

# Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the National Association of Rocketry

February 23-24, 2017

The meeting was called to order before NARCON 2017, Thursday, February 23, 2017 at the Crowne Plaza Dulles Airport in Reston, Virginia at 6:09 PM. Trustees present in person: John Hochheimer, president; Ryan Coleman, vice president; Vince Huegele, Ed LaCroix, John Lyngdal, Mark Wise. Members present via conference call: Joyce Guzik, Carol Marple. Members absent: Tom Ha.

**Ed L. moved to approve minutes from July 2016 BOT meeting. Vince H. seconded. Approved unanimously.**

The meeting was called into executive session. The topics of discussion were related to NAR Headquarters, financial reports, publications, insurance, Section Activities, awards, and HPR range operations.

Executive session ended at 7:50 PM, and the regular meeting continued.

## Contests and Records

Only eight competition meets have been reported during the current contest year. (i.e. since NARAM-58) No Rules Change Proposals (RCP) are currently being considered, as the RCP process has been indefinitely suspended.

Ed L. updated the Board on the status of the Enhancing Competition Subcommittee (ECS) and the preliminary version of the new Model Rocket Sporting Code (MRSC).

The ECS opened a 90-day window for member comments after NARAM, during which 106 comments were received. Thirty-five of them resulted in changes to the draft MRSC. Some comments were too prescient, and would be addressed more appropriately by the RCP process when it's reinstated. Several respondents offered comments that were not useful as submitted, so Ed wrote each respondent to ask for a clarification or a policy proposal. None of the people he contacted responded to him. Most comments addressed section 13 (Competition and Championships), where the most substantial changes were made. Ed suggested adding a PDF of the current draft of the MRSC to the NAR website and inviting members to e-mail him directly with comments. He emphasized that we do not want our members to think that their opportunity to comment has passed and their input is unwelcome. John H suggested posting the current draft on the same page as the previous draft sections and comments.

Ryan C. expressed concern about the omission of the Research and Development (R&D) event from the draft MRSC. He pointed out that the event has been part of the National Championship for nearly 60 years, and argued that it should not be deleted now. Joyce G. agreed with Ryan, and added that a competition meet cannot include an event that does not exist in the MRSC. A committee chaired by NAR member Chris Flanigan has looked into the future of R&D and suggested changes. They have presented their report to John H., but the other trustees have not yet seen the report. After extensive discussion, John H. remarked that there will be some trial and error as we implement the new MRSC, adding, "This doesn't have to be a divisive thing. Let's keep moving the ball forward."

**Ryan C. moved to reinstate Research and Development in the draft Model Rocket Sporting Code. Joyce G. seconded. In favor: Ryan C., Joyce G., Vince H., John L., Mark W. Abstaining: Ed L., Carol M. Motion approved.**

The final version of the MRSC will be sent to the Board of Trustees no later than April 15<sup>th</sup> for final review, and will be posted to the NAR website on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

John H. asked what needs to be done for MRSC implementation and outreach. The ECS is discussing the creation of an implementation guide, to be kept as simple as possible. The process for sanctioning competitions will have to be moved online, a running scoreboard for the National Rocketry Competition (NRC) will have to be created for the NAR website, and appropriate modifications will have to be made to Contest Manager software. A Competition Handbook describing the various processes (applying for sanction, reporting results, etc.) will have to be written and posted to the NAR website.

### **Standards and Testing**

John L. reported continuing problems with Estes E9 and E12 CATOs. He has forwarded summary reports to Mary Roberts at Estes. He commented that we can still pick out the bad lot numbers, but added that Estes goes “above and beyond” with their response to warranty claims.

John L., Bob Krech of S&T, and Allen Whitmore of the Tripoli Rocketry Association traveled to Aerotech’s facilities last fall to observe the testing of large motors. (Gary Rosenfield of Aerotech had proposed allowing manufacturers to perform their own certification testing, but his proposal was not approved by NFPA. Having NAR and TRA observers onsite during testing meets the intent of the NFPA standards). The logistics of the “observed testing” session worked out satisfactorily.

John H. observed an NAR motor testing session of A and B motors in Cambridge, Massachusetts earlier in February.

The Board discussed the fact that S&T relies heavily on committee chair Jack Kane’s relationship with MIT, whose facilities we use for testing. John L. suggested that S&T should build an alternative testing system as insurance against the possibility of losing access to the MIT test cell. Bob Krech estimates that \$5000 will cover the cost of a test cell housed in a trailer. John L. said that S&T has access to a site in Maine, about 90 minutes from Boston, and that with a concrete pad on the site they would be able to test motors of any size. (The MIT test cell is not suitable for large motors.)

**Ed L. moved to approve \$5000 for a trailer, a mobile test stand, and new test equipment as needed. Vince H. seconded. In favor: Ryan C., Joyce G., Vince H., Carol M., Mark W. Abstaining: John L. Motion approved.**

### **Section Activities**

There are currently 173 active sections, 17 of which are new sections joining since the end of 2016’s renewal process. The committee distributed just under \$7400 in section grants, averaging a bit less than \$240 per grant.

The section recognition program is still not ready to be released. John H. pointed out that section recognition is a difficult thing to do, for a variety of reasons.

John H. reported that issuing site insurance certificates is now an extremely easy process. Bob Blomster, the NAR's insurance agent, must review each request before issuing a certificate, but the process is still easy. The entire process is now handled electronically, with no need for paper requests or phone calls. Mr. Blomster can often issue an insurance certificate on the same day it's requested. If a launch site is already in the system, the site owner will automatically receive a renewal certificate.

The NAR has received the invoices for the annual insurance premiums from Mr. Blomster. The \$5,000,000 policy (essentially the same policy as last year) will cost \$76,246.01 in 2017, about a 10% increase over the 2016 cost, due mostly to greater membership numbers. We declined coverage for claims related to terrorism (a standard option on insurance policies today), which saved \$8000.

All insurance carriers, including ours, now have policy riders that state that they do not cover Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS). We have clarified that radio-controlled boost gliders and radio-controlled rocket gliders are not considered UAS.

**Mark W. moved to pay the 2017 liability insurance premium. Vince H. seconded. Approved unanimously.**

The Directors and Officers insurance policy for 2017 is \$1537.00, and will not change for the next three years.

**Vince H. moved to pay the 2017 Directors and Officers insurance premium. Ed L. seconded. Approved unanimously.**

The section renewal process has been decoupled from the insurance renewal process, so there is less of a sense of urgency to process section renewals. The process is now electronic, and Chuck Neff and Jon Bolden are working on updates to the NAR website to facilitate section renewal. Section charter certificates are now generated automatically.

**Ryan C. moved to allocate \$25,000 for 2017 section grants. John L. seconded. Approved unanimously.**

### **National Events**

NARCON had to limit registration to 200 people, which was the maximum number the convention hotel could accommodate. NARCON has never had to shut down registration before, and several Board members remarked that NARCON 2017 is the best-attended NARCON in memory, and probably the largest rocketry conference since the 1970's.

Preparations for the National Sport Launch (NSL) are going well. Tours and other activities have been added to the event.

Both NSL 2016 and NARCON 2017 used the NAR's online registration system, with good results and minimal complaints from members.

NARAM-59: Bob Alway is the Contest Director, backed up by a supportive section. An FAI World Cup and flyoff event will be held the weekend before NARAM at the same launch site, directed by Mike Nowak.

NARAM-60: The event will probably be held in Pueblo, Colorado. An event director has not yet been named. Some sort of NAR 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorative event will probably be held at NARAM, as well.

NARCON 2018: John H. has contacts in the Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau, and will explore the possibility of holding NARCON there.

The Board recessed at 10:28 PM.

The Board reconvened at 8:00 AM on Friday, February 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Member Needs and Concerns**

Burl Finkelstein is looking into revising California's requirement to have a Pyrotechnic Operator – Rocket 3<sup>rd</sup> Class ("Pyro 3") for high power launches. He is looking for someone in California with regulatory law experience and the time to work on this issue. John L. suggested reaching out to someone in the California pyrotechnics community to work with Burl. Ryan C. said that a Pyro 3 license is not particularly difficult to obtain, adding, "You probably shouldn't fly HPR if you can't pass the test." John L. suggested adding a Pyro 3 tutorial to the NAR website to assist anyone applying for the license. Ryan added that the California fire marshal's office doesn't have the resources to enforce the requirement, that they confiscate tons of fireworks every year, and HPR is not a serious concern for them. A Pyro 3 license costs \$50.00 per year, which is a concern. John L. suggested that the NAR subsidize the affected sections for one member's Pyro 3 license annually. John H. and Ed L. pointed out that a section grant could be used to pay for one or more licenses. The question came up whether only one person at a launch needs the Pyro 3 license, or does everyone flying HPR in California need the license. Ryan said there's never been a clear ruling on the question. John H. will contact the people in California to discuss a way ahead, and we will post appropriate information to the NAR website to clarify the situation.

Don Carson addressed the Board regarding the requirements for the LAC Newsletter Award. He proposes making electronic newsletters eligible for the award. He noted that rising printing and postage costs have put a traditional paper newsletter beyond reach of most Sections, and that electronic newsletters serve the same purpose at lower cost. Ed L. suggested including a question on this topic in the next member survey.

**Ed L. moved that Carol Marple, in her capacity as Media Committee chair, contact the three LAC Newsletter Award judges for their input regarding electronic newsletters, so that the Board can consider their opinions in deciding whether electronic-only newsletters should be eligible for the award. Joyce G. seconded. Approved unanimously.**

Don volunteered to assist Carol in researching this question and moving forward. Carol expressed her appreciation and said that she would contact him.

Frank Burke brought up a concern about radio controlled rocket gliders and minimum field dimensions. He wrote that there are many fields that are smaller than the Model Rocket Safety Code's minimum field dimensions where RC rocket gliders could be flown safely. John H. proposed that the Board turn the matter over to Ed. L. and Safety Committee chair Steve Lubliner, as part of their effort to update the Radio Control Rocket Glider Safety Code.

John Thompson asked if NAR maintains an archive of NARCON presentations. He mentioned watching a DVD of NARCON 2003 while he was deployed to Iraq, and watching NARCON 2016 on YouTube. The Board will ask NAR Historian Jennifer Ash to develop guidelines for event directors.

## **Membership**

NAR membership peaked at approximately 6800 members in October 2016, largely due to new TARC teams, but dropped at the end of October as the previous year's TARC members fell off. Membership growth is still good, and the year-over-year cash balance is just about flat, which means that NAR is doing a good job of spending the money brought in by additional members.

## **Education**

Roy Houchin drafted a Memorandum of Understanding with the Air Force Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (AFJROTC) in response to interest from AFJROTC leadership. The draft MOU is similar to the MOU with the Civil Air Patrol that was signed in 2014, and addresses collaboration on TARC, local contests, science fairs, space-related activities, sport launches and other activities of mutual interest. John H. modified paragraph II.A, a description of the NAR, based on input from Board members.

**John L. moved that the NAR proceed with pursuing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Air Force Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps. Vince H. seconded. Approved unanimously.**

**Mark W. moved to provide \$35,000 for Cannon grants, Extracurricular Activity grants, and scholarships, in the same allocations as in 2016. Vince H. seconded. Approved unanimously.**

## **Media**

Carol M. has set up Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram accounts for the NAR. It is easy to communicate that the sites exist – we can announce them in the E-Rocketeer, and add links from the NAR web page. It is more difficult to keep the content updated. After discussion, the Board's consensus was that national events are ideal occasions for tweetstorms, Instagram posts, and Facebook Live events, and that those would be much more achievable than maintaining a running, low-level social media presence throughout the year.

Carol presented an extensive list of near-term and long-term efforts to grow the NAR's social media presence.

In the next three to six months:

- Add social media icons for Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to the NAR website.
- Announce social media accounts on Facebook.
- Include a small ad in *Sport Rocketry* to share social media sites.
- Cross-post a link for e-Rocketeer newsletter from website to Facebook and Twitter.
- Cross-post section listings from website to Facebook and Twitter to advertise clubs to our followers who may not be aware of clubs in their area.

- Establish a “Section Spotlight” feature to share Sections on Facebook. Carol will contact sections to gather information that they would like to share, such as location, number of club members, and a few fun facts about the section. Will also include a link to the section’s website in post.
- Request videos from members for upload to the NAR YouTube channel.
- Include a “Get to Know the NAR” post to introduce the NAR Board of Trustees and Committee Chairs to increase our connection with the membership.
- Discuss possibility of having an “Ask the President/Vice President” feature, where John H. or Ryan C. will host a Q&A session on Facebook. This could occur every one or two months, with a time limit of 30 minutes, and would give the membership the opportunity to ask questions. Another option would be for all questions to be pre-submitted by a deadline, and the Q&A is posted without live interaction.

Six months and beyond:

- Broadcast from national events (with Facebook Live or other method), to include individual launches (unique projects, HPR flights, cert flights, etc.), presentations, manufacturer’s announcements, Town Hall meeting, introduce VIP guests (such as Vern and Gleda Estes), etc. This would broadcast clips of selected activities, not the entire event, so that we don’t diminish the value of attending the event in person.
- Advertise Section newsletters on Facebook. This would be accomplished by establishing a document in the Files section which includes links to Section newsletters.
- Discuss partnerships with The Rocketry Forum and Ye Olde Rocket Forum to possibly establish a “NAR News” section, where NAR information and news can be shared to these popular forums.
- Establish a “Member Spotlight” feature to highlight NAR members on the Facebook page. This feature would include a one or two paragraph write up (written by the member; screened by Facebook admins) that would be shared to all Facebook users on a rotating basis.
- Establish a “Vendor Spotlight” feature to highlight various rocketry vendors on the Facebook page. This feature would include one or two paragraphs written by the vendor, and include the vendor’s website.
- Contact Tower Hobbies to discuss the possibility of including a “Rockets 101” section on their website. This would be a beginner’s guide to rocketry, similar to their “Easy RC” section ([www.easyrc.com](http://www.easyrc.com)).

Ed L. suggested using YouTube to support the National Rocketry competition, post build videos, etc. No Board action is required at this time. John H. thanked Carol for a great report.

### **Museum of Flight**

Pat Fitzpatrick, Chairman of the Special Committee on the Museum of Flight partnership, reported that the partnership is going well, although the Museum is currently busy getting its new Apollo display ready. Pat also discussed the possibility of creating the “NAR Historical Preservation and Exhibits Fund,” a concept he’s discussed with John H. and Trip Barber. John and Pat have discussed linking the NAR’s 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a fundraising campaign. The Historical Preservation and Exhibits Fund would not be tied to the Museum of Flight in name or practice; rather, it would be a fund for the NAR to use as it sees fit to preserve the history of the hobby and the NAR.

Pat also reported that Jeff Nunn, an adjunct curator at the museum, suggested a NAR traveling exhibit. Pat envisions a co-exhibit with Columbia, the Apollo 11 command module, while it is on display at the museum in March-September 2019. Pat admits that it will be difficult to sell the concept to the museum, but believes that it's worth trying. He will talk to the development staff at the museum to get a sense of how much money would have to be raised.

**Ryan C. moved to establish a NAR Historical Preservation and Exhibits Fund, and charge the Special Committee on the Museum of Flight to develop an implementation plan for a NAR 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary funding campaign. Mark W. seconded. Approved unanimously.**

### **Special Committee on FAI Activities**

The U.S. team was very successful at the 2016 World Spacemodeling Championships. John Langford and Chris Flanigan have been strongly engaged in improving the performance of U.S. competitors, and their efforts have produced impressive results. Flyoffs to determine the makeup of the 2018 U.S. team will take place immediately before NARAM-59. A Capitol Cup FAI event will be held in the Washington, D.C. area in the fall of 2107. The committee requested \$7000 to help defray the participation costs of junior team members, to be matched by Aurora Flight Sciences.

**Ed L. moved to donate \$7000 to support the U.S. FAI team. Mark W. seconded. Approved unanimously.**

### **Technology and Website**

Chris Kidwell is working on a system for automatic scoring of the National Rocketry Competition. A test site is up and running.

Mark Bundick is nearly done with indexing back issues of *Sport Rocketry*. Jennifer Ash and Tom Ha are continuing to scan articles for posting to the NAR website.

The NARTS website is ready to use, but Brad Cline has not yet moved operations to the new website.

**Mark W. moved to budget \$9000 for technology and website expenses, the same amount as in 2016. Ed L. seconded. In favor: Joyce G., Vince H., John L., Carol M., Mark W. Abstaining: Ryan C. Motion approved.**

### **Final Items**

**Vince H. moved that the Media Committee be formally created as a special committee, with Carol Marple as chair. John L. seconded. Approved unanimously.**

Ed L. brought up the fact that the Rules Change Proposal process has been suspended indefinitely. The Board's consensus was that we will need to allow some time for the new Model Rocket Sporting Code to take hold before soliciting RCP's.

**Ed L. moved that the Rules Change Proposal process be suspended indefinitely, or until the Contest Board requests that it be reinstated. Mark W. seconded. Approved unanimously.**

Ed said that he and Jim Filler will undertake a review of the RCP process. They will submit recommendations to the Board, who has the sole authority to change the process. Their intent is to have a report ready by NARAM-59.

Ed L. brought up the matter of contest certification of motors. Contest certification involves a 60-day waiting period after S&T issues the safety certification for a new motor before it may be used in competition. The intent of a waiting period before contest certification has been to give a manufacturer time to get a new motor into production and make it available to competitors. Ed asked whether the waiting period is truly necessary. John H. asked Ed to develop a proposal to address the issue, and to present it to the full Board at the July meeting.

John H. reminded incumbent trustees running for re-election to send their candidate biographies to Joyce G. by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Ed L. moved to adjourn. John L. seconded. Approved unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM. The Board will reconvene before NARAM-59 in Muskegon, Michigan.

DRAFT