

LAW OFFICES
WALTER E. HETTMAN
315 MONTGOMERY STREET
SAN FRANCISCO

March 3rd, 1930

Colonel Ed Fletcher
1020 Ninth Street
San Diego, California

Dear Colonel:

Your letter of February 28th was received this morning and I am writing you immediately, air mail, in response to your questions.

The name "Commonwealth Club of San Diego" would be an ideal one, but when we corresponded I was of the opinion that you were intending to start a club similar to the Commonwealth Club here, but to give it some name which would apply to your own locality.

Section 296 and 296-A of the Civil Code provided that the Secretary of State cannot file Articles of Incorporation of a company ~~which is~~ similar to one already incorporated. The Commonwealth Club has been incorporated for some time.

The Commonwealth Club, as you know, has the name, "Commonwealth Club of California" and its interests are State wide. It has members in Los Angeles and also members in your own city, and when it takes any stand upon any issue which concerns the entire State, it calls for help on these members scattered throughout the State.

I have no doubt but that you could build up a Commonwealth Club in San Diego which might even resemble and surpass the Commonwealth Club up here, but you can see how confusing and embarrassing it might be if two clubs of the same name in different sections of the State would take views diametrically opposed to each other on some great issue.

An attempt was started in Sacramento to have a Commonwealth Club, but they finally realized the confusion and changed the name. This was also true in Burlingame where they started the "Commonweal Club" but finally changed it, or tacked it on to the Chamber of Commerce. In Berkeley they have what is called the "Berkeley Commons Club" but even this tends to confusion with the Commonwealth Club.

Some time ago in our correspondence I suggested that you might call it the "Down Town Association". This organization is not incorporated but is a wonderful factor for everything concerning San Francisco and San Francisco County. Marshall Hale is

one of the moving spirits in this Club and it counts among its members and directors some of the leading men of the community.

The Down Town Association is anxious to build up other clubs in other cities and it has assisted in establishing Down Town Associations in Sacramento, Stockton and Fresno and would no doubt cooperate with you in helping to organize in San Diego.

Joseph Cummings is the Secretary and Manager here in San Francisco and I am getting in touch with him today to ask if he will send you copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Down Town Association, and even though you may not take that name there might be something in their By-Laws and Constitution which would help you in your organization.

If I might be permitted to make some suggestions for names, you might consider "San Diego Commonweal Club", "Public Spirit Club", "Down Town Association", "San Diego Commons Club".

Sincerely,



Walter E. Hettman.

WEH:R

LAW OFFICES
WALTER E. HETTMAN
315 MONTGOMERY STREET
SAN FRANCISCO

March 7, 1930

Colonel Ed Fletcher
1020 Ninth Street
San Diego, California

Dear Colonel:

With regard to your question in your letter of March 5th, as to what possible objections there could be to naming your club the "San Diego County Commonwealth Club", will say that I pointed out the reasons in my letter to you of March 3rd; that the adopting of the name in San Diego would result in confusion over state-wide issues, and especially should the two clubs be opposed to each other on some matter of great political moment.

If you will investigate you will find that there are a great many members of the Commonwealth Club of the State of California in San Diego, and they might not know where they would stand should the two organizations not be in accord.

Then, too, the name "Commonwealth" denotes for the common benefit of the entire state, whereas your organization would be purely for that of the County.

Yes, legally, you may adopt the name "Commonwealth", but if you attempt to file as a corporation with the Secretary of State, no doubt he would refuse to accept your articles for filing, but if you merely proceed as an association there might be no legal objection.

I think, however, the matter should not be considered on mere legal principles but entirely upon ethical principles, and if the Commonwealth Club of the State of California, having a membership of over five thousand, objects to your taking the name I would accord to their wishes.

Since your club will be entirely local and confined to San Diego County, why not adopt the suggestion I gave in my last letter and call it, "San Diego Commons Club", just like the Berkeley Commons Club, which has developed into a powerful organization in Berkeley and the name was so adopted to avoid confusion. The word "Commons" denotes a place for gatherings of the people of the community and no doubt in other states it means a gathering for a discussion, or for any events affecting the local community,

Col. Ed Fletcher - Page #2

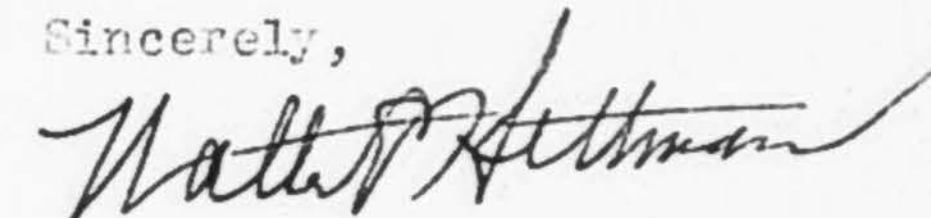
March 7, 1930

such as might almost be denoted by the old Boston Commons, a sort of town pump meeting place.

The dictionary definition of "commonwealth" is - "The people of state"; "The state"; "A state in which the people rule"; "A republic", and this, you will see, is altogether too broad for an organization limited only to the confines of the county.

I think when you have fully considered the matter, you will find that "San Diego Commons" or "San Diego Commonweal Club" is ideal for the name of your organization.

Sincerely,



WEH:R

LAW OFFICES
WALTER E. HETTMAN
315 MONTGOMERY STREET
SAN FRANCISCO

April 9, 1930

March Thirty-first,
1 9 3 0

Mr. Walter E. Hettman,
315 Montgomery,
San Francisco, Calif.

My dear Walter:

Enclosed find notice that is explanatory.

We got pretty sore after the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco refused to let us use the name even Commonweal and made a protest to the Secretary of State, Jordan, and caused him to repudiate his pledge to accept the name "San Diego County Commonwealth Club", as per your suggestion.

I have a legal opinion from two of the best attorneys in the city that they can't stop us and for that reason we went back to the name, "San Diego County Commonwealth Club".

I would appreciate any suggestions from you as to organization and in a general way the subjects that we should tackle first.

It goes without saying that your name is not being mentioned in any way.

Yours very truly,

EF:AK

Colonel Ed Fletcher
1020 Ninth Street
San Diego, California

Dear Colonel:

Your letter of March 31st has been received, together with the clipping announcing the organization of the San Diego County Commonwealth Club, and I will say that I admire your courage in going ahead in spite of all the opposition which has developed against the use of the name "Commonwealth".

From the reading of the clipping it would indicate that you had an enthusiastic meeting and that you selected some real leaders in San Diego for your board of directors.

I have one criticism, however, to make and that is I am opposed to having women in an organization of this kind. I think that the women should have their own service clubs and the men theirs. The Commonwealth Club here has never taken any women into its membership, although they permit women to come to the talks after the luncheons and at the monthly meetings women are especially invited to come to the dinner meetings to listen, but I know of no instance where any of the women have taken part in any of the discussions.

A number of years ago I built up an organization called the "Iroquois Club", which was of a political nature and we made it a very strong organization until we took some women into its membership and gave them offices. From that time the club disintegrated and finally became merely a matter of past history.

In the Community Chest, or matters which involve certain phases of charitable work, etc., I believe that both men and women should cooperate, but I am opposed to a club, such as the Commonwealth Club, being run with both men and women in charge. All of this is said without anything personal in regard to the women who are named as directors for the first year in your organization. I do not know them but I feel certain they are women of influence and outstanding in their particular field in San Diego.

In your letter you ask for suggestions regarding organization and also the subjects which should be first tackled by your club, and if you will refer to the Progress Report for 1929 of the Commonwealth Club, you will see that the Club is divided into some fifteen or twenty sections, which are organized for the purpose of studying various specified subjects. It might be best at the be-

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April 9th

ginning not to have too many study sections but to allow them to develop as the necessity urges. For instance, the sections on literature, music, men's chorus, the Club's orchestra, radio, were developed during the last two years. You had better confine your sections to agriculture, aviation, city planning, governmental finance and taxation, harbor development, immigration, industrial relations, irrigation, municipal government, public health, State highways and social welfare. It would be best to select a chairman for each section and then permit him to recruit members for his special study section and he can appoint a vice-president and secretary and hold round table lunches for discussions, starting at 12:15 and finishing at 1:30. Speakers may be invited to come before these sections to give their views.

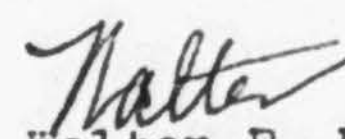
Once a month a dinner meeting can be held, starting at six o'clock and ending no later than ten, at which some one of the sections will bring in a report, having some three or four speakers, and then others to talk after the set speeches under the five minute rule. These night meetings are the occasions when the Club really goes on record for or against any particular measure, and it is at such meetings that everything which is reported has been carefully studied and censored in advance of the report by the various speakers.

From the Progress Report you will see that many of the sections have been very active and that the subjects covered by them at their noon day luncheons are very comprehensive. Take for instance the section on immigration, on page 520; this will give you an idea of what an active section can do during a year.

The Commonwealth Club has a Friday luncheon at which about 500 attend, at the Palace Hotel, and the address is always by some person of note, generally someone from the East or abroad and the talk is limited to 45 minutes. There are no other speeches except the one at such a luncheon and no business is conducted at such a meeting.

I do not know how extensive you will want to be in your activities in the Club, until you have developed a fairly good sized membership, but you will undoubtedly be interested in the subjects of irrigation, highways, taxation, etc., and could develop active sections on these subjects at once.

Sincerely,


Walter E. Hettman.

WEH:R

Colonel Fletcher announced the completion of the organization of the San Diego County Commonwealth Club today as outlined recently in a meeting at the San Diego Athletic Club.

The board of governors for the first year will be, Mayor Hary C. Clark, Dr. Edward L. Hardy, President of the State College, A. W. Gilbert, property owner in Rancho Santa Fe and prominent manufacturer in the east, Havrah Hubbard, dramatist, M. F. Heller, business man, Mrs. Beryl Munkelt, wife of attorney Glen H. Munkelt, Dr. Constantine Panunzio, director of the Neighborhood house and Professor of sociology at the State College, F. M. White, President San Diego Athletic Club, Gordon Gray, attorney, member state Board of Education, Miss Ada York, county superintendent of schools, W. B. Whitcomb, V. President First National Bank, L. F. Weggenman, businessman and director San Diego Community Chest, J. W. Sefton, Jr., Vice President San Diego Trust & Savings Bank, Dr. W. C. Crandall, director First National Bank, Hal G. Hotchkiss, President San Diego Chamber of Commerce, W. R. Hepner, City Superintendent of Schools and Colonel Ed Fletcher, land and water developer.

Colonel Fletcher in announcing the creation of the Club stated:

"We feel the time has come to create in San Diego County an organization similar to the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco with the same objects and ideals.

The San Francisco Club has rendered a distinct service particularly to San Francisco as well as the State. It now has a membership of 4450. They are incorporated under the name Commonwealth Club of California.

The San Francisco Club objects to the name San Diego ^{County} Commonwealth Club as well as the name San Diego Commonweal Club and have protested to the Secretary of State Jordan with such affect that our Secretary of State Jordan will not accept the incorporation papers under either name, San Diego ^{County} Commonwealth Club ~~of~~ San Diego County Commonweal Club although at one time our secretary of state agreed to accept the incorporation papers for the San Diego County Commonwealth Club but later by 'phone cancelled that promise.

Our attorney says that the Secretary of State can be successfully mandamus'd and that neither will conflict with the state law. The probabilities are that the Board of Governors will not at the present time press this matter.

There can be no question to our having a voluntary association without filing association papers, at least until such time as the matter can be amicably adjusted satisfactory to all parties in interest.

This organization will be a fact finding body wholly impartial and will, I am sure, cooperate to the fullest extent with the city council, Board of Supervisors, Chamber of Commerce, Tax Payers Association and all other public or semi-public organizations who will have problems to solve and desire us to assist or aid in their solution.

This Club will unquestionably maintain itself and will be in an impartial position as an open forum for the discussion of disputed questions, to make investigations as to the facts and present said facts to the public that the public may in their own mind decide their future course of action.

It has taken the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco twenty odd years to develop into an organization of tremendous influence.

I am sure the policies of the Club will be to go slow and lay the foundation for an organization that will be of valuable service to this community."

May Twenty-first,

1 9 3 0

Mr. A. W. Gilbert,
Rancho Santa Fe,
California.

My dear Mr. Gilbert:

I have not called a meeting of the incorporators of the San Diego County Commonwealth Club for reasons you well know.

There is a movement on foot in San Francisco among the Directors of the Commonwealth Club of California to send a letter of recommendation to the Secretary of State approving the name San Diego County Commonwealth Club.

One of the ex-presidents of the club, one of our most prominent men in the state, has written me to the effect that our position is well taken. Also the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Will C. Wood, State Superintendent of banks believes likewise and sympathizes with us in the matter.

I hope at an early date to get a definite decision one way or another or reconsideration by the Commonwealth Club of California and plan at an early date to call a meeting. I hope favorable action will be taken by the Commonwealth Club of California in relation thereto.

I have a written opinion from two prominent attorneys in this city that we are wholly within our rights and can mandamus the Secretary of State and can force him to accept the name San Diego County Commonwealth Club but I am hoping that no such action will be necessary.

I have just received the following letter from State Superintendent of Banks, Honorable Will C. Wood.

#Dear Colonel:

So far as the Commonwealth Club is concerned,

the Board of Governors understand from Frank Jordan that you are now applying for "Commonweal Club of San Diego County", which they consider quite different from "San Diego County Commonweal Club". I am sure the Board of Governors here are averse to the use of the name "Commonweal Club of San Diego County", on account of probable confusion. However, as I indicated to you, I, (and I am sure certain other members of the Board of Governors), regard the name "San Diego County Commonweal Club" in an entirely different light. I am very hopeful that this matter may be adjusted in a very friendly way and in a way satisfactory both to the Board of Governors and to yourself.

With best wishes

Very sincerely yours,

(signed) Will C. Wood

The following is a copy of my answer in reply.

"My dear Mr. Wood:

Answering yours of May nineteenth will say that San Diego County Commonwealth Club is the only name that I have submitted officially to Secretary of State Jordan who turned it down on recommendation of the Commonwealth Club of California.

I never considered naming the Club Commonweal Club of San Diego County.

I am enclosing official and original papers which please return.

I do appreciate your interest in this matter and hope it will be settled in a friendly spirit.

Sincerely yours,

(signed) Ed Fletcher

Can you see by this that the information given the Commonwealth Club of California is entirely erroneous?

I am sending to Mr. Wood the original letter from the Department of State dated April 23, 1930 reading as follows:

"Gentlemen:

We are returning herewith the enclosures which accompanied your letter of the 10th instant and advise that we have no intention of withdrawing our objection to the use of the name SAN DIEGO COUNTY COMMONWEALTH CLUB by the corporation which you propose to form. It is our firm opinion that this name would conflict with that of the COMMONWEALTH CLUB OF CALIFORNIA and we have already advised this corporation that we will not permit the use of such name.

It is our suggestion that if you persist in your desire to use said name you file a petition in the Superior Court for a writ of mandate to compel us to file these articles.

If such a petition is filed the COMMONWEALTH CLUB OF CALIFORNIA will furnish counsel to represent this office in the proceedings.

Very truly yours,

FRANK C. JORDAN, Secretary of State.

By Robert V. Jordan
Assistant Secretary of State."

I am also sending Mr. Wood the original petition.

I hope this matter can be straightened out and have every reason to believe that we are going to win out along the lines of our original petition, i.e., SAN DIEGO COUNTY COMMONWEALTH CLUB.

Yours very truly,

EF:ASK

Ed Fletcher Papers

1870-1955

MSS.81

Box: 24 Folder: 8

**General Correspondence - San
Diego County Commonwealth Club**



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