

Committee of 33 Annual Report

The Committee of 33 leadership changed in 2011-12. The Committee Chairman, Brother Robert “Bob” Elert, became an Emeritus Member and stepped down as Chairman. The former Vice Chairman, Edward Nolte, was subsequently elected Chairman by the Committee membership. Brother Martin “Marty” Schebel replaced Brother Nolte and was elected Vice Chairman. Brother Justin “Rip” Van Kleeck, resigned as Secretary, and Brother John “JJ” Brown was elected to that position.

As a result of the change in leadership, and significant change is occurring in how the Committee of 33 functions. In the past, each Task Group was assigned a task and worked independently of the other task groups. Consequently, each member only saw one task, if that, and did not have insight into all tasks. The revised approach is that each member of the Committee of 33 will see and have the opportunity to make an input on each task. In addition, each task response has an initial response, a revised position, and a final position as the members cross-flow information within the Committee. Each member sees each task and each member is expected to work each task. Thus, the solutions and recommendations will truly be Committee of 33 positions, rather than the position of a single Task Group.

The Committee of 33 has operated at a total strength of 31 members for most of the year. This is due to Brother James Higdon being elected to the National Line and being required to resign from the Committee of 33. In addition, M.W.B Alister Boyd passed away after a lengthy illness. Brother President William Turner appointed Ronald Stites as a backfill for one of the vacancies. More recently Brother Russell Hain also resigned due to health reasons. The Committee of 33 will require the addition of two extra members to the normal 11-member election each year for a 3-year term.

For its work, the Committee of 33 received three taskers from Brother William Turner at the Tucson Mid-Winter Meeting in January 2012. The first tasker, **Task C33-2012-01 is titled National Trustees Qualifications**. It requests the Committee of 33 to recommend a solution, which would “Establish a comprehensive set of qualifications for a member to run for the office of National Trustee. The National Line and Committee of 33 have personnel requirements for election or appointment. To be elected to the National Line, an individual must have 10 years of continuous NSI membership, served honorably as Chapter, President and Camp Commander, served two years on a National Committee, or A/R Rep, attended 3 ANCs and 3 MWMs, demonstrated leadership, active membership status, and be prepared for financial burden and travel, and receive a “qualified” report from the Nominating Committee. Committee of 33 requires noteworthy depth of Sojourners knowledge, dedication to the Order, and demonstrated performance as A/R Rep or National-level standing committee, and experience as Chapter President. The current requirement for a National Trustee is to be a Sojourner of great experience at the national level who is particularly knowledgeable in matters of management, finance, and budget—no leadership, no prior offices, no years of membership/performance, no prior committees, and no Masonic requirements. In short, **Should there be more stringent requirements, and if so, what should they be?**

The second tasker, **Task C33-2012-02, is titled National Sojourners Line Officer Qualifications**. It requests the Committee of 33 to review the qualifications for the

National Line, which were established several years ago based on an emergent requirement. We have had some problems in the meantime and had to suspend the National Regulations. The current requirement to be elected to the National Advancing Line are as follows: Individual must have 10 years of continuous NSI membership, served honorably as Chapter President and Camp Commander, served two years on a National Committee or A/R Rep, attended 3 ANCs and 3 MWMs, demonstrated leadership, active membership status, and be prepared for financial burden and travel, and receive a “qualified” report from the Nominating Committee.

In short, Revisit the qualifications to run for the National Sojourners Line to ensure they are practical and reasonable, or should they be modified. If changes are warranted, be specific in your recommendation?

The third tasker, **Task C33-2012-03, is titled Task # C33-2012-03: NASOCOCO vs Time and Place Committee. Should** we replace NASOCOCO with a Time-and-Place Committee and dispense with the separate NASOCOCO. Consider history in researching with such numeraries as Chuck Wallens, Nellie Newcombe, Chuck Folsom, Andrew McVeigh, Ben Yudesis, etc., to ensure a full, comprehensive understanding is known before making recommendation. Focus on financial obligations/commitments that might be at issue for both NASOCOCO and National Sojourners. **In short, should we replace NASOCOCO with a Time-and-Place Committee and dispense with the separate NASOCOCO?**

The Committee of 33 will recommend solutions to each all three taskers to the National President at the Annual National Convention (ANC) in Burlington, VT in June 2012.

In addition, the Committee of 33 received four taskers from Brother President-elect, James “Bob” McConnell. These taskers will be assigned at the ANC and recommended positions delivered at the Mid-Winter Meeting in January 2013 to avoid impeding the work we are already finalizing. These taskers and their titles are as follows:

C33-2012-04: Goal: To increase attendance at the MWM and ANC. Look into how we as an organization can increase attendance at the Mid-Winter Meeting and Annual National Convention. What can the Chapters do to help in providing information to the members about attending these functions. What possible incentives could be offered to increase attendance. What steps can be taken to increase the attendance at the Mid-Winter Meeting and the Annual National Conventions. Would it be feasible to provide incentives to the membership to attend? If so, what would the incentives be that would increase attendance at these functions, and would they impact on funding for the event.

C33-2012-05: Goal: The inclusion of equivalent civilian grades as members who have served in the Department of Defense. Consider the fact that they have served the country faithfully but were not in uniform. They would be equivalent grades to the existing membership requirements for military personnel. Many Masons have served faithfully in the Department of Defense in a civilian capacity. Due to being considered non-military, they can become members only as Honorary. What would the impact be if membership was offered to these Masons who served in the equivalent grade of existing membership qualification? What would be required if this were to come about?

C33-2012-06: Goal: Enhance relationship with CLMA. The relationship with CLMA is at minimum strained. The financial situation for the ALC looming over their heads and the fact that they are trying to obtain funding from the National Sojourners membership has caused the formally friendly relationship to become strained. We need a way to enhance this relationship in a non-financial manner. How can we do this?

C33-2012-07: Goal: To determine the widest concurrence on number of desired days for the MWM and ANC. A) Survey and determine interest in having evening committee meetings to de-conflict agenda and/or shorten the number of days. B) Survey and advise the National Line on members' desire for a period of time during the ANC to allow all to engage in local tours/events, versus a shorter ANC. C) Provide recommendations to the NP and National Line during the January 2013 Mid-Winter Meeting.

In addition to the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary mentioned earlier, the current membership of the Committee of 33 includes the following Brethren:

TASK GROUP 1: Richard Wyatt (TG Lead), James Baker, Carl Diamond, Matthew Scott, and Justin Van Kleeck.

TASK GROUP 2: Andrew Hirst (TG Lead), Gerald Houston, Anthony Johnson, William Means, Ronald Stites, and Raymond Vanden Berghe.

TASK GROUP 3: Bill Greshel (TG Lead), David Gardner, Henry Kuhn, Robert Roth, Charles Sharp, Jr., and Charles Umberger.

TASK GROUP 4: Armand Cote (TG Lead), Paul Bailey, Charles Blacknall, Paul Pennybacker, and Robert Powell.

TASK GROUP 5: Joseph Zito (TG Lead), Robert Epps, William Haynes, Robert Mason, Richard Ripley, and Raphael Rivas.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward W. Nolte

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Chairman, Committee of 33