

G.A.R. Memorial Board of Trustees

Meeting December 18, 2012

Minutes

National Guard Armory Room C, 50 Skyline Drive, Worcester, Massachusetts

Meeting Began at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Daniel McAuliffe, Reynaldo Rodriguez, Robert Grogan, James Mirick, Timothy Boucher

Old Business:

1. Timothy Boucher reported on recruitment of members for the Board. According to Mr. Boucher on Friday December 21st a candidate will be interviewed. If approved the candidate will go through the process and could be available to meet in four weeks.
2. Chairman Daniel McAuliffe reports that the Civil War Regimental Flags that were packaged at the National Guard Armory Museum by himself, Reynaldo Rodriguez and volunteer Ed Norris were transported to the Massachusetts State House. According to Mr. McAuliffe, he and Ed Norris delivered the flags to Susan Greendyke at the Massachusetts State House who occupies the G.A.R. Office there. A receipt was given by Ms. Greendyke of the flags that were received. The original will be filed with the GAR Board records and a copy for the city of Worcester with Mr. Boucher.
3. Personal items belonging to Mr. George Frissell (last surviving member of G.A.R Post 10) was moved from the National Guard Armory Museum by Chairman McAuliffe. Chairman McAuliffe cataloged the items and has made arrangements to have them placed into the Worcester Historical Museum.
4. The National Guard Armory Museum issued a release of items turned over to the GAR Board. Other items that still remain will be addressed.
5. The balance of funds available to the Board will be presented at a future meeting.
6. Secretary Rodriguez handed out GAR Member books which contained the following:
 - a. Organization Chart where the GAR Board fits into the City of Worcester;
 - b. GAR Website page on the city website;
 - c. The most valued artifacts (3 Confederate flags, Bell of the C.S.S. Albemarle & Midyett Bible);
 - d. Current Policy & Procedure on Using GAR Funds;
 - e. Pages explaining the artifacts;
 - f. Current Conflict of Interest Law;
 - g. List of framed prints;
 - h. List of artifacts at the Historical Museum on display;

The GAR Member books will be updated as things change and members were reminded to turn in the books at the end of their terms. A contact list of current members will be added.

7. More on the ways to improve recruitment for the Board was discussed. An idea to keep the interest is to properly identify what the functions are of the Board and to expose the Board's roles at every opportunity to the public. Mr. Boucher suggested allowing for alternate members. These extra members would attend meetings in a non-voting capacity but can fill in as voters when necessary to meet a quorum if made official. These alternatives can also be future members to fill vacant positions. Mr. Rodriguez pointed out that he was initially an alternative member when he joined. Having a clear definition of what the Board does and allowing for alternative members should allow for the Board to survive. Mr. Grogan added that by researching civil war genealogy, possible members could come from that.

New Business:

1. Chairman McAuliffe addressed the remaining items left in the National Guard Armory Museum. They include furniture and pictures. Once the National Guard Armory Museum's operation has gone, the Veterans Shelter organizers will be in complete charge of the Armory. Chairman McAuliffe will get the name and email contact of the person in charge and work towards a solution with the Board and the shelter on the remaining items. Mr. Rodriguez pointed out that previously it was discussed that the Board should consider having the furniture surplused as other city property unless the shelter itself has a use for them. Some of the furniture include display cases that might be useful somewhere else in the city.
2. The books remaining in the Worcester Auditorium need to be catalogued. Mr. McAuliffe and Mr. Rodriguez began the process but there are about 15 or more books to go. Mr. Grogan volunteered to assist in completing the cataloging. Chairman McAuliffe pointed out that the books are in rough shape and that a cabinet was purchased a few years ago to store them. Once the catalogue is complete it will be filed with the GAR Board records.
3. The plaques which name the members of GAR Post 10 located on the walls of the Hall are still there and will remain as per the deed. Chairman McAuliffe hopes to make contact with the new owners (The Dream Center) to confirm with them that the plaques are artifacts and part of the charge of the GAR Board.
4. Chairman McAuliffe reminded the Board that beyond 2015 the three loaned Confederate Flags will need to find a home. The Board discussed possibilities. One suggestion was to research current legitimate museums located in the south where the flags could go and be appreciated. Part of the legitimacy of any of these museums to house the flags will be proper security and temperature control etc... The Board was tasked with researching possible sites and coming to a future meeting with a list of places. Chairman McAuliffe will also suggest to the members of the Museum of the Albemarle if they would be interested in keeping the flags longer and/or suggesting possible sites. For the sake of future discussion on the Confederate flags, Chairman McAuliffe made a motion to the possibility of allowing the flags to remain in a southern museum, it was seconded by Mr. Grogan and unanimously approved by the Board.
5. Chairman McAuliffe asked for suggestion for the future goals of the Board. Mr. Grogan pointed out that our website needs to be updated to reflect our mission and goals. Currently the website

that describes the Board states “The board acts as trustee for the G.A.R. building, determining rental rates, tenancy of rented quarters, and recommending proper maintenance activities.” Considering that the Building was sold in 2004 (eight (8) years ago), the Board no longer has those functions.

The Board discussed what the functions should be. Mr. Grogan suggested as a group to help research civil war genealogies. Mr. Rodriguez suggested that the Board has the function of maintaining the artifacts and using them or making those available for use in order to teach about the civil war. The Board agreed that people like to see and touch actual artifacts when learning about history. Mr. Grogan cleared the function as “educating the public” on the civil war. It was agreed that the artifacts should not just sit but be purposefully used.

Essentially three primary functions formed:

1. Maintaining the artifacts;
2. Educating the public by utilizing the artifacts for history presentations ; and
3. Genealogical research help in regards to Post 10 GAR members.

The Board discussed the possibility of accessing the artifacts in order to present various civil war topics to the public. Some of the items include a bible with a strong history behind it. Also among the items are a GAR member’s equipment like medals, hats, swords, and camp items like cards, toothbrush etc... which can be used to educate the public on the civil war and the G.A.R.

6. Mr. Grogan suggested a Facebook presence. If the Board was willing to assist with civil war genealogy research, it could lead to more exposure of what the Board does and even help with recruitment. Mr. Rodriguez mentioned that the Post 10 GAR members may have descendants who might be interested in knowing that their ancestors were a member. In turn, these same descendants might even have biographies on these Post 10 GAR members. If they do, those biographies can be added to the GAR Board records and assist in future research for civil war enthusiasts.
7. Mr. Rodriguez suggested that each member of the Board make themselves known to the places where the artifacts exist. Places like the Worcester Historical Museum should know who the members are so that there won’t be any problems when getting access to the artifacts. Mr. McAliffe suggested a list of members be given to the Worcester Historical Museum to allow access. The Board would at a meeting officially release the items to a member or members for use.

Nothing further to discuss the meeting ended at 6:16 pm.

The next meeting will be on March 12, 2013 at 5:30 pm at the National Guard Armory on Skyline Drive.

Respectfully Submitted,

Reynaldo Rodriguez

Secretary, GAR Memorial Hall Board of Trustees