

August 2022

## Meeting Minutes, August 11th, 2022

National Smokejumper Association Board of Directors

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## NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION

### NSA August 11, 2022 Board of Directors Minutes

#### Boise, Idaho

Board Members Present: Bob McKean, Bill Derr (via Zoom), Fred Cooper, Chuck Sheley, Larry Lufkin, Jim Cherry, Denny Breslin, John Berry, Joe Stutler (via Zoom), and Mike Bina. Not present; Pat McGunagle and Jim Lindell.

Guests: Brent Russ, Financial Advisor; David Provencio, U.S. Hot Shots Association board of directors' member; Leo Cromwell; Phil Petty; Bob Smee; Doug Stinson; Bill Moody; and Lynn Sprague.

#### 1. Call to Order

Bob McKean, NSA President, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. MT. Bob welcomed the board and guests. He asked each person to introduce themselves. Bob handed out printed copies of all handouts in addition to having made them available online prior to the meeting.

#### 2. Reunion Update

Lynn Sprague, chairman of the reunion host committee, updated the board on the reunion which was scheduled to start the next day. He reported that 256 jumpers and 194 guest are registered. He reviewed the reunion schedule and agenda. Bob thanked the host committee for their hard work and planning over a five-year period necessitated by the reunion having to be postponed due to COVID concerns two years ago.

#### 3. Agenda and Consent Agenda

Bob asked for the following two motions to A.) Approve the agenda (HO 1); and B.) Approve the October 2021 NSA board of directors

meeting minutes (HO #2a); the Scholarship Committee Report HO 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e, 2f, and 2g; and the Membership Recruitment report HO 2h.

These two separate motions were made, seconded, and following no discussion, both approved unanimously.

#### 4. National Hot Shot Association (NHSA) Report

Bob introduced David Provencio, who is a member of the NHSA board of directors. David is a former MSO smokejumper. David explained the NHSA was formed in 2016. Their mission is to support Hot Shot crews and preserve their history. They currently have 400 members. The association dues are \$25 annually. They are interested in collaborative and cooperative ventures with other allied organizations. The NHSA has a presence on social media including FB, Pinterest, and Instagram. The association does fundraisers that include hosting a volleyball tournament. Proceeds support member needs and scholarships. They also organize an annual conference and have reunions. Bob Smee recommended that the NHSA become involved in the TRAILS program. Jim Cherry asked about Wildfire Foundation collaboration. David explained that the two organizations are very connected.

#### 5. Financials and Treasurer's Report (HO 5a and 5b)

John Berry presented financial documents. He expressed appreciation to the investment committee for their work during the period of market volatility. He also expressed appreciation to Chuck Sheley for his work increasing membership. John reported that the investment portfolio is beating the market and that donations have been solid and generous. As result of these donations, the NSA has not had to use unrestricted investment funds to pay for operational expenses and in actuality, the association has increased the amount of investments. John reported that CD interest rates are improving from 3.1 to 3.5 percent of one- and five-year CDs, respectively. Mutual funds have decreased due to market decline. John also reported that the investment committee recommended changes due to market volatility and accordingly, adjustments were made. John

emphasized that while the NSA has \$1.45 in fund balance, the association only has \$743,00 in unrestricted funds. Brent Russ reviewed the balance sheet and answered questions.

Motion was made to accept the treasurer's report, seconded, and following no discussion, motion passed unanimously.

#### 6. Historical Preservation at Eastern Washington University (HO 6)

Chuck Sheley reported on membership increases and outlined the progress made getting jumper bios done. He reported that very few of the current 400 jumpers have joined the NSA. Chuck went over his report and highlighted the historical holdings that are archived at Eastern Washington University. He also outlined the development of this digital commons collection and expressed appreciation to the university and key individuals who have made this significant contribution to preserving smokejumper history.

#### 7. NSA Future (HO 7)

Chuck highlighted elements of his submitted report that breaks down the rookies by ten-year increments and membership numbers for each group. Of the 1419 NSA members, jumpers from 1940 to 1959 account for 18%; jumpers from 1960 to 1990 account for 68%; and jumpers from the last 30 years comprise only 12% of NSA members.

#### 8. Forest Service Museum Proposed MOU (HO 8a, 8b, 8c, and 8d)

Fred Cooper and Lynn Sprague, who serve on the USFS Museum board of directors, gave an overview of the USFS Museum in Missoula, its mission, history, and the progress made. Lynn stated

that Chuck asked for a formal agreement with FSM and proposed \$1M to preserve smokejumper history.

Bob McKean submitted a very thorough and detailed summary (HO 8a) as part of the board meeting handouts. His report summary was intended to brief the board about events and discussions that occurred leading and subsequent to the passage of a motion at the March board meeting to form an ad hoc NSA negotiation subcommittee to consider the MOU (HO 8b) presented by the FSM to the NSA.

John Berry highlighted his written report (HO 8d) that was included in the board meeting handouts. John reported the financial implications, the affordability, and the resultant difficulty for the NSA to provide such a large amount for this project. John reiterated and cautioned the board that while the NSA has \$1.45 in fund balance, the association only has \$743,00 in unrestricted funds.

Members of the ad hoc NSA Museum Negotiation Subcommittee were Jim Lindell, Larry Lufkin, Chuck Sheley and Mike Bina. Larry Lufkin and Mike Bina reported that the NSA negotiation committee suggested some changes to the MOU that the FSM originally drafted. The primary counter-offer recommended 1.) \$750K versus \$1M and 2.) the NSA would have a 3-to-5-year period to make the donation in installments versus having to make the donation in one lump sum.

They also reported that Jim Lindell took the counter-proposed MOU to the FSM attorney, who indicated that the FSM was not willing to reduce the original donation amount or the time frame in which it was to be paid. Given that the FSM was not willing to negotiate, the NSA Negotiation Committee referred the negotiation stalemate to the EC for next steps.

Bob opened the floor for discussion and invited questions and answers. It was pointed out that 1.) the NSA already has done a

comprehensive and thoroughly impressive job preserving its history though the Eastern Washington University Digital Commons, the Smokejumper magazine, jumper bios and obits, the NSA website, published books, etc. and 2.) there are other sites around the country that are already preserving smokejumper history.

Following a very extensive discussion, the board agreed to 1.) continue discussing on and consideration of preserving smokejumping history discussion at a later day, and 2.) as part of formal plan and process develop and consider all options to preserve smokejumper history.

It was moved that the NSA president appoint a Historical Preservation Sub-committee to explore and develop options for board consideration. Motion seconded, and following discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

#### 9. NSA Website (HO 9a and 9b)

Larry Lufkin provided a historical overview of the NSA website from its original launch years ago to the current status today. Larry reported that John Robinson is our current web-master. He pointed out the issue that with John's health issues we could be left without someone to continue the sustained operation of the site. Larry also detailed another complicating issue that since John is the only person who holds the website passwords, this is especially concerning and potentially problematic.

In light of the above, Larry recommended that the NSA 1.) engage another service provider to ensure website sustainability and 2.) contract with him or her to redesigned and upgrade the website.

Motion was made by the Executive Committee to engage Christy Costello to redesign the NSA website using existing content and

features using the Wordpress platform with remuneration not to exceed \$12,500.

With a motion coming from a committee, it requires no second. Motion was discussed and, after the question was called, it passed unanimously.

Larry will be the primary point of contact with Christy. John Robinson has agreed to assist in the redesign process.

#### 10. Soliciting Grants and Gifts (HO 10c)

Jim Cherry and Mike Bina moved that the NSA engage Donna Fischer-Williams for grant writing fundraising services for the NSA not to exceed \$2,835 for 63 hours at \$45 per hour.

Following the motion, second, and discussion, it passed unanimously.

Ms. Fischer-Williams services will be coordinated by an ad hoc grant and major gift subcommittee appointed by the NSA president.

Jim Cherry and Bob McKean emphasized that grants solicited by and on behalf of the NSA need to be submitted under the signature of the board president.

#### 11. Investment Committee (HO 11a)

The investment committee is comprised of Bob Dalton, Roger Cox, John Berry, and John Packard. Given bear market volatility, high interest rates, record low unemployment, consumer discretionary spending, and inflation, John Packard reported it has been challenging getting consensus on the committee. The committee

continues to review the investment policies and makes adjustments accordingly. Overall investments are down, but the committee is beating the bear market.

## 12. Nominations Committee (HO 12)

Jim Cherry reported that the committee also includes Mike Bina and Patrick McGunagle. The committee recruited Tom Boatner and Kim Maynard to serve as committee advisors. Jim reported on the board survey of experience and expertise. He outlined the results that illustrate in what areas the board is well-represented and where it has experience and expertise gaps.

The committee decided not to submit a slate of candidates to fill board vacancies wanting to use the reunion as an opportunity to find potential candidates. The board currently has three board seats that are vacant.

## 13. Legacy Fund

*The Keep the Flame Legacy Jump List* has 15 individuals who have made commitments. Thus far living will donations amount to \$27,000 received in cash. These cash gifts have been placed in restricted investments, which donors prefer and insist be done, that is that their gifts are not spent, but continue to grow. Other individuals have made commitments but they are part of bequest gifts outlined in individual wills. Fifty percent of the board have made commitments.

## 14. Budget (HO 13)



John Berry and Larry Lufkin presented a draft budget proposal. John and Larry highlighted and explained income, investments, membership, donations, legacy, TRAILS, and other line items.

Motion made to approved the budget, seconded, and following discussions and questions and answers, the budget was approved.

As part of the budget, Chuck Sheley's salary will be increased from \$40,000 to \$44,000 to provide additional funds for magazine proofreading and expenses.

#### 15. Report from Liaison to Active Jumpers

Patrick McGunagle could not be at the board meeting due to work commitments. Jim Cherry went over Patrick's report and recommendations. His motion to approve and formalize the Board Liaison position was seconded, discussed, and when voted upon was approved unanimously.

The Liaison will coordinate membership of rookies and second year jumpers to have at no cost electronic access to the Smokejumper magazine.

Per Patrick's recommendation to add "advocating for smokejumpers" as part of the NSA mission statement and incorporation into the by-laws, this matter will be referred to the Executive Committee.

#### 16. Tramps Trail Program

Fred Cooper highlighted his submitted report HO 15. Fred and Bob Smee stated the difficulty in recruiting more members with fewer individuals volunteering. The trail program is open to ideas how to increase involvement.

#### 17. Facebook

John Berry reported on his NSA Facebook report. HO 17. The NSA FB page has grown to 5,679 followers. The demographic is primarily males 35-55 years of age. The USFS and the FS smokejumper bases are not very active; however, the BLM bases and Facebook pages are very active. The third highest contributor is Wildfire Today.

The separate NSA Smokejumper FB page and group is restricted and has 459 members, which is up from 421 users in last March.

#### 18. Scholarship Committee

Jim Cherry reported that his committee is comprised of Larry Lufkin, Charlotte Larson, and Mike Bina. The new web-based scholarship application process is working very efficiently. He reported the increase in both quantity and quality of the scholarship applications.

Motion made that applicants must be a member of the NSA to submit a scholarship application. Motion coming from a committee needs no second. After discussion, motion passed unanimously.

#### 19. Wrap-up

Bob thanks the board for their work and expressed appreciation for the members in attendance as guests. He again thanked the reunion committee for all their work and looked forward to the gathering and activities.

#### 16. Adjournment.

Motion made to adjourn and was seconded. Being a privileged motion, it required no discussion. Motion approved unanimously.

Submitted by Mike Bina, NSA Board Secretary.

August 11, 2022