



Minutes of the National Association of Rocketry Board of Trustees Meeting

March 19-20, 2009 at NARCON 2009, Wethersfield, Connecticut

The National Association of Rocketry Board of Trustees convened at 8 PM Thursday, March 19, 2009 at the host hotel for NARCON-2009 at Wethersfield, CT. The following Board members were present:

Joyce Guzik
 John Lyngdal
 Trip Barber
 Ted Cochran
 George Rachor
 Jennifer Ash-Poole
 John Hochheimer
 Vince Huegele
 Absent: Stew McNabb

The Board immediately entered Executive session for discussion of the BATFE lawsuit, the status of the hobby rocket industry, and NAR personnel matters. The Board came out of executive session at 9 PM.

Motion by Ted Cochran – seconded by Joyce Guzik. Passed unanimously.
The list of unexecuted decisions from previous Board meetings whose completion status is being tracked by the Board shall be reduced so that it contains only the following tasks:

Production of a Contest Directors Guide
Improvement of Available Competition Resources
Implementation of Joint Launch/Insurance Policy with TRA
Production of a NAR Rocketry Handbook for Retail Sale
Development of a Simplified Trained Safety Officer Program
Development of a NAR Website award
Revision of the NAR Section Manual
Development of a NAR Treasurer Manual of Accounting Procedure
Develop Safety Best Practices Guidelines for RSO's

NAR Member Concerns.

Insurance. Jeff Short of Austin, TX (AARG section) asked if his dual (NAR/TRA) chartered club needed to declare their launches in advance as a NAR or TRA launch for insurance purposes. The NAR President noted that he has been discussing a potential joint policy on insurance with TRA President Ken Good to clarify the current ambiguity in which coverage is primary in event of an incident for dual-chartered clubs and dual-insured launch sites, but there is not yet a consensus on how to proceed. The Board declined to take unilateral action on this issue, and the President will continue negotiations with TRA on a joint policy. Currently both insurance policies are in effect for launches held under NFPA 1122 & 1127 codes (identical to the NAR Safety Codes) while only TRA coverage is in effect for the club and site owner for launches where EX is flown. NAR members' individual insurance remains in effect for any flight they fly under NAR Safety Codes even at a launch where club and site owner insurance is solely provided by TRA.

Amateur-Built Rocket Engines. Nickolaus Leggett of Reston, VA asked the Board to consider means by which a wide range of amateur-built rocket engines could be built, tested, and flown by NAR members. The NAR Board reaffirmed the policy of the NAR to incorporate in its activities only the use of commercially-made engines that are manufactured, tested, certified, and operated in accordance with the codes of the National Fire Protection Association. These codes do not encompass amateur-made rocket motors of any type.

Out-of Production Rocket Engines. Bob Kaplow of Dundee, IL asked the Board to reinstate NAR safety certification of all rocket engines whose NAR certification had been withdrawn solely due to their out-of-production

status. The NAR Board reaffirmed the current policy that out-of-production engines with lapsed NAR safety certification can be flown, but only under a controlled testing program. This program requires such engines to be identified to and approved for flight in advance by the designated representative of the Board (currently NAR VP Ted Cochran), and requires submission of reliability data to that representative after all such flights.

Magazine Subscriptions. Bob Ferrante of Ravenna, OH asked the Board to provide a means by which libraries could purchase subscriptions to Sport Rocketry magazine.

Motion by John Hochheimer – seconded by Vince Huegele. Passed unanimously.

The Publications Committee shall develop a program that enables libraries to receive Sport Rocketry magazine by subscription.

Sport Services Committee.

The Board reviewed the report provided by departing Committee Chairman Carl Tulanko. Carl reported completion of a major update of the information and documents for HPR certification that are posted on the NAR website. With these updates plus recent actions by TRA there are now essentially no technical differences in Level 1 through Level 3 certification requirements between NAR and TRA. The Board thanked Carl for his 5 years of service, presented him with a recognition plaque, and welcomed Art Upton as the new Committee Chairman.

The Board discussed the member survey feedback that the NAR's organizational focus on high-power activities and technology is inadequate in comparison to its focus on model rocket activities, particularly in view of the fact that about half of the NAR's members are high-power fliers. The President noted that he had already directed Tom Beach to increase coverage of HPR technology and plans in Sport Rocketry, had directed Contest & Records to develop and implement an HPR competition program before NARAM-51, and had directed that the next edition of the Member Guidebook implement a more balanced discussion of HPR in addition to model rockets. The Board noted that the NAR has no recognition programs of any kind for achievement in HPR, versus a wide range for model rocketry. Joyce Guzik agreed to develop a proposal for a technology achievement recognition award (focusing on high power and separate from NARAM R&D) by the NARAM-51 Board meeting, with this award potentially to be presented at NARCON each year.

Special Committee on FAI Activities.

The Board reviewed the report provided by Committee Chairman John Langford. John reported that the program for US adult and junior participation in International (FAI) model rocket competition is healthy with no Board action required. The US has sent delegations of over 30 participants (including 10 or more junior competitors) overseas to both the 2006 and the 2008 World Spacemodeling Championships. There will be a flyoff for selection of the 2010 team at NARAM-51 and it is anticipated that an equally robust US delegation will participate in this 2010 Championships in Serbia.

NARTREK Committee.

The Board reviewed the report provided by Committee Chairman George Scheil. The NARTREK program enrolled 10 new participants and awarded 5 regular certificates and 5 Cadet certificates in 2008, a decline from the previous year. Efforts to start a new NARTREK track for recognition of achievement in HPR have not progressed due to lack of a qualified volunteer to develop and run it.

The Board meeting was suspended at 11 PM on March 19 and resumed at 8 AM on March 20.

Membership Committee.

This Committee currently has no Chairman and therefore submitted no report. Instead the NAR President reviewed with the Board the data from the August – October 2008 online survey of NAR members (which drew 1211 responses) and the latest NAR membership statistics. He reported that significant numbers of actions have been initiated and/or completed in response to the survey, with many of these actions being reflected in Committee reports or having been reported in the new monthly Electronic Rocketeer newsletter. Membership statistics reflect flat trends over the last 12 months: total membership of 4400-4450 with about 850 of these Junior or Leader and the rest Seniors; 110-115 sections; and 2000 members HPR certified. In response to numerous requests on the member survey:

**Motion by John Hochheimer – seconded by Vince Huegele. Passed unanimously.
Senior members shall be allowed to purchase a 3 year membership for \$180 (\$154 for family members).**

Section Activities Committee.

Committee Chairman John Hochheimer presented his report in person. The recent NAR member survey showed that improving national support to sections is a high priority for members. The Committee (with volunteer Chuck Neff) has fully updated the NAR website section contact listing and implemented a process for keeping it current. The new section recognition program (formerly “Section of the Year”) is still not considered to be adequate and John will propose another revision at the NARAM-51 Board meeting, meanwhile continuing the current program through that NARAM. A new resource guide to assist sections in gaining access to launch sites has been developed and is being reviewed for near-term release. The NAR Section Manual will be fully updated by March 2010. John will obtain a software package that permits geo-mapping all NAR members’ addresses and will compare this data to the locations of NAR sections to identify places where there are many NAR members but no section, to support targeted section start-up initiatives.

The Board discussed implementation of a section website recognition award program. They concluded that managing such a program would be quite complex and time-consuming due to the constantly-changing nature of websites. John proposed that instead he would begin identifying a “section website feature of the month” to be publicized on the NAR website.

Standards and Testing Committee.

Committee Co-Chairman John Lyngdal presented the report in person. The Committee is fully up to date on certification and recertification testing. The 108 MESS reports of engine failures in 2008 showed no trends requiring action. The Committee proposed a change to the current NAR policy on manufacturer flight demonstrations of uncertified engines. The Board did not understand the reasons for making the proposed change and tabled the proposal. The Committee is developing the NAR’s official proposals for changes to NFPA Code 1125 (Motor Manufacture and Testing) that will be submitted when that Code’s quadrennial revision cycle process opens in July 2009. The NAR President instructed the Committee to circulate any such proposals to all affected manufacturers for comment, and then to the NAR President, before submitting them to the NFPA.

Contest and Records Committee.

The Board reviewed the report provided by Committee Chairman Tom Lyon. Tom reported that competition participation is steady and that the annual process for developing Pink Book rules revisions is working well. He reported slow progress on developing a Contest Director’s Guide or a simplified version of the Pink Book for beginners’ use. Both tasks are due at the NARAM-51 Board meeting. Significant content on competition strategies and designs has been assembled by Mark Bundick and is being organized for near-term posting on the NAR website. The Board decided to cease printing a paper Pink Book and rely strictly on a downloadable electronic version, since the active and effective annual rules revision process now makes printed versions obsolete too quickly to justify an economic-sized print run of a paper version.

Technical Services Committee (NARTS).

Committee Chairman Tom Ha presented his report in person. NARTS had an extraordinary financial year in 2008, with over \$9,000 profit on sales of \$27,000. This is NARTS’ best sales year ever. The Board commended Tom and his family for their hard work and great service on behalf of the NAR, particularly at NARAM-50/ORR. NARTS asked for help with negotiating an arrangement with the NAR’s internet service provider to implement a capability to do online selling of downloadable documents; the President agreed to negotiate this with the ISP.

National Events Committee.

Committee Chairman Ted Cochran presented his report in person. Ted reported that NARAM-50 and the Old Rocketeers’ Reunion went extremely well and each had over 300 participants. NARAM-50 made a small profit and the ORR had a small loss. All 2009 national events appear to be on track, although the NARAM-51 launch site has to be shifted to a different field in the same area due to emergent construction on the original site. There are not yet any bids for the 2010 national events, although there are expressions of interest for all of them and a firm commitment for NARCON. The Board approved continuation of the B Division NARAM Travel Grant program for B Division (age 14-17) first-time

participants at NARAM, with the NAR matching Bob Alway's generous grant of \$1200 to provide up to \$800 per participant for up to three B Division participants for travel and lodging expenses to NARAM-51. Joyce Guzik agreed to organize and manage this program again in 2009.

The Team America Rocketry Challenge event for 2009 has 652 participating teams in this 7th year of the event, 10 more than TARC 2008, and everything is on track for the May 16 Finals. The Board agreed to provide free NAR memberships (sent to a school address) as a prize to the teachers of the 12 teams that are selected to enter the "presentation competition" event at the TARC 2009 Finals. After some initial uncertainty at the transition into office of the new AIA President Marion Blakey, AIA now remains firmly committed to continuing TARC. The UK version of TARC (UKAYROC) is now in its third year and has grown to 54 participating teams. There is a TARC event underway in Japan this year for the first time, with an August 2009 Finals. Both NAR and AIA are working with their respective counterpart organizations in Canada, Australia, and France to facilitate starting TARC events in these countries next year.

Safety Committee.

The Board reviewed the report provided by Committee Chairman Andy Eng. Andy provided the complete proposal requested at the previous Board meeting for a new program to provide funding grants of up to \$250 to NAR sections for the purchase of range equipment that contributes to safe flight operations, such as fire extinguishers, public address/warning systems, etc.

**Motion by Ted Cochran – seconded by John Lyngdal. Passed unanimously.
The section safety grant program is approved for immediate implementation with \$4000 in its first year.**

The Committee did not report any progress on the tasking from the August 2008 Board meeting to develop a concise set of "safety best practices" guidelines for distribution to and use by both model rocket and HPR Range Safety Officers, or on the tasking to develop a simplified "Trained Safety Officer" program.

The Committee noted that the February 2009 change in Federal Aviation Regulations that now permits flights of model rockets above 1 pound but no more than 3.3 pounds liftoff mass without prior notification of FAA has made a change appropriate in one rule of the current NAR Model Rocket Safety Code.

**Motion by Ted Cochran – seconded by John Lyngdal. Passed unanimously.
The NAR Model Rocket safety code rule #7 shall be amended to reflect the changes from the FAA ruling changes early in 2009, by removing the following sentence from that rule:
" If my model rocket weighs more than one pound (453 grams) at liftoff or has more than four ounces (113 grams) of propellant, I will check and comply with Federal Aviation Administration regulations before flying."**

Financial Review.

NAR Treasurer Stew McNabb had provided the Board with extensive and up-to-date financial reports and a draft budget prior to the meeting, and joined the meeting via telephone conference call to review these with the Board. The NAR's overall financial health is excellent. Total balance of funds on hand at the end of 2008 was \$222K, a 25% increase compared to 2007. About \$70K of these funds are in "restricted" accounts such as the Cannon Grant Fund, the Stine Fund, the Alway R&D Prize Fund, the Capital Equipment Fund or the Legal Fund, each reserved for a specific purpose. The Board directed the NAR Treasurer to establish one additional restricted fund account in the amount of \$10K to be a reserve fund to pay the NAR's share of the deductible for any future claims against NAR insurance. The remaining unrestricted funds balance of \$142K represents just over 6 months of dues income, which is the balance that accounting best practices say a non-profit association should maintain.

Due to the successful March 16 Court decision in our long-standing lawsuit against BATFE, the NAR's future exposure to continued high legal costs has now greatly decreased. A March 2009 fundraising drive for the Legal Fund brought in \$14K in donations on top of the \$8K previous balance in this Fund. This \$22K will clearly cover all legal expenses likely to be required to complete closing out this case. As a result of the decisively favorable Court decision, there is also a small chance that the NAR may be able to seek and receive a Court-directed reimbursement from BATFE of a fraction of our \$300K+ legal expenses on this case. The potential success of this will not be known for 4 or more months.

Because membership and Sport Rocketry advertising have not (so far) declined as expected due to the ongoing national recession, and because of the coming drawdown in legal costs, the NAR's fiscal outlook has become unexpectedly favorable. The Board recognized this in approving several new service programs during this meeting, and may be able to approve further improvements at the NARAM-51 meeting if these fiscal trends continue. For the past several years all donations to the NAR have been directed to the Legal Fund, but it may also become possible to begin developing other worthwhile purposes for members to support with donations, such as a museum display of the history of our hobby.

The Board reviewed in detail the draft budget for calendar year 2009 offered by the Treasurer and agreed with its assumptions and proposed fund allocations.

**Motion by George Rachor - seconded by Ted Cochran. Passed unanimously.
The proposed 2009 budget shall be approved.**

Organizational Communications.

The Board reviewed feedback from the recent member survey concerning effectiveness of the NAR's internal communications. This feedback indicated a number of problem areas where members wanted more information about what is going on in the NAR. The President reported that these areas have now almost all been addressed by actions taken in the last four months: the content and wide distribution of the new Electronic Rocketeer newsletter; the "How the NAR Works" article in the March/April Sport Rocketry magazine; and the new content such as the list of opportunities to volunteer for specific NAR projects or committees that has been posted on the NAR website.

One area still to be addressed is the lack of an official statement of the NAR's mission and goals, for use both with members and with outside organizations or potential partners or donors. The Board reviewed but could not reach consensus on a draft of such a statement. Ted Cochran agreed to develop and circulate a new version with the goal of achieving a consensus by mid-May.

Education Committee.

Committee Chairman Vince Huegele presented his report in person. The national partnership between NAR and 4-H is making satisfactory progress. 4-H is clearly interested and committed to the success of this partnership, and is holding regular conference calls with us to monitor status and actions. 4-H has distributed about 430 packets of NAR and model rocketry information to interested 4-H local leaders, and through surveys inside 4-H and inside NAR we have identified about 39 local 4-H groups doing rocketry activities. 4-H has agreed to do a follow-up with each of the 4-H people to whom the NAR packets were sent to see how they have used the material, and has agreed to publicize the NAR and the TARC program nationally within 4-H twice per year.

Vince presented information on the future schedule of National Science Teacher Association national and regional conventions and recommended that this organization's events be a place where the NAR establishes (and funds) an annual presence in future. At the same time as the Board was meeting, the Aerospace Industries Association TARC Manager Audrey Koehler was at the annual national NSTA convention, which this year was in New Orleans, running a TARC booth but also using the NAR table display, display rockets, and NAR handouts. She reported to the Board from that event that the booth was very popular and busy. AIA will be funding such a booth again at the March 2010 NSTA national convention in Philadelphia, and the NAR will assist in staffing and running it. The Board concluded that a regional NSTA convention held near an NAR section that could man a booth without travel or lodging expense might provide an additional useful and economical opportunity to expand the NAR's penetration of this potential growth area for membership.

**Motion by Jennifer Ash-Poole – seconded by John Lyngdal. Passed unanimously.
\$2000 shall be allocated to the Education Committee in addition to the previously-approved budget, to fund the registration and booth-rental costs of sending NAR representatives to the National Science Teacher Association regional conference in Minneapolis in October 2009, if the local section can arrange to man this booth.**

The Board discussed potential future NAR relationships with more complex or advanced national student rocketry programs that could provide challenges for students who have become very interested in rocketry as a result of TARC. John Lyngdal had researched a long list of such programs, most of which were very small or very regional (i.e. within a

single state), and most of which already have established relationships with other rocketry organizations (e.g. TRA, Aero Pac, etc.) or with professional rocketry companies. Vince described the unexpected growth that NASA implemented this year in the Student Launch Initiative (SLI) program, especially in the University SLI portion. He reported that this growth is exceeding the capacity of his local NAR section to handle. The Board concluded that enhancing NAR support to and alignment with the NASA SLI program is the best option currently available for student programs beyond TARC.

NAR Historian.

The Board reviewed the report provided by NAR Historian Art Nestor. Art has energetically accumulated about 1300 historical items in the form of scanned documents (newsletters, magazines, plans, etc.), videos, and digitized photographs occupying 3 Gb of digital memory. His goal is to document the complete history of the NAR and all its sections, and to make this digital archive available, appropriately structured, on or as an adjunct to the NAR website. He is making steady progress in calling for and receiving contributions and in indexing this material.

Periodicals Committee.

The Board reviewed the report provided by Committee Chairman Mark Bundick. Mark reported that advertising sales for Sport Rocketry have remained steady at about \$6K per issue. Hobby shop sales of the magazine are declining slowly due to the shrinkage of the number of hobby shops nationally, although the magazine's sell-through rates at each remaining shop are good. Distribution of the Electronic Rocketeer through the Constant Contact service has been very successful. The newsletter is sent to about 3150 valid e-mail addresses of NAR members, with this list being updated by George Rachor each month from the NAR headquarters database as new people join the NAR and others depart. The newsletter is opened and read at about half of the addresses to which it is sent. The Educator Newsletter will be shifted over from its separate e-mail service to also use the NAR Constant Contact account by May, at a savings of \$360/year. A single paper issue of Model Rocketeer will be published in 2009, with publication planned for early May to support inclusion of the paper mail-in ballots for the Trustee election, Pink Book change proposals, and ByLaws changes.

Mark did some preliminary analysis of the publication cost and break-even point for a potential rocketry handbook for retail sale, made up with content already owned by the NAR from Sport Rocketry or the Member Guidebook. He concluded that the market is unlikely to be there for hobby shop sales of enough copies to achieve break-even, and recommended that if such a book is produced that it be sold and distributed electronically. The Board agreed, but deferred making any decision on whether to produce such a book.

The NAR President proposed, and the Board agreed, that the NAR Member Guidebook be officially transitioned to a biennial update cycle with one copy to be provided to each new NAR member at the time that they join, and one copy to be provided to each current NAR member on their first renewal during that two-year period. The current policy is to send a Guidebook to every member at each annual renewal even if it is the same edition provided to that member the previous year. This change will save the NAR \$5000 per year in printing and mailing costs. The next edition of the Guidebook will be produced in late 2009 and will be the 2010-2011 edition.

Special Committee on Technology.

The Board did a status review with Jennifer Ash-Poole, who is Chairperson of this currently-temporary Special Committee, on progress to date in developing improvements to the structure of the NAR website (through a Website Redesign Subcommittee led by Mark Bundick) and to identifying a replacement for the NAR headquarters management information system (a task led by Jennifer).

Motion by Jennifer Ash-Poole – seconded by George Rachor. Passed unanimously.

The NAR shall establish a permanent Technology Committee that will oversee the NAR HQ hardware and software needs and the website, and will assess any new information technologies for NAR use as the Board sees fit.

Motion by Jennifer Ash-Poole – seconded by Joyce Guzik. Passed unanimously.

The following revision text for Article XI of the By Laws that enables the Technology Committee to become permanent shall be submitted to the membership for vote:

Add to Section 2:

(n) Technology Committee

Rename:**Section 16 to Section 17****Section 17 to Section 18****Add new Section 16 to Article XI:**

Section 16: The Technology Committee shall have as its duties the administration and maintenance of the Headquarters software and hardware systems and any NAR websites and their functions, and shall review any new information technologies before their implementation by the Association.

The Board first reviewed a report on the website redesign project submitted by Mark Bundick. Mark reported that the team of 10 contributing to this project had decided to develop a new navigation structure for the existing website as their first priority, to make it easier to find specific items among the very large amount of material already on the website. They have developed and are testing a new prototype for the front-page structure and menus. Mark has also assembled a significant amount of new technical content for the website (especially material related to competition and high power) and will deploy this new material once the new navigation structure is implemented. The Technology Committee will decide how to manage this deployment. Some of this potential new material is already posted as web content on private or other types of websites, and the NAR policy concerning what can be put on our website in terms of links to content or sites elsewhere is not clear.

Motion by Jennifer Ash-Poole – seconded by Ted Cochran. Passed unanimously.

It shall be NAR policy is to allow direct links from our website only to noncommercial websites whose content is consistent with the mission of the NAR.

Committee Chairperson Jennifer Ash-Poole presented in person her report on the project to identify a new headquarters management information system that would support a comprehensive modernization and integration of all of the NAR's information technology activities. The optimum solution would be one that can handle all current HQ business and membership processing functions, provide members the ability to access and update their membership information online, interface with the NAR website, and support bulk e-mail distribution of information such as the Electronic Rocketeer to all or to selected groups of NAR members. The Board discussed whether establishing an online members-only forum should be a priority requirement for our future information technology solutions and concluded that it should not; there are already plenty of online forums for rocketeers and management of such a forum would be labor-intensive for a volunteer.

Jennifer has researched the market and identified a short list of commercial association-management solutions that appear to meet the NAR's requirements, and is now engaged in doing demonstrations of these systems with marketing representatives from their vendors. All solutions appear to be web-based, with the actual software and data resident at the vendor and accessed online by users who subscribe and pay a monthly user fee, rather than what the NAR now uses – custom software unique to (but owned by) the NAR and written in an obsolete software system that is resident on an obsolete Macintosh computer at NAR headquarters. Web-based solutions have become the state of the art and come with significant technical support from the vendor, but also come with significant subscription fees. All solutions to upgrading the management information system will also require replacement of the NAR headquarters computer with a modern PC-based system. Every aspect of the current NAR headquarters information technology system, from computers to software to printers and copier, is old, slow, unreliable, and completely obsolete.

Motion by Jennifer Ash-Poole – seconded by Ted Cochran. Passed with George Rachor opposed and Joyce Guzik abstaining.

The HQ software system shall be replaced with a web-based solution with an annual cost of no more than \$5000 and with the goal of deployment of no later than August 1, 2009.

Motion by Jennifer Ash-Poole -- seconded by Ted Cochran. Passed unanimously.

The projected capital account expense in the previously approved NAR budget shall be raised from \$6,000 to \$10,000 to enable the purchase of new HQ equipment without unduly increasing annual maintenance cost.

At the end of the scheduled agenda for the Board meeting, the NAR President reviewed with the Board the decisions that had been made at the meeting, and the due dates and responsibilities assigned for those decisions that involved actions to be taken after the meeting.

**Motion by Ted Cochran -- seconded by Vince Huegele. Passed unanimously.
The minutes of the August 2008 NAR Board of Trustees meeting shall be approved.**

**Motion by George Rachor -- Seconded by Joyce Guzik. Passed unanimously.
The meeting shall be adjourned, to reconvene on Thursday evening, August 6, 2009 at NARAM-51.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6 PM.