

October 2013

Meeting Minutes, October 2013

National Smokejumper Association Board of Directors

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Recommended Citation

National Smokejumper Association Board of Directors, "Meeting Minutes, October 2013" (2013). *National Smokejumper Association Meeting Minutes*. 57.

https://dc.ewu.edu/nsa_minutes/57

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**National Smokejumper Association
Board of Directors Meeting
October 9-10, 2013 Seattle, WA**

October 9

**Call to order/Introductions/ Orientation to site/
Approval of agenda**

Jim Cherry

Minutes of prior meeting and intervening BOD actions

Tom Boatner

Ron Stoleson has resigned from the BOD since the last meeting. All resigning BOD members will receive a copy of the print "Never Alone." Jim Cherry has a couple on hand in Iowa. No additions or corrections to last meeting's minutes, so they are approved.

Trail Report for 2013

Fred Cooper

Fred handed out the NSA Trails Program Report for 2013 and reviewed it. In 2013, 22 projects were completed in 9 states for 202 total volunteer weeks. Five new squadleaders stepped up and we added a project in a new state (New York). The Trails program has a projected net income of \$6,500 for 2013. The program made contributions of \$10,000 to the Jukkala-McBride Scholarship Fund and \$6,000 to the Good Samaritan Fund (GSF). Fred briefed us on the status of efforts to develop a Historic Preservation Plan between the USFS and the NSA for Mann Gulch. Jim Phillips has met with the USFS Regional Forester (Faye Kreuger) and has her commitment to make an announcement on the status of the plan at 2015's national reunion in Missoula. Fred is also working on a national Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the USFS. Fred also hopes to have on-line registration in place by next year. There are already about 20 projects lined up for next year. Mike Overby mentioned REI as a possible source of funding to support Mann Gulch trail and maintenance work.

Gary Baker told the BOD about work to identify and mark a segment of the Lewis and Clark Trail in the southern Bitterroot National Forest and construct a hiking trail. Local partners are looking for help constructing this trail starting with a 7 to 9 mile section. The NSA has been approached. Application for a \$7,000 grant has been made to the Lewis and Clark Heritage Foundation. **Gary made a motion that this project be considered by NSA for next year. He will serve as key contact/project manager for this project. Motion passed.**

Chuck Sheley gave an update on the ongoing Siskiyou Smokejumper Base project. Another work week is planned for next summer and volunteer hosts are always needed. There is an apartment on-site for volunteers.

Jim Cherry read Jim Phillips' update on progress of the 2015 NSA Reunion planning. The keynote speaker will be John MacLean. Details are being planned and implemented this fall and through the winter, with many people stepping up to volunteer and organize various aspects of such a large undertaking. The University of Montana Adams center

will be the primary reunion site. The dates are July 17-19, 2015. This reunion will celebrate the 75th anniversary of the first fire jump.

No one should be going to any of the reunion committee members with recommendations or requests – all items should go to Jim who will go to Jim Phillips. In regard to the above request, Mike Overby is to send recommendation to Jim Cherry that he requests the committee consider: Recommendation: a Video/Youtube contest should be considered for the Reunion. Entries can be made that capture a base, era (i.e., 60's era), or rookie Class and include pictures, movies, etc. Winning video, as judged by an impartial Reunion, will be shown at the reunion. Videos should not exceed 10 minutes in length. All video Links submitted will be provided to the new NSA Historian (TBD) for possible inclusion in the future NSA History Web Site.

Wild Land Firefighters Foundation – Burk Minor

Mike Overby

Mike Overby introduced Burk Minor of the Wildland Firefighters Foundation (WLFF). Burk began his briefing by asking if anyone had any firsthand experience with the WLFF. Doc Smith spoke eloquently about the support his family received when his son, the Mormon Lake Hotshot Superintendant, died of cancer. His son's widow rapidly received a \$2000 check to help with any expenses. "One of the most responsive organizations I've dealt with," Doc said. Burk spoke about his history growing up in Garden Valley, Idaho and his connection to wildland fire. He and his mother, Vicki, were contract commissary operators for wildland fire. He showed us the WLFF's 13 minute video, explaining the purpose and goals of the organization and followed that up by speaking about WLFF's role and desire to support firefighters of all kinds and their families.

Jim's questions: What is your mission statement? Do you have a BOD? Yes, WLFF has a 9 member BOD. How can NSA and WLFF coordinate and support each other? Burk is open to future cooperation and coordination. "No amount of help is too much." Burk is approved to spend up to \$5000 after a Line of Duty fatality and \$2500 for an injury. Expenditures above that require their BOD's approval. There followed some discussion about how WLFF and NSA should coordinate in the aftermath of future accidents involving smokejumpers. The agreement is made that in the future we will try to coordinate our efforts to support smokejumpers and their families. **Jim Cherry and Burk Minor will initiate this coordination.**

Status of KIA plaques

Chuck Sheley

Chuck has checked on the status of all the plaques. We don't know the status of the plaques at Missoula or West Yellowstone. Chuck has sent out the new plate honoring Luke Sheehy to all of the bases. There is one space left on the current plaques and that will be filled by the plate honoring Mark Urban. Chuck is trying to continue Carl Gidlund's research on smokejumpers killed in the line of duty. There was some discussion about how to determine the current status of the Evergreen Museum smokejumper display and whether anyone can periodically check up on it. **John Marker and Bob McKean volunteered to try to do that.**

Scholarship Report

Gary Baker

A total of 9 applications were received this year and it was a very high caliber pool. Doc Smith, Gary Baker, and Larry Lufkin selected 3 recipients, 2 current smokejumpers from Fairbanks, all doing graduate work, and the daughter of a Boise smokejumper. These scholarships were for \$2000 each. **Chuck requested that the scholarship committee forward the applications of the winners to him and ask them for a photo, so we can publicize the awards shortly after they happen.**

Parachute development report

Tim DeHaas

Tim is on furlough because of the federal government shutdown and unable to attend. No update available.

Treasurer's Report/FY 2013-14 Budget Review

Bob Dayton & EC

Bob reviewed the "Balance Sheet" and the "Profit & Loss Budget vs Actual," and gave additional information about our transition process from individual stock investments into Vanguard Mutual Funds. **Bob suggests that for this year we leave our earnings in the Montana Community Foundation Endowment. It will be a small amount and he recommends we let it build up our principal. Motion made, seconded, passed.**

There was some general discussion about our current financial situation, which is generally good. An area of concern is the availability of current operational dollars. In FY2013, our operating expenses exceeded our planned budget. Because of restrictions on the use of some of our major fund categories (Good Samaritan Fund, Montana Community Foundation, Life Member Endowment), we need to ensure an adequate level of unrestricted funds to support yearly operational expenses. We discussed a number of ways to deal with this and whether we need Brent to make changes in his accounting system to more accurately reflect how our money flow works. **Bob will talk to Brent about making some of these needed changes.**

Larry reviewed the new budget process that the EC and Brent have put together. It has less detail and is simpler to work with. We talked about our best ways to manage the different pots of money we have, both in terms of acquiring funds and disbursing them. **Motion to accept budget revision made, seconded, and passed.**

Headstone's for firefighters killed in Montana, 1931

Doc Smith

Doc updated us on Charlie Palmer's efforts to fund headstones for the unmarked graves of 2 firefighters killed on the Waldron Creek fire in 1931 on the Rocky Mountain Front in Montana. This would cost \$1100. It was agreed that even though this request is from a former smokejumper, this is not something that the NSA can donate to. Because, we felt like this was a good cause and we wanted to support Charlie, we took up a donation among the BOD and raised \$320 to send to Charlie.

Exploring NSA's potential role in fire/land management

Gary Baker

Presentation & discussion with John McMahon

John had a long, distinguished career with Weyerhaeuser and had a lot of experience operating at high political/governmental levels in forest policy issues. Gary invited him to talk to the NSA BOD about his experience influencing change at the national level and his thoughts about NSA trying to take a more active role in supporting sound fire management and the future role of smokejumping. John distributed and briefed us on his paper, "The Future of Smokejumping Policy Discussion." His paper summarized his thoughts on the issues and tasks that NSA would need to consider and work on in order to influence change. His paper is, in fact, a template for NSA to follow if we decide we want to enter this arena. This started a lively conversation/debate on various aspects of the current fire management scene, the use of smokejumpers, what's broken, why, and does anybody care. We debated whether NSA should be involved in trying to influence these issues and whether we could make any credible difference. **After extended discussion, the BOD agreed that the Executive Committee (EC) should continue to discuss this issue and debate how and whether to proceed.**

Status of Trademark Registration

Guy Hurlbutt

We have 3 possible trademarks needing renewal-clothing, magazine, and website, at a cost of \$500 each. We have some time because we don't need to apply for renewal until June, 2015. Do we need to renew all 3 of these trademarks? **Some debate was followed by a motion made and passed to proceed with renewing all 3.**

Membership Report

John McDaniel

We have added 14 new life members in the last 2 quarters, bringing our total to 290. We have had 17 upgrades to 10 year memberships plus a number of recaptures (former members rejoining). Total membership is 1595: 1438 are jumpers, 157 are associates. Sixty-eight members haven't renewed in the last 2 quarters, but John just recently sent out notices of expiration to them, so a number may rejoin. There have been a total of 5900 American jumpers in history. We think that about 25% of this number are no longer living.

Request for Database for health research project

Cherry/Sheley

Joe Domitrovich of the Missoula Equipment and Development Center (MEDC), in conjunction with the University of Montana, is asking permission to use the NSA data base to help conduct research into the long term health of wildland firefighters. Questionnaires would be sent to everyone on the data base to gain data about long term health issues that may be connected to wildland firefighting. Joe sent us a copy of the rigorous procedures that would be followed to protect individual identities and to insure that no one else can gain access to the data base. **After discussion on the pros and cons of making our data base available, a motion was made and passed to make the data base available. Our discussion focused on the contribution our participation in this research could make to identifying health issues associated with firefighting to the benefit of current and future firefighters and smokejumpers.**

Website Committee Report

Larry Lufkin

The drive to redesign and update the NSA website was based on feedback from a membership survey and from current knowledge about how to make websites more inviting and user friendly. Larry explained some of the challenges and issues associated with a redesign, and

making the website easy to navigate and useful. The new web design has been seen as a big improvement. The design was completed in May, with coding done by the end of June. Viewers like the new content and rotating pictures. Larry is maintaining a list of tasks that still need to be done, and the designers will work on them periodically in “sprints.” Mike handed out statistics on our website that he got from Google Analytics, showing trends over the last 2 years in number of visits, visits per day, number of unique visitors and average minutes per visit.

Magazine/Merchandise Report & Staffing

Chuck Sheley

The October issue was scheduled to feature the Redding Smokejumpers, but after Luke Sheehy’s death, it became a tribute to him. Chuck is totally out of copies and is going to do another small print run, so he can provide more copies to family and friends. Chuck is planning on the April issue being dedicated to Mark Urban.

There will be a 4 page merchandising flyer in the April newsletter.

Chuck maintains regular office hours and gets many electronic and phone inquiries. Chuck also distributed to the BOD a staffing paper describing his many duties.

Recess for social evening

Hosted by Polly and Fred Rohrbach for the NSA BOD and local NSA members. Many thanks to Polly and Fred for a fine evening of food, drink, and camaraderie.

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October 10

Guidelines for GSF

Hurlbutt/Smith

Doc read the change softening the language requiring a written application for aid. New wording suggests submitting a written application when possible. Our goal is to quickly consider requests and make a rapid decision and response. **Motion made, seconded, and passed to accept revision in language as presented by Doc.** There followed some discussion about how to clearly define who has decision-making authority: the full BOD, the EC, or the President.

Motion made to give the Executive Committee authority to give up to \$5,000 without Board approval. This was clarified to mean any portion of the EC that can be contacted and respond in a reasonable period of time. Motion seconded and passed.

Chuck made 2 requests: the first is to make a \$2,000 donation to the WLFF in the name of Luke Sheehy in thanks for their support. The second is to approve from the GSF \$400 to print additional magazines for Luke’s family. **Motion made, seconded, and approved to do both of these.**

Doc talked about the WLFF and their 52 Club and requested that we as individuals consider joining to show our support. John McDaniel mentioned that he joined the 52 club last night.

Mike Overby talked about his sales of Red Skies of Montana DVDs to raise money for the GSF. Between last year's MSO reunion and an email blast, Mike has netted \$1,385 profit. **Mike is willing to be the champion of fundraising for the GSF if the BOD is OK with that (and they are).** Fred shared some information about the costs of designing and producing a Montana state smokejumper license plate, and the potential risks and returns.

Long-range funding for scholarships

Cherry/Baker/Cooper

This year there were 9 applications, and 3 scholarships of \$2000 were given. As the program becomes more known, the number of applications is increasing. We discussed the idea that we should reduce the dollar amount of individual scholarships and increase the total number of scholarships given each year. We have received 2 donations to fund scholarships for a number of years to honor specific jumpers. Chuck presented his proposal for changing to more individual scholarships for more applicants, 4 scholarships of \$1000. We also discussed different ways we can raise money from smokejumper and non-smokejumpers sources. There is consensus that we need to improve and expand our fundraising efforts, particularly from outside sources like corporations and businesses. Motion made and seconded to fund 4 \$1000, 1 \$500, and 1 \$250. This motion was withdrawn after discussion and **amended to a motion to make 5 \$1000 awards and 1 \$250 award, using one common application, with the scholarship committee making determination on who gets what amounts. This motion passed unanimously. Jim will mention these scholarships in his President's Column for the January Smokejumper issue, and Larry will have the website info updated by January 1st.**

Report on Pilot data collection

Charlotte Larson

Charlotte continues to work on collecting smokejumper pilot info with names, dates, and locations they flew out of. She will continue to update us and may ask a few of us to proof read what she has so far.

Report on elimination of the 'other' facebook site

Bob Dayton

The other facebook site is still there, but has changed to say it is not affiliated with any particular organization like NSA. Facebook has said this page doesn't necessarily reflect any trademark or copyright violation. Chris Sorenson has set up and maintains our official site. You can look at the other site, see who likes it, but you can't post any content to it.

Unfinished business

BOD

Guy Hurlbutt recommends that we develop a Conflict of Interest policy, mostly to satisfy IRS requirements. He has volunteered to do it, and Jim will ask him to go ahead.

With Larry Longley's resignation, we need to continue looking for someone willing to take on the Historian role.

We know that adding new content regularly to the website keeps people coming back so any member of the board who sees interesting content should forward the link or info to Chuck and he will post it. Board notes are not being posted currently.

Nominations for the Al Dunton Award are due by the end of next month. Jim Cherry is the link to the Base Managers. The Base Managers make the decisions.

Expenses vouchers/evaluation of meeting/**BOD**

Lodging will be reimbursed for any expense over \$100 per night for a 2 night maximum. All other expenses, such as airfare, parking fees, mileage will be reimbursed for the total cost over \$300. This means that maximum personal cost for each BOD member should not exceed \$500 per meeting.

One or 2 topics went on a little long. Outside noise was an issue on day one. We could have used a bigger screen. More time on strategic plan, ways to raise money. Chuck wants to consider using this hotel again next year-free meeting room, free coffee, good airfares into Seattle, opportunity to get 2 bedrooms and double up to cut costs.

Bob McKean, MSO 67, attended the meeting as a guest and indicated at the end of the meeting he would consider serving as a Board Member if asked. Jim Cherry also asked if Bob would attend the next Board Meeting in Boise and Bob said he would.

Next meeting site/date

March 19-20, 2014 (Wed/Thurs) in Boise. Chuck will work on inexpensive lodging near the airport.

October 8-9, 2014 (Wed/Thurs) in Seattle, same facility.

In attendance: Jim Cherry, John McDaniel Chuck Sheley, Gary Baker, Mike Overby, John Marker, Fred Cooper, Roger Savage, Larry Lufkin, Bob Dayton, Charlotte Larson, John Packard, Doc Smith, Burk Minor, Bob McKean, John McMahan.