be an asterisk or a note in the budget to remind us for the next three years that this will be seeing how things get lost in the shuffle if it's just in the minutes?

Commander: Yeah. That seems to be a wise choice in a situation like this.

At least have an asterisk. Just something to remind us. It would likely have a separate line item name as a commander in chief memorial.

John McNulty: Thank you. Brother Mike, I have a question for you. Since back in 2017, Anna Ross Camp did nothing to get this memorial done.

Who's going to do this? Who's responsible for getting these four? I mean, I have no objection. Those four men were all very dear friends of mine. But Anna Ross flubbed it.

Mike Peter: Yeah. I don't information on that.

John McNulty: Something from 2017, there's been a lot of water under the bridge since then. Rich always came up with these ideas. And one of us would support it.

It was more or less Rich said something. And then I would second it, or whoever would second it. I don't remember what he intended.

I think, if I remember rightly, the idea was that there was going to be a plaque or something in the GAR hall. But it was the Griscom Street Hall originally. Yeah, for past Commander and Chief Atkinson.

Well, we found it. Hold on a minute. You're right.

Commander: OK, so under new business, there were three motions. The first motion, or motion one, by Richard Orr, seconded by John McNulty, that to give proper recognition of past commanders and chiefs, Charles Kuhn and Elmer Bud Atkinson, the upcoming department commander, appoint a committee to consult with their widows to establish a proper memorial for each brother, limited to \$500 each.

That motion passed. Second motion, motion by Richard Orr, seconded by George Powell, that the bylaws committee investigate to see if the department bylaws can or should be amended to honor past commanders and chiefs that have served from the Pennsylvania Department. That motion passed.

The third motion, motion by Richard Orr, seconded by John McNulty, that the department take an additional full page in the upcoming National Encampment Program to memorialize past commanders and chiefs, Charles Kuhn and Elmer Bud Atkinson. That motion passed.

Mike Paquette: So, Commander, I would suggest that, since that has not been acted on by any department commander, but the Department of Encampment has mandated that the incoming department commander from this election can take action on that obligation from the 2017 Department of Encampment.

And I believe that's what Brother Mike Peters is suggesting.

The other point that I would like to make is, last year, even though we were showing a deficit budget, we came out with a surplus of \$5,648, even running a deficit budget.

So finding \$500 based on that should not be a challenge, especially with a checking account balance of \$34,097.23.

John McNulty: Precisely my point. In the 20 some years I've been on council, I think we always had a, the way they work it out, it always had a deficit. And I think we actually had one deficit in all those years.

There's always been, that's just the way we've done it. Because that's the way Ivan did it. And actually, the guys before him did it.

Mike Paquette: I believe the department has the money. And I'm not necessarily spending it because we have it. But we have a mandate from a previous department encampment, and the monies are available.

Whether it's indicated in the budget or not.

Brother McMillan.

Doug McMillin: Brother Commander, Doug McMillan, JP Brental Camp 50, Carlisle.

Just a point, I don't know if it's a point of order, but so much point of information. At this point, or roughly a little before this discussion started, every year, Brother Ivan Franz would start this section by reminding and clarifying to everyone that this budget is an estimate. It is not written in stone that these expenses will be paid out.

This is just the amount we are allocating to cover them. We rarely ever hit the full amount of the budget. This is simply an estimated list of expenses.

And we have a lot of wiggle room in there. So if we're projecting a loss on the budget, it does not necessarily mean that we are going to see that loss in actual fact. We're just saying that's how much we're prepared to allow for these expenses.

John McNulty: Precisely. The system that we worked on was that we put the things that were periodical in there. For example, the surety bond on the treasurer.

It only comes up every three years. But the concern always was if we somehow forgot it, then we'd really be in Dutch. So the things that were every other year or every third year, we put them in.

We knew the money was there. But it was just beyond the way they did it to keep it straight. So this was the way it was done.

Brother Clark?

Clark Brocht: Clark Brocht, Mount Union Church Camp 502. We talked, I think it was yesterday, about a state flag. That was approved in 17.

We don't have it yet. This memorial was approved at that time. We need to do something.

Why don't you buy the state flag in their memory? We need to move on some of these things.

John McNulty: If you look on one or the other of those flags, it says that they're memorial to somebody. If you look at this gavel, it says, In memory of David Bernard Orr, who was Rich's dad, Pennsylvania Department Commander, 1989-1990.

He died in office. We've got stuff all over this place that has people's names on it. I mean, this department collects stuff like that.

I think we can do it. But do we? I mean, it would be nice. Even if they change the Pennsylvania flag next year, which they've been arguing this for 20 years now, and we know how Pennsylvania doesn't do things, we should have a Pennsylvania flag.

Would that be a reasonable memorial, or do we want to do something else?

John Frantz: Gentlemen, may I remind you, though, that per the motion, it did say that we were going to consult with the families. I don't know if Rich Orr has any standing family that we know of at this point.

John McNulty: His sister still does.

John Frantz: Okay. Because I know with Charlie, I still maintain contact with family. So I'd be willing to volunteer to talk to the Kuhn Constabulary to see if they have anything in mind or if we want to move forward there.

She agreed to it at the time. I know. Yeah.

I mean, you could talk to her or to Bobby or somebody. Well, I regularly talk to Charlie's daughter. Hey, I know at this point in their familiar clan, Joanne's just happy to be a great-grandmother.

I mean, what I hear from Joanne is she's just that. She's happy being a great-grandmother. That being said, gentlemen, I've been letting everybody know that last year's budget had a deficit of \$4,599, and it was still passed.

So, you know, we said there was going to be a deficit of \$4,600, and we actually were ahead by more than double that.

John McNulty: I know for a fact that Joanne was asked because I asked her, and Margaret Atkinson was asked because I asked her. And they both said, Whatever you want to do is fine.

Because Rich had not said anything besides a memorial. This is the best I can tell you because this is what I remember what happened, because I know I talked to both Joanne and Margaret about this.

John McNulty: So the budget's been amended, and now the deficit has increased by an additional \$500, correct? \$2,000 total. It would technically be deficit increased by \$2,000?

John McNulty: No, no, no. Increased by \$500.

John Frantz: Brother Piquet only said \$500 this year, and then for the consequent, for next year, it will also increase by another \$500.

Commander: Then you'll be picking one memorial over another.

John McNulty: That's my next question is, who are we going to do what year? Are we going to do it by date of death, by date of seniority? Because if we do date of seniority, it's Dick Partington.

John Frantz: Okay. So you have to vote on Piquet's motion first, and then we have to approve the budget.

Commander: And that was seconded by Brother Michael Peter.

So that motion was made by Brother Piquet, seconded by Brother Peter, but the discussion led us that it was out of order based on the appropriate budgeting procedure of only budgeting for one year. So that came out in the discussion.

Mike Paquette: The way I rephrased that, Commander, was \$500 this year with the intent to do the same next year.

That doesn't mean we actually have to do it next year. The intention is we're going to plan to do this for four years in a row, but we're only approving \$500 this year.

Commander: For \$500 for this year.

Okay. And that was seconded by Brother Michael Peter.

(Off mic objections from John McNulty about how do we decide which of the four PcnCs get honored in which order?)

John Frantz: Look, why don't we deal with Bud and Charlie first since they were the ones who initially approved the money for anyway?

Mike Paquette: Commander, if I may, the incoming department commander has to appoint a committee to actually do this. So why don't we let the committee approach the individuals' families as was originally directed and come up with a recommendation on which one should be first?

Okay. So that's the motion. The motion was to add an additional \$500 to the budget to be referred to a committee to properly contact the family of past Commander-in-Chief Charles Kuhn and then also Bud Atkinson and Richard Orr and then Dick Partington to decide, based on their own work, who the expenditure would be given to for memorial.

Mike Paquette: Commander, if I may, all I'm asking for is the \$500. How it's being done was already dictated by that encampment in 2017, so that's not part of my motion. All I'm saying is we approve \$500 this year out of the budget, increase the deficit by \$500.

Okay. The incoming department commander can handle the rest.

Commander: All in favor of that motion as presented, raise your card.

All opposed, same sign. Okay, the motion carries.

John Frantz: Brother Commander, I move you that we approve the proposed 2024-2025 budget as amended.

John McNulty: Second.

Commander: Okay. That was seconded by Brother John McNulty.

Motion by Brother John Frantz. All those in favor, please raise your cards. Opposed, same sign.

Budget carries.

Commander: We need to handle delegates to National Encampment.

(Procedures debate off mic.)

John Frantz: Motion to name all Department Commanders as delegates to National with all members in good standing as alternates.

John McNulty: Second.

Commander: All in favor raise your cards.

Opposed same sign.

Motion Passes.

Okay. So that brings us to nomination. So that brings us to nomination of officers.

So we'll start for the nomination of officers.

We'll start for the office of department commander. Correct? And then we just work our way down the chairs.

Are there any nominations for the office of department commander? Brother Rob Koningsberg.

Secretary: It's my honor to nominate department -- Pennsylvania Department Senior Vice Commander Bill Fisher for the position of department commander. Brother Bill is a native of Montgomery County and was raised in Philadelphia.

He enlisted in the Air Force after high school graduation and spent more than 22 years on active duty serving in weather, ICBM operations as a professor at the Air Force Academy and as an intelligence staff officer at the theater and command levels, retiring with the rank of major. After teaching high school, Bill joined the National Park Service, retiring from Steamtown National Historic Site in Scranton

where he supervised the park's rangers, oversaw museum operations and the third largest archives in the National Park Service and coordinated volunteer partner activities.

Brother Bill has served actively in Pennsylvania Department Senior Vice Commander, visiting many camps across the Commonwealth and participating in many of their activities.

As a Department of Kansas junior vice commander, Bill was recognized as their 2015 brother of the year before moving to Pennsylvania.

He also increased the order by organizing camps in Kansas and Ohio.

He has increased department and camp relations with Pennsylvania ROTC, Junior ROTC, Civil Air Patrol and Young Marine Instructors, Cadets and Midshipmen in order to recognize young people with the SUVCW Cadet Award.

Brother Bill has also served as the Department Graves Registration Officer for the past seven years, locating and adding grave sites to the National Graves Database to catalog our boys in blue buried in Pennsylvania. He has worked with camps on locating and recognizing the last Civil War veterans in several Pennsylvania counties and is a National Graves Committee member working to revamp the SUVCW Graves Database into a more user-friendly platform. Brother Bill has well demonstrated his willingness to actively serve our department and I am convinced that he shall continue to do so effectively as Pennsylvania Department Commander.

Commander: Okay. Brother Fisher, if elected, would you serve? Commander, yes. Okay.

Nominations are closed. Yes.

Now for the Office of Senior Vice Commander.

Brother.

Glenn Rodell: Good afternoon, Commander. Good afternoon.

My name is Glenn Rodell. I'm Senior Vice Commander of Baker Fisher Camp 101, Department of Pennsylvania. It is my honor and privilege to nominate Brother Mike Peter of Baker Fisher Camp 101 for Senior Vice Commander of the Department.

Mike's membership stems from his second great-grandfather, Walter Bryant, of the 37th New Jersey, and he was a member of the Colonel William L. Curry Post-18 GAR Camp in Philadelphia. Mike is a 20-year member of the PA Department. He's also a dual member of both Anna M. Ross Camp 1 and Baker Fisher Camp 101, where he was a previous past commander.

He's a graduate of Penn State and holds a B.A. in psychology. No wonder that's how he's trying to analyze us in the camp. Mike serves as a 38-year law enforcement officer.

He's 36 years with the Horsham Township Police Department, where he is still active and for the past seven years holds the rank of detective. He's the father of two daughters and proud first-time grandfather this year. Congratulations, Mike.

The future member of the PA Department, Reese James. That's Mike's background, but let me tell you a little bit about the man. When I joined the Sons about seven years ago, I knew nothing about the organization.

All I knew is I had an ancestor who fought in the Civil War. When I came into the camp, Mike made me feel comfortable. His leadership style is that of collaboration, and he never forgets that the camps are the most important thing.

We interact with the public. We're the ones that do the recruiting. We're the ones that raise the money for the camps.

We're the ones that do the patriotic instruction in the schools and things like that. So Mike never forgets that, and under his leadership with Baker Fisher, it saw its largest growth in its history. So once again, it's my honor to nominate him, and I hope you all consider him for this position. Thank you

Commander: Thank you. Brother Michael, if elected to Department, Senior Vice Commander, will you serve?

Mike Peter: Commander, yes, I would.

Commander: Seeing no further nominations. Department, Junior Vice Commander. Brother Carty.

Chris Carty: I'd like to nominate Brother Ted Zeman for the office of junior, or excuse me, yeah, junior vice commander. He's been a member of the Sun since 2003. He was department chief of staff for John McNulty.

He's been camp commander of Joel Searfoss camp number 273. He is a member of the National Scholarship Committee. He was the department assistant chief of staff for me.

He is the department GAR memorials officer and department patriotic instructor. He received a PhD in U.S. military history from Temple University, studied under Russell Wigley. He has taught for 23 years at St. Joseph's University, 10 years at Penn State Abington, uses history classes to spread message of the SUVCW particularly, the Battle of Gettysburg class, and Civil War classes, as well as talks given to private audiences.

Commander: Thank you, Brother Carty. Brother Zeman. Brother Zeman, if elected, would you serve as department junior vice commander?

Ted Zeman: Brother commander, yes.

Commander: Council member number one. Okay. That has to be read.

It has to be read.

John Frantz: Brothers, I have a letter dated June 18, 2024 from Ivan E. Frantz, Jr., past department commander. Dear brothers of the Pennsylvania Department, it is with deep regret that I cannot be with you at this encampment.

Even though I have now been home for about two weeks from my recent hospitalization and time in rehab, I still do not quite feel up to the rigors of attending the encampment. In my now 70 years, I have only missed about seven encampments, most of them when I was serving in the United States Navy. I miss all of you, my brothers, very much.

It is just like being away from family for me. For many years now, I have been serving as a member of department council, and my term of office expires with this encampment. There are three extremely important jobs in the department, commander, secretary-treasurer, and council.

The department has been extremely fortunate to have some excellent brothers serve on council over the years. Normally, the job is fairly routine, but like this last year, some very hard decisions need to be faced, and the decisions made over the years don't please everybody. But the decisions for this last year were all made in consultation with the National Councilor and made with the best interest of the department and the order in mind.

I thank everybody involved that we all had such good people to work with in these considerations in reaching decision without fear or favoritism, as has been the case over the years that I have worked these many fine brothers. Since my term of office expires this year, even though I am not physically present with you, I want to express my desire to you to stand for reelection and still serve as a member of department council. I still feel that my experience could be an important help to the department.

If I am nominated and elected and continue to serve as a member of council, I feel it will keep a good core of leadership in our department. If I am reelected to serve, my son John, who is a past department commander, could be appointed by the new commander to give me the oath of office at a regular Ruhl camp number 33 meeting. I hope you will give this some reasonable consideration.

Once again, I wish all of you and wish you a successful encampment. I look forward to seeing all my brothers again when my strength has improved and recovered to a greater extent. In fraternity, charity, and loyalty, Ivan E. Frantz, Jr., past department commander.

With that being said, I'd like to nominate Ivan Frantz, Jr. for council member number one. It goes without saying, he's unofficially been a member of the order for over 70 years, officially for 54 years, serving as pretty much every office. He continues to serve with great zeal for the allied orders as we know.

I'm fortunate that I was the one that made the call that literally saved his life back in April. That being said, I am putting forth Ivan Frantz, Jr. as council member number one.

Commander: Seeing no further nominations, council member number one is closed.

And that would be a two-year term.

Council member two.

This is for a one-year term. Council member two.

John McNulty: If I might explain for a second, it is our tradition that one term, one of the terms is a one-year term so that the outgoing department commander can be on there for a year to give his experience.

If there's any questions, he knows what went on in his term. The second year of that term, it can either be that same man or someone else. In this case, there will be no second year on that term automatic because Brother Bill is only going to serve one year as commander.

Commander: Brother Hagey.

Jeff Hagey: Commander, Jeff Hagey, Anna Ross Camp number one. As was pointed out several years ago by past Commander-in-Chief Richard Orr, under the CNR, council members are elected for one year, not multiple years.

It may be your tradition that you would continue to do that, but effectively, you can only elect a council member for one year at each encampment.

John McNulty: National told us we can do two-year terms. It was three-year terms.

Jeff Hagey: No, sir. No, sir. This was brought up by past Commander-in-Chief Richard Orr several years ago.

Under the CNR, you are required to elect a council member for one-year term. End of discussion. Look at the CNR, please.

John Frantz: Okay. Under Article IV, officers, the term of all elective and appointed officers shall be for one year provided, however, that departments shall elect their secretary and treasurer and fix their term and location of office and provided further departments may fix the term of office of members of the department council for two years. That's Article IV, Section 2.

Commander: So the position in question is Council Member 3, and that would be for a one-year term usually reserved for outgoing department commanders.

John McNulty: Yes, sir. I would like to place a nomination for the one-year term on council of the department council. Here I go.

Dane Aaron DeFebo, our outgoing department commander. I've known Dane since he was a kid, literally. He used to come to our camp meetings as General Galusha Pennypacker.

His grandparents would bring him. He's been an active member of our camp. I don't remember when.

When did you join? 2002. And has served several terms as our camp commander.

He has served almost all the other offices in the camp. Beyond that, he has two master's degrees in history, is the historian for the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, a well-versed historian, somebody who's easy to get along with. And I'm sure we'll make a good member of council for this year.

And if there's any questions about his administration, the advantage is that he'll be there. On a personal note, I realize that I misunderstood Brother Bill. Taking a shower, I got water up both ears, and I can't hear a blasted thing.

I think the earwax has closed my ears up. So I'm realizing I'm having a hard time with hearing. I apologize, Brother Bill, and I apologize for the exposure to everybody.

It's not my usual way. The last several months have been tough with things with the department, and it just built up. I apologize.

Commander: Here, you can have the gavel. Yeah. No, you don't have to literally get it.

Bill Fischer: Yeah. Figuratively. Figuratively, I accept the gavel.

Brother Commander, would you serve the one-year term as department counsel? If elected, I will serve the one-year term as department counsel.

Are there any other nominations for the one-year term to department counsel? Are there any nominations for the one-year term to department counsel? Last chance. Are there any further nominations for the one-year term to department counsel? Hearing none, I close.

Just tap the mic. I There. Thank you.

Commander: You're good.

Bill Fischer: Thank you, Brother John. I return the gavel to the commander.

Commander: Okay. We have all the department counsel seats. The other elected position was the Secretary of Treasury.

But that's next year. Okay. That's all.

So now that closes nomination of all elected offices.

John Franz: I move that in all unopposed offices that the secretary be emposed to cast a single ballot.

John McNulty: Second.

Commander: There's a motion. Seconded by Brother McNulty to cast one single ballot for all unopposed offices? All in favor, please raise your card.

All opposed. Same sign. The motion passed.

Congratulations to the candidates.

Yeah, we'll do 10 minutes till 2 30. Going to research recess for 10 minutes till 2 30.

Meeting in recess at 2:20pm.

Meeting resumed qt 2:30pm.

Commander: Okay, since we have done the election of officers, that moves us to the installation of officers.

So, we still have to elect one member of council. We reviewed the official departmental bylaws, and there was the position that was initially believed to be a two-year term. It's only a one-year term, so there is a position for department council number two, which is currently held by Brother John McNulty.

Are there any nominations?

Ted Zeman: Brother Commander, Ted Zeman, Past Camp Commander, Joel Searfoss, Camp number 273, I'd like to nominate Brother John McNulty as council member number two. John has served this department a number of years. He has always devoted himself completely and utterly to the department, no matter what, and while others may disagree with things that John does, he always has, first and foremost, the good of the department at heart, so it is my honor to nominate John McNulty as council member number two.

Commander: Thank you,

Brother McNulty, if elected, would you serve?

John McNulty: Yes.

Commander: So now we have to vote.

Just on John.

So for those of you in favor of electing Brother John McNulty to council position number two, please raise your card.

All those opposed, same sign.

Brother McNulty is elected to council number two.

Okay, so now we move on to installation of officers.

We're going to turn the gavel over to our installing officer, who's Brother Dan Murray.

Dan Murray: Commander DiFebo, in relieving you of command of this department and on behalf of the officers, I convey to you their thanks for the manner in which you have discharged your duties. I trust that in surrendering the command of this department, your interest in the welfare of the order will not cease. Having received the highest honors which your fellow members can confer upon you, your continuing commitment will point the way for others who still serve the order.

Please be seated to my left. Commander-elect, are you prepared to announce your staff appointments?

Bill Fischer: I am.

Dan Murray: Secretary, call the roll of officers-elect and staff appointees who, as their names are called, will rise.

Bill Fischer:

(Full List printed here)

Commander	William E. Fischer, Jr. PCC
SVDC	Michael E. Peter PCC
JVDC	Theodore J. Zeman PCC
Sec/Treas.	Rob Koenigsberg PCC
Council Member	Ivan E. Frantz, Jr. PDC
Council Member	John M. McNulty PDC
Council Member	Dane A. DiFebo PDC
Patriotic Instr	Steve Johnston PCC
Chaplain	Clark Brocht PCC
Color Guard	Isaac Eaton Camp
Guide	Wayne Blattner PCC
Guard	Alex Johnston
Chief of Staff	Richard Essenwein PDC
Counselor	John M. McNulty PDC
Counselor	Richard Essenwein PDC
Counselor	John Gipson PDC
Parliamentarian	Ivan E. Frantz, Jr. PDC
Parliamentarian	John M. McNulty PDC
GRO	William E. Fischer, Jr. PCC
Aide de Camp	Scott Teeters
Cadet Award Coord	William E. Fischer, Jr. PCC
Camp Revitalization	Dane A. DiFebo PDC
CW Monuments	Chris Carty PDC
Eagle Award Coord	Donald B. Houston PCC
GAR Highway Off	Dane A. DiFebo PDC
Historian	Gregory Kline PDC

Memorial Camp	David Demmy
300 Sec/Treas	
Public Relations	Dane A. DiFebo PDC
Newsletter	Michael E. Peter PCC
	(SVDC responsibility, so feel free to find someone else)
Webmaster/Signals	Kevin Kuhn PCC

DEPT COMMITTEES

Bylaws	John M. McNulty PDC
Bylaws	Richard Essenwein PDC
Bylaws	John Crider PCC
Credentials	Greg Kline PDC
Credentials	Scott Debo PCC
Education	Vernon Stout PCC
Education	Scott Debo PCC
Encampment Site	Bob Wrigley PCC
Encampment Site	Greg Kline PDC
Encampment Site	Steve Johnston PCC
GAR Memorials	Theodore J. Zeman PCC
GAR Memorials	Chris Carty PDC
Long Range Plan	John M. McNulty PDC
Long Range Plan	Wayne Blattner PCC
NPS Relations (West)	Rob Koenigsberg

Dan Murray: Brothers, these are your regularly chosen officers for the next term.

If any brother has any valid reason why any of them should not be installed, let him speak now or forever hold his peace. Brother Frantz, would you act as guide?

John Frantz: I will, sir.

Dan Murray: And present these brothers before the altar for installation.

Officers, you have been selected to positions of great honor and trust.

With the commander, you will be responsible for the financial and material prosperity and interests of this department. And the members of the encampment confidently expect that your discharge of the duties and responsibilities resting upon you will be conspicuous for zeal, ability, and good works.

I trust that you appreciate the great confidence placed in you and that you remember that the success or failure of the administration of your department will depend very largely upon the manner in which you discharge the duties of your respective offices. Are you now willing to pledge solemnly to the faithful performance of your several duties?

You will each raise your right hand, place your left hand on the Bible, and repeat after me using your name when I do mine.

I, Daniel Murray, having been regularly chosen as an officer of the Department of Pennsylvania, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, hereby renew the sacred obligation given at the time of my initiation.

In the presence of Almighty God and the members of this encampment, here assembled do furthermore solemnly and sincerely promise and declare that I will, to the best of my ability, in word and deed, and without fear or favor, faithfully, honestly, and impartially perform all the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter. So help me God. Drop your hands, please.

Encampment attention. Guide, conduct the officers to their respective stations. Commander, by the votes of the members of this encampment, you have been elected to the highest honor within their gift.

Your election to this honorable position is an evidence not only of their high regard and appreciation of your work and ability as a Son of Union Veteran of the Civil War, but it is an assurance that your conduct of the affairs of this department will be characterized by faithful, earnest, and conscientious devotion to the responsibilities resting upon you. Grave trust and grave cares await you, and to their faithful performance I now most solemnly direct you.

As no work of this nature can be a success without the assistance of the Divine Provider, the chaplain will ask his assistance and guidance.

Clark Brocht: Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we humbly ask your blessing on these brothers assembled at this delay.

Grant them your blessings, that they may daily perform the duties of the office unto which they are to be installed, with the knowledge that Thou art ever watching over them. Keep them in good health, that they may not falter on the way. Bless them with your great mercy, that they may be competent to administer the many trials that will confront them.

Bless their every action in your name, through the meditation of your Blessed Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. Amen.

Dan Murray: Commander, your officers are now at their respective stations, and I am about to place you in full control. But first I give to you here the charter of this department. Prize it for the privileges it bestows, and guard it sacredly for the filial heritage it represents.

Next I place in your care the ritual of our order and a copy of the Constitution and Regulations for the Government of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, both of which I advise you to study with care, so be true to its principles and faithful to its teachings. Lastly, you will receive the gavel, the emblem of authority. One rap calls the encampment to order, and seats the same when standing.

Two raps calls the officers to their feet. And three raps calls up the entire encampment. Now, by the virtue of authority invested in me as Installing Officer of the Department of Pennsylvania, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, I hereby declare the officers of this department legally elected and installed and qualified to enter upon the discharge of their several duties for the term ending June 2025, or until their successors are regularly elected, qualified, and installed.

And if someone would escort Commander Fisher's wife up. Now I am pleased to present you with the badge of the Office of Department Commander. Assume your command, be true to your vow, faithful to your trust, unflinching in your loyalty, and rule with civility, impartiality, and firmness.

And may your administration be successful.

Bill Fischer: Thank you. I was going to test it, but that will come soon enough.

Just a few remarks. One of my younger brothers passed away the day after Christmas, and I'm usually not an emotional person, but at his eulogy I wrote notes. And those notes came from my heart, because my niece and nephews didn't need to remember my brother, their father, as a homeless alcoholic who died in prison.

And I'm glad I did, because I would not have been able to get through it. I mean, look at me now, just thinking about it. So I have a few notes that come from my heart to you, and I appreciate your indulgence.

I appreciate your confidence in me as Department Commander. You know, life's always full of surprises. Sixty-five years ago, as was mentioned, I was born in this county barely 20 miles away.

And growing up in northeast Philadelphia, I had no idea that I had a Civil War veteran, let alone two in my lineage. Soon after graduating high school, the Air Force took me away from Pennsylvania, and little did I know that it would be 40 years before a job change brought me back here to live. But when we moved back, I'd been a member of this Order for more than 10 years, and knew that I had two Civil War veterans.

One, a German immigrant who served in Company C of the 2nd Indiana Cavalry and was injured at Shiloh. I'm sorry, injured after Shiloh on a long-range reconnaissance into northern Alabama. I thought, oh, wow, he has a disability discharge.

He was probably in battle. On that reconnaissance, his horse reared. He held on and ended up with a monster hernia, and he spent the next two weeks while they were on long-range patrol laying in the back of a wagon.

That must have been great fun. He'd been a farmer in Germany and in Indiana and couldn't do that anymore with that injury. So he did what many good Union soldiers did after the war.

He became a carpetbagger and opened a tavern in Memphis, Tennessee. My other ancestor joined at age 40 as a coal heaver in the United States Navy out of Philadelphia, and thanks to him, I'm a fourth-generation Philadelphian, and thankfully my children are not fifth generation. It was a good place to grow up.

He served on the USS Hartford, which was Farragut's flagship, and he entered in April of 1861. His three-year enlistment was up in April of 1864. He served during the battle and taking of New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and efforts around Vicksburg, but his three years were up before, damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead, we're heading into Mobile Bay.

Three coal heavers on that ship earned the Medal of Honor, and I like to think that my great-great-great-grandfather knew them and mentored them because he got out as a fireman first class. So, you know, we really don't know where things go. Many brothers, first in the Department of Ohio, then the Department of Kansas, and here for the last seven years, have provided me with invaluable guidance that has brought me to this podium, but more importantly have helped me to further the purpose of our order in honoring our boys in blue, those who saved the United States and who moved this nation toward creating a more perfect union.

Recruitment and mentorship are crucial if our order is to survive, but more importantly, if our boys in blue are to be remembered long after we're gone. I'm a member of the VFW, and I get so tired of their constant recurring push for new members. Every newsletter that comes out, the percentages of districts that are above 100% or fallen behind are listed, and there's no question that recruiting and recruitment is important, but that ever-constant focus seems negative and negates the good work that's going on in those VFW posts that are falling short of 100%, and that translates exactly to our camps and our department.

There's a lot of good work going on, even if we're not growing, but we need to work at it. Perhaps if we in the SUVCW focus more on discipleship or mentorship, if you prefer, of our existing and new members than simply pushing recruitment as a means to its own end, the value of belonging will become self-evident and will help the order grow for future generations. You know, Moses mentored Joshua, and Elijah mentored Elisha to carry on the Lord's work.

The apostle Paul did not go it alone in growing his faith. He was mentored by Ananias, then Barnabas. Paul became a Barnabas, a son of encouragement to Timothy and Lydia and Titus and Priscilla and Aquila and Silas and on and on, even when he was jailed, awaiting his fate.

We all need to be Barnabas. We need to encourage members to attend camp meetings, to assist in local projects, even to explain why the Civil War remains relevant in 2024 and beyond. Had our boys lost beyond the continuance of the evil institution of slavery for possibly generations, there would likely have been three nations on this continent, the United States, the Confederate States, and a nation based out of California, because we didn't have direct connection.

We had a fragile telegraph line, and the first transcontinental railroad line wasn't completed until 1869. Had we had such a divided continent, could we have been the arsenal of democracy to defeat fascism and imperialism in the 20th century? We, the sons of Union veterans of the Civil War, have the grandfathers of the greatest generation to thank. The grandfathers of the greatest generation.

Their example set, they set the example for their sons and their grandsons who fought on all kinds of hell-forsaken places in Europe and the Pacific from 1941 to 45. The boys in blue's dedication set that example. Just as the farm boys, the city boys, the immigrants, and the men of color from 1861 to 1865 relied on their NCOs and officers to learn how to soldier, we need our camps and department officers to actively encourage and mentor those hesitant to engage in the work of our order.

Many brothers won't step forward because they don't know what is expected of them. Such unfounded intimidation can be overcome by a friendly phone call, some positive encouragement at a camp meeting, and caring fraternal mentorship. Doing so will go a long way to growing our order to ensure that the boys in blue are not forgotten.

You know, my pastor has a favorite saying. No one can do everything, but everyone can do something. And if everyone did something, everything would get done.

Pretty simple. You know, I know I'm preaching to the choir here because you've taken the time and expense to be here. Encourage your camp brothers who are not here to attend next year, to become more involved in your camps.

Explain what happens at a camp meeting. Explain what happens at an encampment and why their attendance is important. Communication is the key.

And better communication is going to be the primary focus of my one-year tenure as your department commander. Yeah, it's time-consuming, requires dedication. If you want to move into a new role, ask others to disciple you or offer to disciple others in positions you have previously held.

Don't keep it a mystery, don't keep it a secret. We need brothers to be able to step in. You know, when a soldier fell on the field, the next one stepped up.

If the officers were killed, the NCOs stepped up. If the NCOs were killed, the junior enlisted guys stepped up. That's the backbone of our United States military, even in 2024.

Granted, we're not the Apostle Paul, but we all can be Barnabas, sons of encouragement, because we are a community with a common cause. So let's commit to helping each other. Moving our camps, our department, and our order forward in fraternity, charity, and loyalty.

Thank you. applause Thank you. Brother Franz, I know we have some housekeeping.

John Frantz: Brother Commander, yes, we still have some business to conduct yet for today. I would like to make a motion that we adopt the traditional housekeeping motions, which are as follows.

One, a letter of thank you be sent to the encampment committee, the local municipality, and the hotel, expressing the pleasure of having a good encampment.

Two, the delegates to the national encampment be instructed to support, and past commanders-in-chief and past department commanders be requested to support the actions taken by this encampment at the national encampment.

Three, the department secretary-treasurer be empowered to transfer funds as necessary to meet the financial obligations of the department during the coming year.

Four, the department committees for this encampment, with the exception of the credentials committee, be discharged with the thanks of the encampment, and the credentials committee may be discharged after it makes its final report.

Five, the department patriotic instructor be permitted to make a post-encampment financial report.

And six, the department purchase a full-page ad in the national encampment booklet to list the past department commanders and current department officers.

Bill Fischer: Are there any objections to that? Need a second.

Second.

Any further discussion?

If you're in agreement, please raise your voting card.

Thank you.

Against, same sign.

John Frantz: Brother commander, I would make a motion that the transcriptions of the notes and recordings as recorded during this encampment as transcribed become the official proceedings of the 144th Pennsylvania Department Encampment.

Bill Fischer: I don't know who seconded the first motion or this motion.

We'll go with Brother Ted Zeman. Any discussion?

If you're in agreement, please raise your voting card. Thank you.

Against, same sign.

Motion passes.

Does anyone have any further comments?

Again, I thank you all for being here.

There being no further business to come before this encampment, we will proceed to close. You will give attention while the chaplain asks the blessing of our God on our deliberations. Parade rest.

Clark Brocht: (Reads closing prayer off mic)

Bill Fischer: I apologize for not thanking my wife, Sue, for all the time she's put up with me doing work of the order.

Brothers, we are about to leave this encampment to retire to our respective homes. Let us regulate our conduct so as to bring honor and credit upon the great patriotic organization we represent. May we be faithful to our vows, mindful of our duties, and exhibit toward each other an unbroken fraternity, a tender charity, and an unswerving loyalty.

Color bearer, attend to the altar and station banners.

Attention.

I now declare the 144th Annual Encampment of the Pennsylvania Department, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, duly closed.

Meeting Closed at 4:00pm