



Minutes of the National Association of Rocketry Board of Trustees Meeting

Draft pending NAR Board vote of approval.

March 11, 2011 at NARCON 2011, Seattle, Washington

The National Association of Rocketry Board of Trustees convened at 8 AM Friday, March 11, 2011 at the Watertown Inn in Seattle. The following Board members were present:

Trip Barber, President

Ted Cochran, Vice President

Joyce Guzik, Secretary

John Lyngdal

Jennifer Ash-Poole

John Hochheimer

Vince Huegele

Tom Ha

Absent: Stew McNabb, Treasurer (joined by conference call at 2:45 PM)

The Board entered executive session for informational discussions on four topics: the recent meeting with BATFE on potential regulation of igniters; the areas where NAR services may not be as good as they could be; the risks within the NAR's insurance coverage; and NAR volunteer availability issues. The Board came out of executive session at 9 AM. No decisions were made in the executive session.

Motion by Vince Huegele – seconded by Jennifer Ash-Poole. Passed unanimously. The minutes of the July 2010 Board of Trustees meeting shall be approved.

NAR Member Concerns.

IRS Group Exemption. Mark Recktenwald, President of the MTMA NAR section in Ohio, asked the Board to consider applying for a "Group Exemption" status from the IRS for the NAR. This could address potential IRS issues for NAR tax record-keeping that could result from NAR sections using the NAR's tax-exempt status and Employer ID Number (EIN) to secure use of free checking accounts and other local benefits of a non-profit status. The Group Exemption process, however, comes with substantial fees and record-keeping requirements. The Board declined to pursue a Group Exemption at this time but directed Tom Ha to determine the correct procedures and requirements for letting NAR sections and events use the NAR tax-exempt EIN for their checking accounts and report with recommendations, at the next Board meeting.

Dorffler Award. NAR member Ken Montayne of New Jersey asked the Board to consider creating a new NAR annual award named after the late Mike Dorffler, a kit designer who worked nearly 40 years at Estes Industries and who passed away last Fall. The Board recognized Mr. Dorffler's creative contributions to the hobby but noted that he was a paid employee of a manufacturer and not a member of the NAR, and declined to establish a new NAR award. The NAR President will suggest to Estes Industries that they consider naming one of the NAR national competition awards that they currently subsidize each NARAM after Mr. Dorffler.

Life Memberships. NAR member Mike Vang of Arkansas asked the Board to consider restructuring the \$1000 payment for NAR life memberships into four annual payments of \$250. The Board declined to do this, primarily due to the difficulty of managing record-keeping within our headquarters management system for a membership that is paid in installments across multiple years. The Board directed the Membership Committee to provide an evaluation of the pros and cons of significantly expanding publicity for and use of life memberships, and of the appropriate pricing and payment options for selling them, at the next Board meeting.

By-Laws Revision. John Lyngdal had been tasked by the Board at its July 2010 meeting to develop a proposal to change the NAR Bylaws Article 3, Section 11 to modify the current requirement for automatic suspension of membership in order to provide discretion as to whether a claim of Safety Code violation made against a member has any substantiation. He provided a proposed amendment to the language of the Bylaws, as follows:

“ Article 3, Section 11: For conduct prejudicial to the objectives, reputation, or property of the Association, or for failure to observe and abide by the Safety Code(s) of the Association in all ~~model~~ [**NAR sport**] rocket activities, a member of any class may be censured, suspended, or expelled by a Committee of three Senior members in good standing appointed by the President. Notice of all charges against such member and of the time and place of the meeting at which they are to be presented shall be sent to the member by mail not less than thirty (30) days prior to such a meeting. A written summary of all evidence to be presented shall be sent to the member by mail not less than twenty-one (21) days prior to such a meeting. Such member shall be given the opportunity to be heard at the meeting in his own defense. Such member in addition to, or in lieu of a personal appearance, may present a written defense; an address to which such written defense is to be sent must be provided to the member not less than twenty-one (21) days prior to such meeting. ~~Any member of any class charged with violation of the Safety Code(s) of the Association shall automatically be suspended from membership until the meeting of the Committee at which his case is to be decided, [~~ **In cases where documentation indicates that there is reasonable evidence that a member’s activity was in violation of the Safety Code(s) of the Association, the President shall direct that the member charged be suspended from membership until the meeting of the Committee at which his case is to be decided,**] providing the time of suspension is not longer than one (1) year from the date of suspension until the date of the hearing. No person, once having been admitted in good faith as a member of the Association, shall be denied the right to continued membership except for the above reasons and through the above procedure, or except for non-payment of dues or other debts owed the Association.”

**Motion by Ted Cochran – seconded by Jennifer Ash-Poole. Passed unanimously.
The proposed revision to the Bylaws shall be approved for inclusion on the NAR 2011 ballot.**

Section Activities Committee.

Committee Chair John Hochheimer presented the committee’s report in person.

There are currently 118 NAR sections, about the same number as at this time last year, and about 55% of NAR members report belonging to one – the highest percentage in sections on record. John reported that the several-year-old program to pay a bounty of \$5 per unit of growth to sections each year which have increased the number of NAR members on their official rolls was very time-consuming to administer within the records available to him and to the NAR, and that it resulted in total payouts of less than \$500. The Board agreed to let this program expire.

John reported that Mark Wise was still working on updating the NAR Section Manual and that Randy Boadway was working on developing two recognition programs for NAR sections: one for overall section excellence; and one for section website quality. The excellence award program is not yet fully developed. A proposal for the criteria and procedures for the program will be posted on the NAR Sections Yahoo group for comment prior to the next Board meeting so that a completed program proposal can be presented for Board approval at NARAM-53. The website recognition program proposal, developed jointly by Randy Boadway and Pam Gilmore, was presented to the Board for approval in the form of a Powerpoint briefing compete with judging criteria and an implementation plan leading to presentation of first awards at NARAM-53.

**Motion by Tom Ha – seconded by Vince Huegele. Passed unanimously.
The proposed NAR section website recognition program shall be approved and shall include some level of recognition for sections meeting minimum excellence criteria in addition to the proposed 1st through 4th places.**

The NAR President tasked Section Activities to announce the website recognition program on various public forums including the NAR Sections Yahoo group, and to get it in operation by May 1.

John reported that the NAR Sections Yahoo group’s status as an official NAR communications path, and the rules for who should be allowed to belong to it if there were to be restrictions against it being fully public, were both unclear and that this lack of clarity was leading to controversy.

Motion by John Hochheimer – seconded by Ted Cochran. Passed unanimously.

The Board recognizes the NAR Section Yahoo group as the official communication mechanism among the NAR leadership. Members shall include and be limited to NAR Trustees, NAR Committee Chairs, and up to two NAR members of each Section that should be either the president, section senior advisor, or another elected section officer designated by the section president.

The NAR President tasked Section Activities to make an announcement of this policy decision on the Yahoo group and to begin checking and enforcement of the membership limitations. The NAR Facebook page remains as the official public forum open to all NAR members.

Education Committee.

Committee Chair Vince Huegele presented the committee's report in person.

Vince reported that all aspects of the NAR's education programs are functioning well, and that he has had good volunteer support for his Committee. The national partnership with 4-H continues to lead to good exposure of 4-H state and local leaders to information about the NAR and to connections of 4-H youth rocket clubs to NAR members and sections. The NAR's participation in two National Science Teacher Association conferences per year (the national conference, in cooperation with AIA with AIA paying; and one regional conference with NAR paying) is providing good exposure for the NAR to a prime market for educational outreach and recruitment of teacher members, and for recruitment of TARC teams. The NAR's support of the range operations of the annual NASA Student Launch Initiative (SLI)/University SLI launch in Huntsville each April (done under contract to NASA for reimbursement of our expenses) is keeping the NAR visibly aligned and in support of a major high-end rocketry-based educational program.

The Board reviewed the programs currently in place for providing classroom grants to teachers and scholarships or travel grants to young rocketeers. The Board concluded that these programs were a very important part of what the NAR was founded to do, and that based on the Association's strong financial situation and the results of previous polls of our membership on where the NAR should spend more money, we should significantly expand the scope of these programs this year.

Motion by Vince Huegele – seconded by Ted Cochran. Passed unanimously.

In 2011, the NAR shall budget for up to 10 scholarships of \$1000 each, 10 Cannon grants of \$500 each, and five first-time B-division NARAM travel grants of \$800 each.

Special Committee on FAI Activities.

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair John Langford. The program for supporting development of a community of US modelers with the skills and organization to compete successfully in the biennial FAI World Spacemodeling Championships (WSMC), and for supporting both adult and junior US Teams that enter these championships, is strong and improving. The NAR, along with extremely generous grants from Aurora Flight Sciences (John's company), helped to support a delegation of 45 participants in the 2010 WSMC in Serbia and the US Junior Radio-Controlled Rocket Glider team won the World Champion gold medal in their event there. Selection of the US Team for the 2012 WSMC in Slovakia will be done at a competitive flyoff at NARAM-53.

There has been interest expressed within the US community of FAI fliers in submitting a bid to host a future WSMC. The Board agreed that any such bid must be submitted for detailed review and approval by the NAR Board of Trustees before being submitted to the FAI.

Standards and Testing Committee.

Committee Co-Chairman John Lyngdal presented the committee's report in person.

John reported that the Committee had only received one shipment of motors for certification testing in the past year: the Estes A8-0 and A10-0T, which were tested and certified in March. 114 Malfunctioning Engine Statistical Survey (MESS) reports were received in 2010, with no motor type receiving enough failure reports to warrant official action by the Committee. The Board discussed the potential value of and requirements for gaining accreditation by the Consumer

Product Safety Commission as a lab for testing to the CPSC standards for model rocket motors and encouraged the Committee to continue pursuing definition of the technical requirements and costs for gaining and sustaining such accreditation.

The Committee advised the Board that the current NFPA Code 1125 standard for labeling average thrust on sport rocket motors, while adequate for high power motors, was insufficiently strict to avoid consumer safety issues with model rocket motors. They noted that the current NFPA standard that the average thrust labeled on the motor be within 20% or 10 newtons, whichever is greater, is essentially no standard for D and lower power class model rocket motors, whose average thrust seldom exceeds 15 newtons. The Committee reported that they had concurrence with TRA Motor Testing that both testing organizations would enforce a stricter labeling standard than required by NFPA 1125 as a condition for all future certifications of new model rocket motor types.

Motion by Ted Cochran – seconded by John Hochheimer. Passed 7-0 with John Lyngdal abstaining. NAR Standards and Testing shall issue a joint statement with Tripoli Motor Testing to change our standard for average thrust labeling on a model rocket motor to be $\pm 10\%$ of the tested average thrust rounded to the nearest whole number.

Technology Committee.

Committee Chair Jennifer Ash-Poole presented the committee's report in person.

Jennifer reported that processes had been implemented to send out automatic reminder e-mails to NAR members 60 days prior to and 15 days after their membership renewal due dates, and to mail out preprinted personalized renewal paper forms to members 45 days prior to their renewal dates. She is still investigating how to permit NAR sections to renew their charters online; and how to permit NAR members to buy or renew memberships for other members of their families online using only their own membership account.

The Board directed Technology Committee to evaluate commercial membership card printing services for cost and for affordable periodicity of printing/ mailing these cards, and to report at the next Board meeting. This would potentially be done instead of spending significant funds to either customize the current Neon software to print our current membership cards in the current format, or to install a separate credit-card-style card printing system at NAR HQ.

The Board reviewed the status of the long-running project to revise the structure of the NAR website to permit easier navigation by users. This project has been stalled for over a year for lack of the new "landing pages" of content required to implement the proposed restructure. The Board assigned low priority to further efforts toward incremental adjustments to the current website, believing that based on member feedback a large-scale makeover is needed instead.

Safety Committee.

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair Andy Eng. This was Andy's final report; he has resigned from the Committee Chair and has been replaced by Steve Lubliner.

The Committee reported that the NAR has disbursed \$8,400 in grants of up to \$250 each in 2010 to 37 NAR sections for the purchase of equipment intended to enhance range safety at launch sites. The Board considered grants to support NAR sections to be a key means by which the national organization can directly and usefully support our most important organizational asset, our local sections. They agreed that the purpose of the grants could be expanded to include not only purchase of safety equipment such as firefighting gear or PA systems but also items to indirectly support overall safe range operations such as signage and access gates or parking area improvements.

Motion by Ted Cochran – seconded by John Lyngdal. Passed unanimously. The NAR shall make available \$10,000 for Section grants of up to \$250 each for safety equipment and range operations in 2011. New sections will be given preference to sections that have already received grants.

The Committee also brought forward an issue concerning the definition of what land can be counted as part of the "launch site" for purposes of defining flight altitude limits, motor size limits, and intended recovery areas. Specifically, is landowner permission and/or site owner insurance required for all land counted as part of the official launch site? The

Board declined to establish a policy on this issue, believing that each local situation is different and that any national policy could have completely unintended or unanticipated consequences in various localities.

Periodicals Committee.

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair Mark Bundick.

The Committee reported that Sport Rocketry ad revenue has remained strong at approximately \$6300 per issue in 2010 and that the magazine's retail (hobby shop) sales have been steadily declining over the last decade as the number of hobby shops has declined. The editor reports adequate overall volume of submissions of articles to support the current 48-page length, although with a distinct shortage of quality "how to" articles on construction techniques and projects. Expansion of the length of the magazine, while it could be affordable based on the current NAR financial situation and trends, would require some new form of incentive system to generate sufficient quality content to fill the extra pages.

The Committee proposed an initiative to develop an electronic publication of some type, to augment but not replace the current paper Sport Rocketry and potentially reach markets where the paper magazine does not have appeal. The Board did not express interest in this due to the lack of sufficient quality content to optimally support even current publications, but directed Technology Committee to determine the price from Neon for posting free downloadable NARTS products such as Sport Rocketry back issues in a members-only accessible area of the Neon system, and to report at the next Board meeting.

Member Survey.

The NAR did an online 30-question survey of the membership in the Fall of 2008 that drew 1211 participants. This survey proved to be extremely useful to the Board over the last two years in evaluating what was working well and what was not within the NAR and thereby setting priorities for corrective action, and for getting member feedback on their priorities for future improvements and initiatives.

Wanting some feedback on how actions taken since the last survey have addressed the issues, and what new issues and priorities might have emerged, the Board developed a new version of the survey, to be opened online for participation between March 15 and June 1, 2011. This Board made final adjustments to the survey and approved its implementation.

Membership Committee.

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair Stew McNabb, who joined the Board by telephone conference call for the review of this Committee's report and for the NAR financial review that followed.

The NAR's membership growth has continued since the end of the official "membership drive" on August 1, 2010. Membership at the end of that drive was 4880, and it has now reached just over 5100 due to a combination of increased renewal rate of existing members and a higher average level of brand-new members joining than before the drive. Referrals by existing NAR members have been a significant factor in new-member recruitment, and the NAR continues to offer a \$5 payment to any member who is cited on a new member's application as the reason that the new member joined. We are paying out these bonuses every six months, at a rate of 25-30 per month. The current bonus program expires on April 1, 2011.

Motion by Joyce Guzik – seconded by Ted Cochran. Passed unanimously.

The NAR shall continue until April 1, 2012 the program of paying a \$5 bonus to individual NAR members for recruiting a new member.

The NAR President summarized for the Board an initiative that he had been negotiating with the Board of the National Retail Hobby Store Association to provide NAR recruiting mini-posters and membership fliers to their member stores, and to pay participating stores a bonus of \$5 for each new NAR member who joined and reported that he/she had heard about the NAR through that store.

Motion by Ted Cochran – seconded by Tom Ha. Passed unanimously.

The plan of using hobby shops for recruiting NAR members under a \$5 bonus program as negotiated by the NAR President shall be approved.

At the last Board meeting, a trial program had been approved to develop a “starter set” membership packet containing various free products, catalogs, and coupons that could be provided to a new member immediately by a section when recruiting a new member in person locally. Todd Schweim had taken this for action and presented the proposed boxed starter set to the Board in person. The Board approved this program for a trial run of 100 such membership sets, to be rolled out and distributed to interested NAR sections at NARAM-53.

The NAR Board had previously established a policy limiting who could be permitted to have access to the NAR’s Neon membership database and management system. This policy had not included the Chair of the Membership Committee, but that Chair clearly needs such access in order to implement many of the planned recruitment programs and to analyze trends in membership.

Motion by Joyce Guzik – seconded by Jennifer Ash-Poole. Passed 8-0 with Stew McNabb abstaining. The NAR’s policy on Neon database access shall be amended to add Membership Committee Chair to the list of those with full access.

The NAR Bylaws establish a category of “Manufacturer and Corporate Supporting Members” but do not define the criteria for gaining or awarding such NAR membership. Ted Cochran developed and offered for Board consideration a set of criteria based on dollar value of cash and/or product donations made to NAR national events. The threshold value of donation to get a “supporting membership” would be \$250 in cash or \$500 (retail value) in merchandise in a year, and a “sustaining membership” would be awarded based on \$1000 or greater donations (minimum of \$250 in cash). Benefits of these memberships would include a link on the NAR website and a discount on any expansion of their current advertising in Sport Rocketry.

Motion by Joyce Guzik – seconded by Vince Huegele. Passed unanimously. The proposal for Manufacturer and Corporate Supporting Membership as developed by Ted Cochran shall be approved for implementation.

Financial Review.

NAR Treasurer Stew McNabb had provided the Board with extensive financial reports prior to the meeting, and participated in this portion of the Board meeting via telephone conference call to review them with the Board.

The NAR Treasurer position will be transitioning from Stew McNabb to Tom Ha by NARAM-53. Tom has visited Stew in person once and will visit both NAR Headquarters, and Stew for a second time, prior to the turnover to ensure he has all the required information to do this demanding and critical job. If possible, the services of a professional accounting firm will be obtained to do a formal review of the NAR’s financial management practices prior to the turnover.

The NAR’s current financial situation is very healthy. The total balance of all funds increased from \$217K at the end of 2009 to \$313K at the end of 2010. \$35K of this increase was due to the recovery of some of the legal fees from the lawsuit against BATFE and these funds (plus \$15K of other funds) have been committed to an Emergency Reserve Fund. Another \$10K was due to a donation by Bob Alway to the reserve fund he established several years ago in his parents’ name for NARAM B Division R&D prizes. The remainder of the growth was due to careful cost management and to membership levels that increased faster than had been anticipated in the NAR’s 2010 budget. Of the overall balance of \$313K, \$41K is in two designated funds for exclusive use for Alway R&D Prizes or Cannon Educator Grants, and \$50K is in the Emergency Reserve Fund in case of future legal or other high-cost unforeseen emergencies.

The Board reviewed the budget for 2011 and increased allocations for delivery of benefits and services so that projected income and expenses would be in balance at about \$390K each assuming membership levels of 5150 and Sport Rocketry advertising revenue levels of \$6300 per issue were sustained on an average for the year, and so that there would be no further growth in the overall fund balance. The service increases included:

- Expanded liability insurance coverage (\$2 million limit vs \$1 million)
- Expanded section grant program (\$10K vs \$8K)
- Expanded Scholarship, Cannon Grant, and NARAM B Division Travel Grant programs (\$19K total vs \$14K)
- Increased payment for headquarters support in proportion to the increase in NAR membership served

- Continuation of the membership recruitment bounty for individuals and addition of a program for hobby shops

Motion by Joyce Guzik – seconded by John Hochheimer. Passed unanimously.

The 2011 budget of the NAR as proposed by the NAR Treasurer and as amended at the Board meeting shall be approved.

The Board also discussed the recurring issue of insufficient candidates willing to step forward and run for the NAR Board of Trustees, leading to uncontested or minimally contested elections. The NAR President noted that in his conversations with qualified and potentially interested candidates for the Board, a recurring issue leading to good people not running has been the personal out-of-pocket cost of participating in Board meetings. Current NAR policy is that NAR Board members pay all of their own travel and lodging expenses for attending meetings, and all current Board members accepted their positions knowing that policy.

Motion by Ted Cochran – seconded by Joyce Guzik. Passed unanimously.

Beginning with the Winter 2012 Board meeting, members of the NAR Board of Trustees, with the exception of those members of the Board currently in office, may be reimbursed for up to \$500 per meeting for travel and lodging expenses actually incurred in connection with attending Board meetings.

Strategic Planning Implementation.

The NAR Board had devoted the final three and a half hours of its March 2010 meeting to discussion concerning the long-term future direction that the NAR should pursue in order to maintain or increase its vitality, relevance, and size. The Board resolved at that time to have as an agenda item for its March 2011 meeting the identification of specific actions to implement the following five elements of overall future direction set by this strategic planning exercise:

- Update organizational branding and image
- Improve employment of social media
- Improve new-member recruiting by focusing on key market segments
- Increase current-member retention
- Strengthen relations with hobby rocket industry

As a result of several hours of discussion of specific actions that could and should be taken to implement one or more of these elements of future direction, the Board agreed on the following:

- Todd Schweim develop a proposal for a NAR contest for positive 60-second videos that show some aspect of Safety-Code-compliant fun in rocketry
- Todd Schweim develop versions of the NAR logo that include our web address and NAR President encourage NAR sections, members, and supporting companies to use this version everywhere
- Technology Committee put a link to the NAR Facebook page on the NAR website home page
- Section Activities Committee develop the materials to support a program to offer teachers who receive an NAR Cannon Grant a free NAR membership and a free NAR section charter if they choose to have some of their students also join the NAR and wish to form a school NAR section
- Education Committee develop a page on the NAR website that has short descriptions of the rocketry programs offered by Cannon Grant teachers and includes links to any rocketry websites they maintain
- Section Activities evaluate the capability of Google Earth to support putting a map in a members-only section of Neon that lets NAR members geolocate other nearby NAR members and get in contact with them
- NAR President update the “welcome to the NAR” automated e-mail that goes out to each new NAR member to include more information about how to find the nearest NAR section

National Events Committee.

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair Ted Cochran an advance of the meeting. No Board action was required. All 2011 national events are on track for successful execution. The 2012 National Sport Launch has been awarded to Monroe Astronautical Rocketry Society for Geneseo, NY. No bids have been received for NARCON or NARAM in 2012. TARC remains fully successful with no issues in its ninth year. A team from Japan, the winner of

their equivalent national event, will be participating in the US TARC 2011 Finals. The winning teams from the US, UK, and French national TARC events will be competing against each other at the Paris Air Show in June.

National Fire Protection Association.

The Board reviewed the report from NAR representative to the NFPA Pyrotechnics Committee Patrick Miller in advance of the meeting. No Board action was required. The three NFPA Codes affecting our hobby are currently all in various phases of their every-five-year revision cycles. The changes to NFPA 1125 (motor manufacturing and certification) are awaiting final approval at the annual national NFPA meeting and will go into effect in the summer of 2011. A series of changes to NFPA 1122 (model rocket flying) and NFPA 1127 (high power rocket flying) were proposed by the NAR at an NFPA Pyrotechnics Committee meeting in Dallas in January 2011. They were approved at this meeting but have several more levels of review to go through before potential implementation in summer 2012.

High Power Services Committee.

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair Art Upton in advance of the meeting. No Board action was required. Buzz McDermott is updating the Trained Safety Officer program to simplify it. The application documents for Level 1 and Level 2 certification have been updated and these updates have been posted on the NAR website.

Technical Services Committee (NARTS).

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair Brad Cline in advance of the meeting. No Board action was required. NARTS has introduced a number of new products since Brad took over last summer, and is working on updating the web store content.

Contest and Records Committee.

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair Steve Humphrey in advance of the meeting. No Board action was required. Steve is reviewing competition programs and documentation for options to enhance appeal, increase information availability, and reduce entry-level intimidation.

NARTREK Committee.

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair George Scheil in advance of the meeting. No Board action was required. NARTEK held a contest during 2010 with 17 entries. The committee is working on revising and updating the packets for NARTREK Silver and Gold Award programs.

Public Affairs Committee.

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair Mark Stought in advance of the meeting. No Board action was required. The Committee has issued a call to NAR members and sections to provide copies of (or links to) media coverage they have obtained for their rocketry activities, along with a description of the means by which they got this coverage, to serve as "lessons learned" for others on what works to get good coverage.

**Motion by Jennifer Ash-Poole -- Seconded by Ted Cochran. Passed unanimously.
The meeting shall be adjourned, to reconvene at about 8 PM Thursday, July 21, 2011 at NARAM-53 in Cincinnati, OH.**