

# **1<sup>st</sup> Michigan Engineers & Mechanics By-Laws**

## **Article I - Structure**

- 1) All members of the 1<sup>st</sup> ME&M must be in good standing.
- 2) All new recruits will be mustered into the unit with the rank of Private.
- 3) All members must pay yearly unit dues to stay in good standing.
- 4) All new recruits will be given one year to obtain their full kit. Until then, the 1<sup>st</sup> ME&M Ditty Bag can be used to supply the recruit with gear and kit.
- 5) All new recruits should go through the Officers and NCOs before purchasing the proper gear and kit.
- 6) The members will function as one unit in the field when required and at the discretion of the commanding officer(s).
- 7) We will not discriminate. There is a place for everyone to participate in the historical re-enactment of the Unit and the period we wish as a majority to portray.

## **Article II – Government**

- 1) The Unit will be commanded by no less than the rank of Captain as company commander.
- 2) The Unit will reflect the highest standards of the American Civil War re-enactment community and to historically portray authenticity in the conduct, dress, grooming and equipment of all members of the Unit.
- 3) The Unit will strive to retain its autonomy regardless of organizations it may be part of or join.
- 4) The Unit will be governed as a democracy under the principle of “one member, one vote.”
- 5) Dues paying members shall be defined as those males or females over the age of 15 who wish to take an active part in the Unit as reenactors.
- 6) To vote on events, a member must first pay the yearly dues and participate in half the events the unit attended the previous year for the right to vote. Unit drills count as events. Exceptions require the approval of the majority of the Officers.
- 7) The company commander will have the power to promote or demote any person or rank at anytime he feels necessary, but only after presenting his recommendation or grievance to and obtaining approval from a majority of the Unit officers. This will also apply to the dismissal of an individual from the Unit for whatever reason.
- 8) All by-laws are subject to change upon a majority vote held only during the January/February meeting.

## **Article III – Officers**

- 1) Line Officers in the Unit will consist of the following and will be elected at the annual unit meeting in January/February.

Line Officers: With authority in company formation in the following chain of command. These are elected positions.

- A) Captain
- B) 1st Lieutenant (If needed)
- C) 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant (If needed)
- D) Sergeant Major
- E) 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant
- F) 2<sup>nd</sup> Sergeant
- G) 1st Corporal
- H) 2<sup>nd</sup> Corporal
- I) 3rd Corporal (If needed)

Staff Officers: With the authority of and reporting to the Commanding Officer. These are appointed by the Commanding Officer. Outside of formation, Staff Officers are higher in the chain of command than the equivalent rank of Line Officers

- A. 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant
- B. Quarter Master Sergeant
- C. Aide de Camp - Corporal

- 2) Any new/additional rank must be approved by an officer majority vote.
- 3) All officers will be elected by a simple majority of the Unit. Decision making criteria should be based on the individual's attitude, participation, and demonstrated leadership capabilities. Officers have a higher duty to comportment, participation and to support the Bylaws of the 1<sup>st</sup> Michigan Engineers, befitting their rank.
- 4) The presiding company commander will cast the deciding vote in any deadlock situations.
- 5) The presiding company commander has the authority to appoint 'Offices' for the unit. i.e., Chiefs of Construction, Topography and Surveying.
- 6) Unit Officers cannot hold dual unit affiliations. If the unit attends a specified/elected event, the elected unit officer must attend and function with his unit. Resulting disciplinary actions up to removal of rank, will be at the discretion of the commanding officer.
- 7) The company commander can appoint an Aide de Camp for assistance.
- 8) Unit officer issues/revisions/articles will be decided by an officer majority vote.
- 9) The unit officers will designate a unit treasurer, which will be responsible for the stated unit funds. The treasure must supply a unit financial statement at the January/February meeting and or upon request by the commanding officer.

#### **Article IV – Meetings**

- 1) An annual meeting will be held in January/February at a time and place to be announced by the unit commander. The primary purpose of this meeting is the election of unit officers and the establishment of events the Unit will participate in for the year.
- 2) Additional meetings can be called at any time by the unit commander or any other member wishing to conduct Unit business provided there is sufficient notice given to all members of the governing body.
- 3) Unit dues for a calendar year are \$25.00. All unit dues must be paid to the unit treasurer at the January/February unit meeting. A new member joining during the year pays dues when joining.

## **Article V – Membership**

- 1) All individuals applying for membership in the Unit shall be on probation for a term of 1 year. Once a calendar year has been completed, permanent membership is determined by simple majority decision of the Officers.
- 2) For individuals applying for membership whose re-enacting experience is known to the Unit, the probation period of 1 year can be waived on approval the Officers.
- 3) All individuals applying for membership must be at least 15 years of age to bring or use firearms, bayonets or edged weapons, with or without ammunition, provided they demonstrate to the Officers correct performance of the manual of arms, in place and in deployment, and carry, use, secure and store these with proper comportment.
- 4) All individuals under the age of 18 applying for membership MUST have a parent or legal guardian join also as a member.
- 5) All individuals under 15 may only accompany troops on the field if they are a working musician (able to play drum or fife), flag bearer or orderly.
- 6) All legal guardians of individuals under the age of 18 MUST sign a waiver at the beginning of the year that states that the unit IS NOT liable for any actions/injury or loss, and that the guardian is ~~And or~~ responsible for the underage re-enactors disposition while at the event.
- 7) All Individuals under 18 MUST have a ‘guardian’ at a unit event. A unit officer or soldier will not be responsible for the individual.
- 8) Exceptions to these age limits are possible at the discretion of the Officers of the Unit.
- 9) Family members are welcome to participate in events in period attire. Period attire will not apply to family members who visit camp. However, visitors remaining in camp overnight will be required to be in period attire.
- 10) Every effort will be made for EVERYONE to be in period attire beginning early Saturday morning and remaining so throughout the event. An exception can be made for children under the age of 10 AFTER public hours.
- 11) No member of this Unit shall approach a member, or potential member, of another unit with the intention of recruitment. If the other member shows interest in having a dual membership, that may be discussed but not initiated by a member of the Unit.

12) Unit mentors will be available for new and prospective members and chosen by volunteers from the ranks.

## **Article VI – Conduct**

- 1) All members will abide by these rules and regulations.
- 2) Displays of any drunken intoxicated or recreational drug compromised behavior during public demonstrations of any kind will result in individual or company discipline up to and including expulsion from the unit. There will be neither excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages or the use of recreational drugs during daylight hours or when on after-hours guard duty or on company details. This is for personal safety as well as the safety of those nearby. All alcohol will always be kept discreetly away from public view. Consumption of alcohol or use of recreational drugs is permitted only under laws of the State the event is held in, the regulations of the event and the permission of an on-site unit Officer. The use or distribution of illegal drugs is strictly prohibited. Any such use will be reported to the local authorities.
- 3) All members, officers included, will be required to participate in any drills, from brigade level down, at all events/drills. Those on 'sick call' will be exempted from duty.
- 4) All members will perform enthusiastically and harmoniously with others, both on and off the field of battle.
- 5) If a problem arises on the field, it will be taken care of off the field unless it requires immediate attention.
- 6) All members will be responsible for their own and their dependent's behavior and safety.
- 7) Company property cannot be used by any member outside of unit elected events.
- 8) Company property/equipment borrowed by a unit member must be returned in functional/clean condition. If the returned item is deemed as in an unclean/un-functional state, then the unit member will pay a fee for the infraction. Discretionary by the commanding officer.

## **Article VII - Safety**

- 1) All members must be 15 years of age or older to fire a weapon in battle, unless prohibited by the regulations of an event. Members under the age of 15 may carry a weapon, but without ammunition.
- 2) All members or their guardians must have applied for or possess a valid state Firearms Owners Identification Card to discharge a weapon or carry ammunition.
- 3) An Officer or NCO must inspect all weapons prior to an event.
- 4) Only three-banded muskets are allowed. The US 1816 Conversion, 1842, 1855, 1861, 1863 & 1864 Springfield Muskets. The 1853 Enfield Musket, 1859 Sharps Infantry Rifle or any approved three-banded foreign import musket that meets safety qualifications. (In 1861, the 1<sup>st</sup> ME&Ms were issued the 1853 Enfield Musket).

- 5) Bayonets are never to be affixed except for drill, guard duty and for stacking of arms. They are NEVER fixed during battle.
- 6) Ramrods are not to be drawn on the battlefield unless ordered by an Officer or NCO.
- 7) Loading and/or firing is forbidden unless approved by an Officer.
- 8) Firearms are by no means allowed to be discharged within 25 yards of the opposing forces. Any discharge of a firearm, within 40 yards, must be elevated.
- 9) All weapons must be handled as if they are loaded. Never point it directly at an individual.
- 10) All weapons are to be capped off both prior to battle and after the battle.
- 11) Make sure your weapon is discharged prior to taking a hit in the field.
- 12) No unauthorized "hand to hand" combat scenarios unless approved by the Commanding Officers.
- 13) Knives are allowed but must be sheathed and approved by the Officers. Knives will NEVER be drawn in battle.
- 14) Firearms will NEVER be left unsecured. They must be either carried, stacked, or always secured in a place inaccessible to the public. When stacked, a sentry must be appointed to guard firearms.
- 15) All gunpowder is loose, granular black powder. Smokeless powder, pre-compressed premeasured powder cylinders or any other propellant is forbidden. Loose gunpowder over 1 ounce may only be transported in the container in which it was purchased.
- 16) Muzzle loading cartridges must only consist of powder and paper. Pistol and breech loading arms must only consist of powder, paper, and farina or toilet paper. Ball, shot and any solid projectiles are forbidden in cartridges. Cartridges should be sealed by folding. Staples for sealing cartridges are forbidden.
- 17) Long arms are never wadded in battle and may only be wadded with the paper of the cartridge when firing in demonstrations.
- 18) No alcohol is to be consumed prior to a battle or public demonstration.

### **Article VIII -Engineering**

- 1) Any engineering tool used at an event must be approved by the unit Officer first.
- 2) All unit members must carry a set of leather gloves for field engineering work.
- 3) All axes or hatchets must have a leather sheath or cover of some sort to prevent injury.
- 4) All members must have proper training before using any engineering tool.
- 5) At the beginning of an event Officers may designate/issue tools to selected members to use or carry on to the battlefield.

- 6) Any sharp tools carried into the field must have an appropriate sheath or cover unless authorized by the Officers or NCOs.
- 10) Tools will NEVER be used in battle or “hand to hand” combat scenarios.
- 8) When an engineering task has been assigned to an officer or ‘office holder’ (i.e. Chief of Construction, Topography and Surveying) the said individual is then designated the officer in command of the detachment. Hence all unit members involved, including elected officers, will obey the orders of the ‘office holder’ commands for the duration of the designated task.
- 9) Any fund allocation for new/purchased engineering equipment must be approved by a majority of the officers. All inquiries prior to a purchased must be forwarded to the officers prior to a purchase. The unit will not be liable for any unit member’s purchase which is done without the prior approval of the officers if the member is looking for a unit fund re-imbursement.

### **Article IX - Camp**

- 1) No modern articles or items are to be visible in camp. Please use a period cover for a modern cooler. Modern items must be covered and out of site.
- 2) Any beverage consumed other then from your canteen, must be consumed from a period correct container/cup/mucket while in camp. No cans or modern bottles are to be seen in camp. Use a tin cup or a period style bottle.
- 3) Food for events is each unit member’s responsibility unless a unit mess is established.
- 4) Period style camp chairs are acceptable.
- 5) All members are required to have a plate, cup and eating utensils for an event.
- 6) Only use period type watches, no wristwatches. Wedding bands are acceptable, but no earrings or other type of facial ornamentation.
- 7) Cigars and pipes are acceptable.
- 8) Please have your cell phones off or on vibrate activation while in camp or the field.

### **Article X - Events**

- 1) All members are to report any injuries to an NCO or Officer in charge.
- 2) Let an NCO or Officer in charge know of any physical conditions or limitations.
- 3) The unit will always have a first aid kit on hand for an event. Fake wounds or scripted battlefield casualties can be used at events for hospital scenarios.
- 4) All canteens will always be filled. Do not enter a battle with an empty or half-filled canteen.
- 5) All members should always keep an eye on their fellow unit members during and event in case of a medical emergency.