

March 2018

Meeting Minutes, March 2018

National Smokejumper Association Board of Directors

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NSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – March 7, 2018
Wildland Firefighters Foundation – Boise, ID

Call to order, introduction to site, introductions, approval of the agenda – Cherry
A few changes in the agenda were discussed.

Approval of previous meeting minutes – Boatner

Fred Cooper brought up a few corrections in the TRAMPs portion of the notes and gave Boatner a corrected copy. Boatner will make changes and resend to all BOD members.

Investment Committee report – Packard

John handed out a Vanguard briefing summarizing their 2018 outlook. Vanguard is a huge organization that manages over a trillion dollars. John also handed out minutes of the Investment Committee's latest meeting, 1/28/18. Members are Bob Whaley, Ben Smith, Bob McKean and the chair is John Packard. Bob McKean talked about setting up a brokerage account with Vanguard and some of the paperwork challenges and complications. He is not sure chasing an extra .25% in interest on CDs is worth the problems, but the investment committee will figure that out and let us know. It is an account for people who want to buy and sell stocks and bonds often, and is not something we probably really need. Bob is still unsure about whether we should pursue it. Our overall investments continue to grow and have added roughly \$50,000 in the past year and now total \$892,358.81 as of March 1, 2018. Bob is the only keeper of Vanguard passwords. Who else should have copies and have signatory authority? Bob recommends he and the president are the ones with the signing authority and copies of the passwords. **The BOD agreed on that decision and Bob will give Jim Cherry copies of the passwords.**

John handed out copies of the current investment policy. The Investment Committee has recently cleaned up and simplified this policy. It is now 3 pages long.

John also handed out a guideline form the Montana Community Foundation on planned giving, something that could be useful to NSA members.

John Berry moved that we authorize Bob McKean, NSA treasurer, to pursue setting up a Vanguard Brokerage account, with McKean and the current President, Jim Cherry, as signatories to the account. Fred Cooper seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Update on 2017-18 Budget – Finance Committee (Brent Russ by phone)

Bob McKean passed out budget spreadsheets and Brent, by phone, discussed key highlights including our approaching 1 million dollars in total value, plus the addition of the Historic Preservation Fund and the Museum fund. Brent talked about our income versus expenditures and future concerns with budgeting and declining membership. Charitable giving has been robust, but most of that goes into restricted funds like the Good Samaritan Fund(GSF). Overall, Brent thinks our financial health is strong and we should be proud of what we have accomplished.

Look ahead to 2018-19 Budget – BOD

Because of Larry Lufkin's absence, this discussion was deferred until the fall meeting.

Report on 2018 Trails Program - Fred Cooper

Fred handed out a list of this year's planned projects. TRAMPS has been confirmed as the official title of the NSA trails program. Fred gave some information on different projects including first ever projects in 2 new states: Wyoming and Washington. Hulla and Kinderman will be continuing to work on chainsaw and crosscut saw certification. Eddie Ward was selected to go to Patagonia to work in a national park helping to build a hiking bridge for 60 days. He is working on his Spanish language skills and plans to go next year. Fred also talked about the Granite Mountain Hotshot Trail at the Yarnell Fire site in Arizona and handed out a few brochures. The National Hotshot Association met last weekend in San Diego. Fred shared a list of the projects with the current president, Dave Provencio, and we may get some of their members on our projects this summer. Fred will still be involved in running TRAMPS, but is trying to farm out the work to more people. They have hired someone to help with the website. They also need to replace some tools and equipment. The USFS has identified 15 priority areas to focus on trail maintenance, but most of the work will still be driven by local communities and non-profit groups. The Frank Church/Selway Bitterroot and Bob Marshall Wildernesses are on the list. The USFS doesn't have any funding to go along with designating these 15 priority areas.

Good Samaritan Fund report – Sheley

In 2017, the GSF took in \$23,745 in donations. Chuck handed out a list of donation and disbursement amounts. Chuck and Tom gave an update on the Chung family and the help we have given them and the seeming payoff in their son, Tanner's, improved health.

Traveling Smokejumper display – Sheley

Chuck described the recent runs of the Traveling Smokejumper display including an upcoming partial exhibit at the USFS retiree reunion. Chuck sees this as part of our Historical Preservation efforts. We have a permanent exhibit at the National Fire Heritage Center in Emmitsburg, MD. We also had an exhibit at Eastern Washington University and this has helped make a number of connections that will help us with historical preservation. We have rented the exhibit a few times, for instance, at the World Forestry Center in Portland, OR for \$1200, but renting will not be our normal goal.

Membership Report – McDaniel

Chuck filled in for John McDaniel in giving the membership update. The membership numbers for the past 3 years: 2015-1567, 2016-1604, 2017-1563. So, we're in pretty good shape right now, but Chuck expects these numbers to diminish as our membership ages and passes on. Most of our current members are multi-year or life members.

Report of partnership possibilities – Derr & Berry

Nothing much to report, except as reported in other areas of the agenda like the Trails report and the Facebook report. Bill has reached out to Shawna Legarza a few times and will meet with her in April and is looking for possibilities to strengthen the connection between NSA and the USFS Washington Office. The Fire Committee for the NAFSR could be a key contact group. Another potential is the Washington Trails Association. The suggestion was made that we should be more proactive about inviting potential partners/allies to our upcoming meetings.

Fred talked about how the National Museum of Forest Service History has a Museum Honor Roll and it currently doesn't recognize any smokejumpers. John will look in to coming up with some potential names to propose as potential candidates to the honor roll.

Website Committee update – Sheley

In the book section, we're adding information on any book written by a smokejumper. This is a service for our membership.

Scholarship program update – Sheley/Cherry

The scholarship program information has been updated on the website. This year we will give out 6 \$2,000 scholarships. Jim talked us through the scoring matrix and its use in ranking candidates. The scholarship committee is made up of Lufkin, Cherry, McKean, and McMillan. All applications go to Jim Cherry.

Update on Facebook page – Berry

John talked about his efforts to become an administrator on our Facebook page in the wake of Chris Sorenson's death. Current administrators are John Berry, Bruce Morey, and Fred Cooper. He corrected the name and added the donate button. There are also links to all the different funds and projects that the NSA is responsible for, as well as links to similar organizations like the Wildland Firefighters Foundation, The Smokey Generation, NIFC and a few others. We currently have 2,430 Followers. John wants to make our logo our cover page and add some other photos.

Vicki Minor came in and welcomed us to the Wildland Firefighter Foundation and talked about their move to a new home and a new location for the Wildland Firefighter Memorial. We also talked about suicide among smokejumpers and what we can do to recognize it and help prevent it especially the bullying. There have also been recent reports on PBS about harassment towards women in wildland firefighting.

Question of another SJ reunion – BOD

There was a general discussion of some key issues related to planning and holding another national reunion and some of the challenges to actually doing it. Missoula, Boise, and Redding are the places that have historically had the highest attendance, in the order listed. The biggest hurdle is finding someone willing to do all the work to put one on. Is it worthwhile hiring someone to coordinate a reunion? We'll put this on the agenda for the Seattle meeting. Lynn Sprague and Leo will check at their coffee to see if anyone in Boise is interested. Chuck will check with some Redding people.

NSA website Photo Gallery – McMillan

Mike McMillan talked about the smokejumperphoto.com website which now has about 1500 photos on it. Mike plans to contact the jump bases to seek photos. He's careful about posting photos that don't represent us professionally.

A presentation was made to Leo Cromwell of a framed smokejumper print as he ends his time on the NSA board. Leo continues to work on a huge project to digitize 60 years of McCall jump records. Idaho City and Boise(USFS) have already been done.

Historic Preservation Progress – Sheley

Is there a blueprint for an organization that wants to preserve its history? Our goals should be long range, permanent, outlast the NSA, and be internet available and searchable. Stan Collins and Chuck came up with a template which was handed out. So far, we've done the Smokejumper traveling exhibit, published 2 books (Gobi and CIA), the photo gallery, and the Region Four website Leo's working on will soon be up. Chuck thinks there is some potential to partner with the National Archives especially with an associate member who works there, Richard Elsom.

Also, with Bob Bartlett at Eastern Washington University, there are some good potential avenues. Professor Bartlett suggested EWU as a repository of smokejumper history and we have done a Traveling Exhibit there. Sheley has met with all the key individuals there regarding set up a history preservation project there, and they were all on board on making it happen. They have the staff, the expertise and potentially access to grants to make this happen. So far, EWU is starting to put old copies of our newsletters going back to the original "Static Lines" on the internet. This is a 3-part process: the 3 Ps: pick an area to work on, plan for doing it, price it out. Currently, putting the newsletters on line is the project being tackled. Once this is done, the P-P-P will be done to figure out the next step.

Fred Cooper: Proposed SMJ history website. Fred presented his paper on the work he has done on a smokejumper history website and presented his motion. "I move that an expense not to exceed \$10,000 be authorized for the next 12-month period for the development and initial provision of content for a Smokejumper History web site. Further, that Fred Cooper work with a cadre of NSA interested individuals in the design of the web site to be designed and built by a Word Press web designer." Seconded by McKean. Opened for discussion. How does this fit in with other efforts underway: EWU work by Chuck, Mike's photo gallery website, Leo's work with R-4 jump records? Fred is meeting tomorrow with the Boise jump base to look at their records and how they are stored and accessible/useable. He is looking at primary source material from each base. We had a long conversation about possibilities, conflicts, how to make these different efforts dovetail together or support each other. There appears to be both duplicity of effort and overlap between Fred's proposal and what we're doing with EWU.

What do we do with Fred's motion? We agreed to table Fred's motion for now, but Fred and Chuck will talk again about how to pool their efforts.

Update on the smokejumper program – Roger Staats, Todd Jenkins, & Grant Beebe

Grant talked first: The BLM has 150 jumpers between Alaska and Boise. The BLM Fire Leadership Team met last week and reconfirmed their commitment to on-the-ground firefighters. This is what protects the smokejumpers when budgets get tight.

Roger: Handed out data he uses to track jumper availability. Lots of complaining about jumper availability and jumpers on single resource assignments, but the numbers show daily availability around 80 through fire season. Then a long discussion about the Meyer's fire in Montana and whether it should have been attacked and caught earlier. There is a risk adverse environment that sometimes just transfers the risk further down the road, but also leads to a lack of aggressiveness in attacking and catching fires early and fast.

The 2017 fire season was busy for the USFS jump program. Roger handed out their statistics on the 2017 season and the prognosis for 2018. Roger talked about headcounts, hiring challenges, injuries, the Ram Air transition, and the Sherpa transition. Jim asked about smokejumper suicide rates. There has been a recognition that it's a problem.

Todd handed out Great Basin stats. They had kind of an average season, more 8 manners than normal indicating to him slow decision-making on dispatching jumpers. He says he sees the same risk adversity at play among land and fire managers. He showed us a piggy back ram air parachute system that the BLM is doing some preliminary development work on. Another discussion on risk and risk management wrapped up this part of our agenda.

- Unfinished business
 - BOD succession planning
So far, McKean, Boatner, and Berry have all been asked to succeed Jim Cherry as President and all have declined. Jim's tenure will continue through the October meeting. Motion made to table this discussion and decision until October meeting in Seattle. Seconded and passed.
 - Strategic Planning – BOD
Discussion deferred until fall meeting
- Other-Fall meeting scheduled for October 24th in Seattle at the Residence Inn in Tukwila

Evening Social

An evening pizza and beer social was held commencing at 6 pm. It was attended by about 40 people.

In Attendance: Jim Cherry, John Packard, Fred Cooper, Bob McKean, Chuck Sheley, Bill Derr, John Berry, Leo Cromwell, Lyn Sprague, Mike McMillan, Tom Boatner