

Friends of Civil War Alcatraz - Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors on 06/26/2021 via Zoom

Present: Board Members Gary Hormel, Constance Smith, Steve Johnson, Evelyn Mar, Frank Avila, Brad Schall, John Fitzpatrick; and members Michael Bennett and Chuck Gardali,

Gary conducted roll call; a quorum was met.

Constance read the minutes, Evelyn moved to approve without amendments; Michael seconded, motion passed without opposition

Treasurer's report: see attached

In October a membership drive will "kick off". NOTE: an unnamed member has offered to pay a one-year membership for two (2) new members.

Steve discussed activities by the Son of Union Veterans of the Civil War on Memorial Day at the National Cemetery at the Presidio. He and other members of SUVCW went in Union uniforms and stood at the gate greeting people as they drove in. Steve stated they had very good reactions from the public. He was able to discuss Fort Point, Fortress Alcatraz and FOCWA. He met a WWII US Army veteran who fought at the Battle of the Bulge who is almost 100 years old.

Gary was also present on Memorial Day and described it as "an emotional day" A member of SUVCW brought his musket and was able to interact with several children. Steve brought a poster which explained the organization.

Park police and rangers came by as well as a San Francisco Chronicle reporter who interviewed Steve. His picture accompanied the story which appeared in the paper 06/1/2021.

John Fitzpatrick was at Gettysburg for Memorial Day. Full ceremonies were performed in the open with social distancing, including a 21-gun salute. He was able to give a private, after hours tour to approximately 25 people.

He provided the fact that in 1938 (75th Anniversary) the Memorial Day ceremonies included President FDR and all 48 states were represented by Civil War veterans. CA had the largest number of veterans (150) due to the fact so many moved to CA after the war.

Alcatraz update: as of 06/24/2021 masks are no longer required to be worn by staff but many Rangers are still using them. Masks are required on the boat. Outdoor programs are being conducted and Steve has done three (3); period uniforms and period clothing are allowed. As of July, all programs will be allowed. Steve will contact Nate to see if Ft Point will be allowing volunteer programs. Presidio Visitor Center is set to open in July.

Steve was on Chrissy Field in his VIP uniform and observed an injury and was able to run to the Warming Hut to contact dispatch for assistance. The mounted Park Police soon arrived on the scene, and it reenforces the need for radios for all volunteers while they are working.

For interpretive volunteers, ACE Training will be available next month. The classes are six (6) hours in total and can be taken online. Currently they are not mandatory for volunteers.

Frank asked if there were plans for a Living History Day in Oct. 2021 or Jan 2022; Steve said the NPS is being noncommittal right now. He suggested January 2022 as more likely but things could change.

Gary discussed changes on Alcatraz. Ferry staff is reduced and must oversee passengers disembark, then drive the tram to the top, drive the return loop and then assist returning passengers onto the boat. The tram has only one (1) car as it now ends at Eagle Plaza and cannot negotiate the turn with more cars. There are hourly trips to the island currently, but the schedule may change.

Wendy is “desperate” for volunteers as the island has only a few fully trained Rangers. More staff is being assigned but seasonals and reassigned Rangers will not have the military history the volunteers have. Training is provided for new volunteers who will learn how to use the radios, help in the New Industries Building, monitor the visitors, etc.

Parking is currently allowed in the pier next to the dock but this may change. The van is operating but only at the beginning and end of the day. Parking permits can be issued for Ft Mason by contacting Ranger Wendy.

Facebook update: Steve does not have info at this time. A new coordinator is needed. Michael may try and he will reach out to SUVWCW for assistance.

Military History: Christian is the new supervisor. He followed Steve on a program and was very impressed. He seems welcoming to military history being discussed. Steve has offered to teach a class in the military history of Fort Point in August. Recording the session so other Rangers can view it was suggested.

Slammer programs (Opening and closing the cell doors) are not to be conducted at this time as Ranger John Cantwell has retired and he was the only one onsite who could repair the doors, which are now frozen.

New FOCWA business cards need to be ordered as PO Box was closed to save money. Constance suggested increasing the font for the website address. She has been volunteering at the info table at FT Point and several local members of the public were interested in FOCWA. Steve stated more brochures are also needed. A tentative amount of \$150.00 was approved. Chuck stated he would continue to print membership cards for members.

Steve’s article about antebellum California was published in *The Homefront Herald*, a magazine for re-enactors. Frank was able to conduct a school program via Zoom for King City with others including a small encampment, tents, etc. Frank will write an article on the experience for the FOCWA newsletter and will see if the program was recorded. If it was, he will ask for a copy so it can be posted on the website. John Fitzpatrick always mentions the involvement of California troops when giving tours at Gettysburg.

Constance was a guest on the revived “Creature Features” TV show and discussed FOCWA in three (3) segments, as well as providing the FOCWA website. The cast is very interested in filming on Alcatraz. Constance will contact Wendy once the park is fully opened. She also suggested Steve as the guest speaker.

Next meeting: to be determined. Gary will notify everyone once schedules are reviewed.

Minutes recorded by Constance Smith, Secretary