Meeting Minutes, October 18th, 2017

National Smokejumper Association Board of Directors
Meeting Notes
NSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – October 18, 2017
Residence Inn Seattle South/Tukwila - Seattle, WA

Call to order, introduction to site, introductions, approval of the agenda – Jim Cherry
Agenda was modified to accommodate time and availability of presenters.

Approval of previous meeting minutes –Jim Cherry
No changes or corrections were required. The notes from the previous meeting were approved as prepared by Tom Boatner.

Report on 2017 Trails Program - Fred Cooper
Trails program goals/objectives, funding and accountability – BOD
As a reminder, the trails program began in 1999 and NSA began in 1993. TRAMPS currently has about 150 members.

Handout of 2017 projects. Of the 24 projects planned for 2017, 3 were cancelled and 21 were completed. Projects were scheduled from May thru September, with most of the projects occurring in July. They covered 8 states. One project was also unique in that it utilized a youth group as volunteers. There were multiple and varied sources of funding for the projects this year which included grants, donations, Forest Service, States, Foundations, etc.

Handout regarding TRAMPS program. TRAMPS Objectives: ....“through a cadre of volunteers and partnerships........maintaining and restoring our nation’s forest and rangeland resources...” Motto: “We work for food.” Values: Comradeship, education, pride in work well done, and loyalty in the program.

Planning Cycle is December through February. Project proposals are developed and/or reviewed. Roughly half of the projects are building restoration and half are trail work. Projects are selected based on volunteer work force anticipated. Costs are estimated at $25/day /volunteer to cover food and other expenses. Funding sources must be assured. Once planning is complete and required squad leader and financial support are identified, projects are advertised on web site. As mentioned at previous board meetings, squad leaders are critical to the completion of a project. April 15 is the deadline for registrations which are then forwarded to the appropriate squad leader. Volunteers are requested to be NSA members (dues paying) but no one checks. Current or past jumpers, associates, women, wives, are all welcome. All must sign a volunteer service agreement. This covers workers comp and tort issues. Mike Overby is using the TRAMPS model for the State of NM projects. He asks for donations from local businesses to fund and/or provide materials for projects. He had four this summer.

Future of program. The Mission is as stated and will change if it becomes necessary. No outside partnerships are planned for younger recruits for sustainability. They have worked with AmeriCorp which was a good partnership that provided younger and stronger bodies for tasks. The Team leadership meets on Nov 16th and will discuss having Bill Derr advertise to other retired fire organizations for a source of workers. Hot shot group was suggested as a useful source. Fred is stepping done on December 1st and will mentor his replacement.
Financial. TRAMPS account balance is approximately $32,000. At least $10,000 is obligated. They have a need for a drastic look at caches for new or repaired equipment. Several years ago TRAMPS donated $18,000 to GSF. They don’t know if they will be able or willing to do that again.

Those that make donations understand that use of their money is broad. The new volunteer service agreement form identifies reimbursement per diem expense agreed to. Problem area is that ABQ service center doesn’t identify which project(s) the payments are for. It’s very hard to reconcile. Can TRAMPS identify which projects are financially solvent? Budget and finances for each project have been kept for last two years. When advance funds are requested for each project the cost is verified against the budget before approval. Don’t want to burden squad leaders with more work of tracking budgets and expenses.

8-10 TRAMPS and back country horsemen worked on MANN GULCH and funded same. Placed a plaque for Jim Phillips. They couldn’t do crosses due to FS restrictions.

Jim Cherry suggested that Fred present to TRAMPS team leadership to consider a partnership for the longevity of the organization. Partnership could be like a merger of businesses that would continue mission with a new name or whatever.

Bob McKean connected Brent Russ with the Board via telephone. Last fiscal year it was anticipated that the Budget would be flat. However, donations were considerably higher, especially the Historic Preservation Fund and GSF. Expenses remained flat. Larry Lufkin will send a copy of the 2018 budget that the BOD agreed to at the March meeting to Brent. Discussed items on P&L and balance sheet.

Brent: Big picture – membership organizations are struggling. NSA membership is aging. As members decrease there will be no association to support. It is doing well now but what about the future? It currently depends on individuals devoted to specific tasks. Trails funds are obligated for multiple years. Does that need to be identified? No, just donor restrictions need to be tracked. Endowments versus general donations (BOD decisions) for 501C3 and tracking.

Investment Committee report – John Packard
John handed out a summary of our current investment accounts and balances. Bob McKean monitors “selected NSA accounts” monthly. John Packard deals with VanGuard and also provides general oversight. Bob McKean has passwords for all financial accounts. Bob needs to share with Jim Cherry since Jim is named on accounts as well. NSA has made $110,000 on the Van Guard account since 2013. 8.1% is current rate of return. What triggers rebalance? Dollar cost average. Investment Committee hasn’t done a lot of rebalance, just additions. Equity/Fixed – Investment team makes decision based on BOD decisions. Originally decided on Equity 60%/Fixed 40%. Currently Equity 52%, Fixed 42%, Bonds 6%.

Good Samaritan Fund report – Chuck Sheley
Chuck handed out a summary of the GSF account. Of the 5 disbursements this calendar year (January-October) 3 have been to the Chung family due to their extenuating circumstances. There have been several reports in the SJ magazine regarding NSA support of Chung family. Tom Boatner is our representative with the Chung family. He will update the BOD at our meeting in March 2018.
generosity of our aging membership is increasing. The Executive committee can authorize up to $4000 for a specific distribution. Anything more has be approved by the BOD. The active fund indicates we are meeting our mission.

**Traveling Smokejumper display – Chuck Sheley**
The display has been shown to over 200,000 visitors. There are fixed displays at 3 different locations. Chuck has picked up a Triple Nickle display. The next display site is Turtle Bay. Kalamazoo is also a possible display site. The display is now printed on fabric instead of paper for ease of shipment and a longer life. How much lead time is required to order the display? For long distances Chuck needs at least a month. If site is closer and can be driven to, less time is required. The purpose of the display is educational and good will.

**Photo gallery report – Chuck Sheley/Mike McMillan**
Mike couldn’t be here but will give his report at the March 2018 meeting in Boise. He needs a link to NSA website. Bethany has not been responsive to inquiries regarding her web site. Her status with NSA is unknown. We need to work with Mike. It is NSA’s intention to get SJ memorabilia out of boxes and on line. Mansfield Library at the University of MT is not working out. Chuck is going to approach Eastern Washington University for help to record smokejumper history for the next generation.

**Scholarship program update – Jim Cherry**
Six $2000 scholarships were awarded this year. Jim shared the matrix used for selection of the winners.

- NSA member gets 5 points.
- Past or present SJ or pilot gets 5 points.
- Wife, child or grandchild get 3 points.
- Educational Facility: College -5 points. Other- 3 points. Previous college- 1 point for every year completed.
- Grade point average: Below 3.0 = 0 points. GPA 3.5 = 3 points. GPA 3.5 or higher = 5 points.
- Essay 0 – 5 points. 4 different people scored the essays.

With the passing of Jim Egan the current Scholarship Committee includes: Jim Cherry, Larry Lufkin, and Mike McMillan. Applicants must have a student ID and funds awarded are sent directly to the school. This year there were 19 applicants for the scholarships; 3 NSA members, 2 present or former jumpers, 17 ‘wife, child, or grandchild’. Scholarships were awarded to 1 jumper and 5 grandchildren. After discussion regarding the matrix, Bill Derr made a MOTION to change the point value for the essay to 0-10. John Packard seconded. BOD approved motion. Chuck Sheley made a MOTION to adopt the requirement that scholarships cannot be awarded in two consecutive years to the same recipient. Bob McKean seconded. BOD approved motion.

**Membership Report – John McDaniel**
Current members total 1606, of which 1450 are jumpers, 141 associates, 15 pilots, and 336 Life Members. Chuck Sheley stated that Obituaries are a major part of the magazine as our members age. It was suggested that Board members visit each base in the spring to promote NSA. When Chuck visits a base he provides a copy of the SJ magazine with the SJ history, a current magazine, and a CD. He schedules his visit for the 2nd day of training, first thing in the morning for 1½ hrs. Chuck has a power point presentation if anyone is interested.
Website Committee update – Larry Lufkin
Is website obsolete? No. A discussion of HTML vs plug in systems ensued. Plug in systems are less sophisticated. NSA is HTML. Currently trying to build the NSA site to be more mobile friendly. Our Store is not part of the web site. Links to the store go to a different site. Ed Booth set it up for Chuck. Fred has the site for Trails. There are two types of links; NSA owned and operated sites is one style. Other links are another. Also working on setting up a history site with a link from NSA to a separate site for historical info. Our previous History site was the portion of the NSA site that was hacked and had to be taken down.

Draft 2018-19 Budget – BOD
Jim Cherry suggested that the BOD should be more generous in reimbursements to board members. Current out of pocket expense is $300. Mileage is reimbursed at the rate of .25/mile. Jim recommended a change of $200 out of pocket and .50/mile driving. Chuck Sheley recommended a change to $100 out of pocket. Chuck Sheley made a MOTION to change the BOD travel reimbursement to $100 out of pocket expense and .50/mile for driving. Fred Cooper seconded. Motion approved by BOD. BOD will either physically mail a completed form with receipts, or you can also scan and send electronically to Jim Cherry. Jim will send a copy of the revised form to each Board member.

The BOD reviewed the 2018-2019 draft Budget line items. The budget will be finalized at the March 2018 meeting.

Lunch – Catered lunch

RAC Visitor Center - Bill Selby/Joe Stutler
Handouts. Redmond is in a unique position to commercially capitalize on the public’s interest in Smokejumping similar to what is currently being done in Missoula, but with the addition of modern technology. A Visitor Center would be a unique tourist attraction to Central Oregon and Redmond that will provide an urban-forest/wildland fire recreation experience. No financial support is requested from NSA but we would like support/approval from NSA for the project. The preferred option would include a 3500 sq feet two-story building with aircraft and parachute simulators, replicated lookout tower in the center accessible from the interior of the building with ADA access, as well as a ramp area for static displays. It would be owned by Redmond City. We expect to collect 4.5 million dollars locally to finish the project. The preferred choice is Option 5, Alternative 5. If possible local concessioners would be included at the facility. Costs would be shared between the airport, city, county, Central Oregon Visitors Bureau, and the FS. The FS would provide the staff. Construction dollars would come from other than FS. A full tour is expected to be about 3 hours. Fred Cooper made a MOTION for a letter to be drafted and signed by NSA in support of the Redmond SJ Visitor’s Center. Second. BOD Approved. Joe Stutler will compose the letter and Jim Cherry will sign for NSA. A powerpoint presentation was given. They are looking at 2019 to open the Center.

Historic Preservation Program – Chuck Sheley
History series book completed or being written: #1 SJ and CIA, #2 Firestarters, #3 Gobi, Redding, and Boise. The program needs writers to write the history of every base. Chuck is working on the Triple Nickle History with ? and also making corrections to previously inaccurate documents. And 1939 experimental program. Fred Cooper is also working on the 1939 experimental program and the 16 men involved. Lloyd Lufkin has his dad’s photo album of that time and offered it to Fred.
History website: As mentioned previously, Chuck is trying to get Eastern Washington University to help NSA. Fred found a woman that revamped the Trails website history in Wordpress. Fred made a MOTION that he develop a proposal for bid for NSA history website to include initial, service, cost, etc. Stan Collins would be good resource. Charlie Palmer also. Will submit proposal electronically to BOD for approval.

**Partnerships – Bill Derr**
Handout – Bod to identify any other relationships or possibilities. Add a hotshot rep on Trails team? BLM rep? To date no BLM projects have been appropriate for TRAMPS. Inviting one or two persons from partnership list to meetings might be advantageous.

**Death of Chris Sorensen & Facebook management – BOD**
Chris experienced a fatal single car accident in Montana due to a blown tire. Loss of FB page due to loss of password. We now have two FB pages that we do not have access to or control of. NSA needs to pursue FB to delete the first site and reset the password on Chris’s site. John ? to pursue.

**Fred Donner issue to BOD – Jim Cherry**
Handouts. Donner has had 25 – 30 articles published over the years. Is there any interest from jump community? From jumpers of that vintage yes, others probably not. Discussion, some of his articles are not appropriate for the SJ magazine. Triple Nickle issue a non-issue to BOD. Larry Lufkin to write a letter of response indicating nonsupport of Donner complaint by NSA BOD.

**Board Succession planning**
Jim Cherry announced his intent to resign from the NSA President’s position at the close of our fall meeting in 2018. It is hoped we will have a candidate to replace him by that time. The Board has the freedom to look at the strengths and weaknesses of the current BOD and selectively approach candidates to invite them to a BOD meeting for possible membership. Wisdom, Willingness and Wealth are necessary to serve on the BOD – well at least 2 out of the 3.

**Brainstorming NSA future – BOD**
BOD has looked at mission statement and determined that it is where we want to be. Would a Monkey survey of younger jumpers to help determine a better way to be more relevant to them be helpful? BOD used to meet at SJ bases but with no real benefit and at great expense. Tom Boatner said at last BOD meeting that we need to stop running into a brick wall and stop agonizing over this topic. What would it take for NSA to accomplish our mission? Discussion. We are not there yet. Should we continue on our current course until assets gone? Set up a foundation with assets/earnings to provide continued scholarships and/or GSF?

**Meeting evaluation and next meeting date/location & adjournment – BOD**
Next meeting will be in Boise at the Wildland Firefighting Association on March 7, 2018. There will be a social in the evening. Jim will send a current list of BOD members with contact information to each member. National Reunion - ? Haven’t been able to identify anyone that will host. Missoula has the best attendance. The national reunion is due in 2019. Each Base continues to host their individual reunions.

**In Attendance:** Charlotte Larson, Larry Lufkin, Bob McKeen, Bill Derr, ?, Joe Stutler, Bill Selby, Chuck Sheley, Jim Cherry, John Packard, Fred Cooper, John McDaniel