

Special Committee Meeting – Minutes – March 2, 2004

List of Attendees:

Committee Members: Dave Wisniewski, Barbara Counts, Jody Williford, Lori Jacob, Mike Berno, Missy Adams

Scoutmaster Corps Members: Chris Counts, Doug Williford, Mark Rehak, Jerry Graham, Dan Burbank, Chuck Anderson, Danny Wright

Interested Parents and Other Attendees: Zully Wisniewski, Todd Adams, Phillip Welch, Earl Hughes (Unit Commissioner), the Grandmother of one Scout discussed at this meeting

The sole item on the agenda for this special committee meeting was the incident which occurred last Tuesday, February 24th. This was discussed in a previous e-mail sent to the Troop 957 distribution list after it happened. Essentially it involved two scouts singing a song with highly racist overtones to a young black man who had come to the meeting with the intention of joining the troop. As a result of this, the parents decided to not allow their son to join the troop because they were concerned for his physical safety. A second incident was discovered after the troop meeting in which a men's restroom at the church was vandalized.

The format for this special committee meeting was to be 1) a report from the Scoutmaster on what had occurred and the Scoutmaster corps recommendation for disciplinary action, 2) an opportunity for the two boys involved to come forward and speak to the committee concerning their actions followed by 3) a discussion period during which the committee would decide on whether or not to accept the Scoutmaster's recommendation.

The Scoutmaster gave a concise but detailed report of the incident, including the most probable lyrics based on a comparison of versions found on four web sites, at least two of which were for white supremacist organizations. During this briefing he detailed what had occurred and who the Scoutmaster corps held to be responsible based on statements from Scouts and Scoutmasters who had witnessed the singing incident, or in the case of the bathroom incident, the physical evidence in the form of papers, eating materials and the cooking demo food left behind and which scouts were still present when the incident had to have occurred.

Past history for one Scout and the lack of it for the other was also discussed as rationale for the proposed actions. The result was a recommendation of a two month suspension for the first Scout, a written apology, and a 500 word essay on why the lyrics would be perceived as threatening by a black person. He would also lose his position of responsibility credit, could not hold another leadership position until the next election, and would participate in monthly Scoutmaster Conferences upon his return. Proposed penalties for the second Scout are similar with the exception that the suspension would be 1 month duration. For the bathroom incident the first Scout would also have to provide 8 hours of service to the church cleaning bathrooms.

Neither of the two boys came to the meeting, however the Grandmother of one Scout provided a brief statement concerning her views of the situation and the effect the suggested measures would have on the Scout and his family. This was then followed by Earl Hughes giving his view of their appropriateness. At Earl's suggestion, all non-committee members then left the room. The committee decision was 4 for the proposed measures, zero against, with two abstentions (Mike Berno who arrived late and Missy Adams).

Barbara Counts
Troop 957 Treasurer, Advancements Chair and Secretary