



Minutes of the National Association of Rocketry Board of Trustees Meeting

Draft pending NAR Board vote of approval.

April 12-13, 2012 at NARCON-2012, Hutchinson, Kansas

The National Association of Rocketry Board of Trustees convened at 7 PM Thursday, April 12, 2012 at the Ramada Hotel in Hutchinson, Kansas. The following Board members were present:

Trip Barber, President

Ted Cochran, Vice President

John Lyngdal

Jennifer Ash-Poole

John Hochheimer

Vince Huegele

Tom Ha

Ryan Coleman

Absent: Joyce Guzik, Secretary (joined by conference call at 9:15 AM Friday)

The Board entered executive session at 7 PM and came out of executive session at 8 PM. No decisions were made in the executive session.

NAR Member Concerns.

Group Memberships for Student Rocket Programs. NAR member Matthew Gentile from the Cornell University SEDS (Students for the Exploration and Development of Space) chapter requested that the NAR Board consider offering a group rate/club membership similar to what is offered to TARC teams for other student programs that involve rocket flying. The Board declined to expand the current program for offering group or other membership discount rates beyond TARC and SLI, the two student programs officially endorsed and co-sponsored by the NAR.

Outreach Recognition. NAR member Tim Quigg of Washington requested that the NAR Board consider establishing a new category of recognition awards for members who go “above and beyond” in their efforts to conduct outreach events on behalf of the NAR and of the hobby. The Board decided that the current practice of using the NAR President’s Award at the discretion of the NAR President (including awarding more than one per year if appropriate) as the recognition for such exceptional service should be continued, rather than establishing a whole new category of award with its own judging criteria.

Cannon Grant Eligibility. NAR member Giovanni Colberg of Virginia requested that the NAR Board consider expanding eligibility for Cannon Grants, currently awarded only to certified teachers in schools, to also include persons doing structured educational outreach programs outside of school, such as the NASA DEVELOP program with which he is affiliated. This issue was deferred for discussion during the Education Committee time slot on Friday, when Dr. Joyce Guzik, who administers the NAR Cannon Grant program, was going to be available by conference call.

High Power Certification Lapse Policy. NAR member Jim Hussey of Oregon requested that the NAR Board reconsider its policy of not restoring previously-earned high power user certifications when a member rejoins after a lapse of more than one year in membership. The Board discussed this issue at some length, and could not decide what the real difference was between a person who earned a high-power certification and never subsequently flew to that level of high power but maintained continuous membership for many years, and therefore retained that

certification, and a person who earned a certification then departed the NAR and returned that same number of years later, but lost the certification due to the membership lapse.

Motion by Ted Cochran, seconded by John Hochheimer: Members having been certified in high power with the NAR may retain that certification when renewing their membership regardless of the length of their membership lapse. Passed 5/1/11 Yea: Cochran, Hochheimer, Ha, Huegele, Coleman. Nay: Lyngdal. Abstain: Ash-Poole.

Treasurer and Financial.

The NAR's financial position continues to be very sound. Total cash balance on hand is about \$353K as of 31 December 2011, of which \$46K is in restricted-purpose funds (for the Alway R&D Prizes and Cannon Educator Grants) that were funded by donations and can only be spent on that specific activity. The NAR Emergency Reserve Fund, funded by the legal fee rebate from BATFE and by life membership dues, is another \$59K of this balance. The NAR's overall unrestricted cash balance at the end of 2011 was \$34K higher than it was at the end of 2010, although the 2011 budget had projected a deficit of \$6K. The growth in cash position in 2011 was largely due to much stronger levels of membership than had been predicted for 2011.

The Board agreed that the NAR's unrestricted fund balance is about \$50K higher than the level generally recognized as the "best practices" minimum for a non-profit association of our annual income. The draft budget for 2012 submitted by the Treasurer based on continuation of currently-approved programs and levels of service (and a projected membership of 5300) projected a surplus of an additional \$15K. The Board concluded after the financial review that the NAR can afford to and should increase spending in 2012 for service enhancements in areas identified in membership surveys as places where our services are not as strong as the membership wants them to be. These opportunities were discussed, and where appropriate approved, in later parts of the Board meeting.

The Treasurer noted to the Board that IRS regulations for non-profit associations have recently been expanded and tightened, and that the NAR's IRS 990 tax return has become lengthy and complex as a result. He also noted that these regulations require that he circulate the IRS 990 to all Board members and make a record of the acknowledgment of each Board member that they had reviewed this return for accuracy.

The Board directed that the Treasurer consult with expert accountant and NAR volunteer Gary Cole concerning the appearance of propriety of using the credit union where Treasurer Tom Ha is employed as the financial institution used by the NAR for the certificates of deposit that we use to hold our cash balance. The Board recognized that by use of this credit union we were benefiting with much higher interest rates than in any alternative investment location.

The Board considered a proposal by our insurance agent Bob Blomster that we adopt an expansion of insurance coverage to provide \$25,000 of coverage for injuries that may be incurred by members while participating in a NAR rocketry activity, replacing the current \$5,000 medical payments coverage, which is payable only to non-members. This new additional coverage would be "excess" coverage, effective only to the degree not already covered by the injured party's personal health insurance. The premium for this new coverage would be \$10,800 per year. The Board declined this expansion of coverage due to cost; it is more economical to self-insure the NAR using the Emergency Fund than to spend this much money for coverage that is limited to \$25K, is only "excess", and is for an event that has never previously resulted in an insurance claim.

The NAR President expressed concern that NAR officers whose duties involve travel to do the business of the NAR and/or represent the organization at events important to the Association, or who require professional memberships to do their duties effectively, are currently paying the expenses for these items out of pocket. While this has not been a problem recently for those officers, he said that continuing to do this is in some cases becoming a deterrent to the most talented volunteers choosing to serve in such positions. He proposed a revision to the NAR policy on volunteer reimbursement as follows:

“ NAR Trustees may be reimbursed up to \$500 per meeting for travel and lodging expenses actually incurred in connection with attending the meeting. This shall not apply to Board members who were in office as of March 2011. The NAR President may be reimbursed up to this same limit for attending other NAR national

events not involving a Board meeting. Other NAR officers who attend non-NAR business meetings to represent the NAR when requested to do so by the NAR President or NAR Board may be reimbursed up to the full cost of their travel. The NAR President may be reimbursed for membership in the American Society of Association Executives, and the NAR NFPA representative for membership in the NFPA.”

Motion by John Hochheimer, Seconded by Jennifer Ash-Poole. The volunteer reimbursement policy proposal shall be accepted as presented. Passed unanimously.

The Board meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm Thursday and reconvened at 8:00 am Friday, April 13.

Membership Committee.

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair Todd Schweim, who joined the Board in person.

NAR membership has increased at a strong rate for the last six months (starting in the fall of 2011) and has now reached 5400. This has been the result of a combination of increased numbers of all-new members joining, and an increase in the rate at which current members choose to renew and former members choose to return. The reasons for this growth are not directly traceable to any single factor due to the large number of different initiatives taken over the past year to improve publicity (to attract new members) and to improve member connection and satisfaction (to retain current members). These include:

- Recruiting bonuses of \$5 paid to current members for signing up new ones (238 new members in the past year)
- Recruiting bonuses of \$5 paid to hobby shops for signing up new NAR members (17 new members)
- Kit stuffers and website publicity from cooperating rocket manufacturers (185 new members)
- Shift to preprinted renewal reminder membership forms (now sent twice)
- Addition of two automated e-mail reminders: membership renewal and membership lapse
- Extensive publicity to participants in the TARC and SLI programs
- Addition of automated e-mails sent to new members at 30, 60, and 90 days after joining publicizing different areas of NAR services
- Implementation of a program to send a free NAR HPR certification level pin to each member as they attain a new certification level

Motion by John Hochheimer, Seconded by Vince Huegele: The individual member recruitment bonus of \$5 as currently implemented shall be continued. Passed unanimously.

The Board took note with thanks of the efforts of Tom Ha to get NAR promotional banners made and sent free to all NAR sections who asked for one over the past winter. Tom got 150 banners produced and personally shipped 97 of them to requesting sections, all within the allowed budget of \$6K (actually spending \$5526), then transported the remaining banners to NAR HQ in shipping tubes for future free distribution to new sections.

The Board asked the Membership Committee to develop a proposal for the next meeting for how to recognize or reward manufacturers whose advertising of the NAR leads to new members joining the NAR.

Periodicals Committee.

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair Mark Bundick.

Mark and Todd Schweim had developed a detailed cost analysis of the NAR’s principal paper publications, Sport Rocketry magazine and the Member Guidebook. They evaluated the net cost of these to the NAR, and developed options for Sport Rocketry that showed its cost as a function of page count and press run. The Board affirmed the current planning factors for Sport Rocketry, making every issue 56 pages and paying for selected feature articles.

The Board evaluated the cost information on newsstand/hobby shop sales of Sport Rocketry and noted that this was a net money-losing enterprise for the NAR (as it is for most magazines) in terms of cost to print and distribute vs

return from sales. The Board agreed to continue to distribute the magazine in this manner, in the interests of exposure of the hobby as the sole remaining rocketry magazine that is available in such stores. The Board directed Todd Schweim to begin putting a membership-recruitment insert in copies of the magazine sold via this route, and to develop separate productivity figures for each of the three distributors that we send newsstand copies through, to see if any of these are outliers in terms of low productivity.

Education Committee.

Committee Chair Vince Huegele presented his report in person. Joyce Guzik joined the Board meeting by telephone for the review of this committee's report and departed at the end of this session.

Vince's report reflected the wide range of different effective outreach and educator-support programs his committee and its numerous volunteers have underway. These programs include the national partnership with 4-H, which has increased TARC 4-H enrollment and has identified 45 4-H rocket clubs nationally; efforts to initiate a partnership or at least a close working relationship with Civil Air Patrol as they try to move into a Junior HPR program; an arrangement with the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville to distribute NAR and TARC material to Space Camp participants; and the bimonthly NAR Educator Newsletter written and sent electronically to over 2000 teacher contacts by Dr. Roy Houchin.

The Board reviewed the report on NAR participation in National Science Teacher Association conventions, where we currently partner with AIA to run a TARC-NAR booth (funded by AIA) at the annual national convention, and run our own solo booth (funded by the NAR) at one regional convention per year. CATO section, led by Al Gloer, ran the NAR booth at the northeast regional NSTA convention in Hartford, CT in October, 2011; and ROCI section, led by Mario Perdue, ran the NAR-AIA booth at the national NSTA convention in Indianapolis in March, 2012. The Board discussed whether the regional NSTA event provides the best return on our \$2000 investment in terms of contacts made, compared to other potential convention/trade show events such as iHobby. The Board concluded that the NAR should continue to do both NSTA events, within the limits of volunteer availability to do this work, and should add to that participation in this year's iHobby in Cleveland in October to see if this is a productive venue for establishing contacts with hobby stores and companies.

Joyce Guzik reviewed with the Board the criteria currently being applied for eligibility for Cannon Teacher Grants. These criteria give preference to teachers in formal school settings but applications are considered from educators who work in settings outside of schools although the eligibility criteria do not currently say this explicitly. The Board asked Joyce to amplify the published rules for Cannon Grant eligibility for the 2013 program, to clarify that this support is intended for structured programs and must be made payable to a school or educational group, not to a private individual.

John Lyngdal reported no issues with execution of the NASA Student Launch Program that he manages, where the NAR provides launch services to NASA under a contract that reimburses our expenses including lodging for the staff volunteers. This program has expanded to over 50 participating/launching high school and college teams this year. This year's contract required the NAR to supply an additional 8 large high-power pads to support the increased size of the launch. John personally fabricated and shipped these, and will lead the NAR team of 23 skilled high-power flier volunteers who support this event in Huntsville in April.

The Board considered a proposal by Jack & Kathy Colpas for the NAR to become involved in the "Reach for the Stars Rocket Competition" program that they run. The Board considered this to be a worthy program but could discern no particular advantage to the NAR from extending our involvement into a commercial (if non-profit) program such as this, and declined to establish any formal partnership arrangement.

Technology Committee.

Committee Chair Jennifer Ash-Poole presented her report in person.

Jonathan Rains and Jennifer Ash-Poole had both traveled to NAR HQ in March to do a complete make-over of the HQ computer and office equipment infrastructure and to review all administrative processes with the HQ Manager

in order to see what assistance she might need with resolving process issues that created difficulty or extra work for her. Their reports identified some areas where the NAR HQ "Neon" web-based database management system needed custom programming to better support NAR member renewal processes. The \$3000 cost for this custom programming was added to the NAR 2012 budget.

The Board reviewed with Bruce Canino by phone and online the current status of his development of the new, restructured NAR website. Bruce reported that he was behind his originally-planned schedule but still thought he could have the project finished and the new website open before NARAM. The Board asked Bruce to provide a schedule of work reflecting "configuration freeze" and transfer of the old website content to the new website structure and software on July 1, and completion of proofing by July 15.

Bruce also reported that the process for posting, commenting, and voting on changes to the US Model Rocket Sporting Code has been successfully moved to a purely online technique using a forum in the Neon headquarters software, effective this year, making publication of this material in the annual paper Model Rocketeer unnecessary.

The Board received a report from Jonathan Rains concerning the project he had volunteered to do in getting new, better-looking NAR membership cards (credit card style with color graphics) developed and implemented. Jonathan got price quotes from a variety of vendors to outsource this operation from NAR HQ where current membership cards are printed. The best value bid was for about \$1.23 per card, stuffed into an envelope with accompanying NAR literature, not including postage, when sent in batches every two weeks. This compares to \$0.75 for the current card plus enclosures, not counting the extensive manual labor involved by the NAR HQ manager in stuffing and addressing envelopes. The current card is also sent out in bi-weekly batches.

Jonathan also priced an option to do a one-time mail-out of a new card to every current NAR member to get the new program underway. The cost for this was estimated at \$8,200.

Motion by John Hochheimer, Seconded by Ted Cochran: The new membership card program shall be implemented as presented. Passed unanimously.

Section Activities Committee.

Committee Chair John Hochheimer presented his report in person.

There were 127 NAR sections in 42 states as of April 1, 2012. Of the 8 states without a section, only 4 have more than 10 NAR members in that state; only Kentucky has more than 20. The process for supporting NAR sections doing their annual renewal online turned out to be far more difficult to execute in the Neon headquarters system than anticipated and was not implemented in 2012.

Randy Boadway has developed a new program for recognition of section overall excellence and plans to have this in place in 2012 to support awards at NARAM-54. The Board identified prompt implementation of this program as the top priority for this Committee's near-term efforts. The Board identified the second priority for the committee to be "taking the pulse" of the current NAR sections by contact, survey, etc. to see what their priorities are for actions within the power of the NAR to do in order to support them better.

Randy Boadway will be taking over Section Activities Committee by the end of May and he and John are currently engaged in turnover. The Board asked John before his departure from this position to develop a briefing or document reflecting "lessons learned" from his experience as the committee chair in advising sections on the best practices for gaining or maintaining access to launch sites.

The Board reviewed the current fee structure for chartering or renewing the charter of an NAR section. In view of the NAR's current good financial situation and the priority that the Board places on tangible support to NAR sections, the Board could find no good reason to continue charging a \$25 annual section charter fee.

Motion by Ted Cochran, Seconded by Vince Huegele. All fees for establishment and renewal of NAR section charters shall be discontinued. Passed unanimously.

Safety Committee.

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair Steve Lubliner.

Steve requested guidance from the Board concerning whether a 2012 Section Safety Grant program should be approved and announced, and if so on what the conditions or limitations would be for how the grant money could be spent. Steve reported that the final round of Section Safety Grants in 2011 only resulted in \$7910 in requests against an authorized \$10,000 in available funding, and that the market for “safety” equipment may be getting saturated by the number of such grant programs the NAR has run in the past several years. The Board agreed that the purpose of the grants in 2012 could be expanded beyond just safety equipment, and tasked new Section Activities Committee Chair Randy Boadway to develop a broader purpose for these grants based on feedback from the sections, for Board approval at the NARAM meeting, and to take over administration of this broader program.

Steve provided the Board with a series of proposed changes to the NAR Model Rocket and High Power Rocket Safety Codes, to exactly reflect the changes to the National Fire Protection Association Codes on rocketry that are currently in the final stages of approval for implementation this summer. The Board made adjustments to these proposals to ensure that they exactly and comprehensively reflected all the changes to these NFPA documents, and nothing more. The final versions are attached.

Motion by Ted Cochran, seconded by John Lyngdal: The proposed changes to the NAR Model Rocket and High Power Safety Codes shall be approved, with an effective date of 1 August 2012 for these changes. Passed unanimously.

Special Committee on FAI Activities.

The Board reviewed the report from Committee Chair John Langford.

John reported that participation in the NAR-supported FAI international spacemodeling competition program was strong and growing, with more participants (51) trying out for the 2012 US Team for the World Spacemodeling Championships than for any previous team. John also reported that the team’s finances were strong as a result of the NAR’s annual allocation of \$7000 and matching funds from John’s company, Aurora Flight Sciences.

John submitted a “Request for Commensurate Compliance” request to the NAR Board for approval to allow US Team members to use at the team’s formal practice in June near Chicago a batch of European-made FAI competition motors obtained by the US team and tested by FAI at the last World Spacemodeling Championships. By virtue of the Board approval for this one-time use, these motors would be considered to be certified for that day and their flights would be covered by NAR insurance.

Motion by John Hochheimer, Seconded by Jennifer Ash-Poole: the application for Commensurate Compliance for FAI-certified motors for the US Team practice shall be approved. Passed with 6 yea votes, Lyngdal abstaining.

The Board reviewed without comment the reports of the following committees that had no issues requiring NAR Board action:

Standards & Testing Committee
National Events Committee
High Power Services Committee
NAR Technical Services Committee
NFPA Representative
Contest & Records Committee
NARTREK Committee

The Board adjourned at 3 PM for a tour of the Kansas Cosmosphere space museum, dinner, and the NARCON welcoming session, and reconvened at 8 PM for a discussion of organizational priorities.

Organizational Priorities

The Board returned to the subject of the 2012 budget, prioritizing among all the decisions for enhanced program funding made or considered during the course of the Board's deliberations. The net effect of these decisions was a budget for 2012 that projected expenses \$16K greater than projected income, rather than the \$15K surplus originally projected. The Board agreed that this projected deficit was a conscious and appropriate action on the part of the Board to spend down a prudent fraction of the \$50K by which current fund balances exceeded the reasonable minimum for the NAR to keep on hand as a non-profit association.

Motion by Ted Cochran, Seconded by John Hochheimer: the NAR 2012 budget shall be approved. Passed unanimously.

The Board then turned to a discussion of potential organizational priorities and goals for the next year. A list of potential priorities was brainstormed, and then discussed and voted. The top 4 organizational priorities that were agreed to by the Board were (in order):

- Increase the number of available NAR section flying sites
- Ensure that there is a NAR section in or near every major US population center
- Increase the fraction of NAR Senior members who are under age 40
- Increase the NAR's website traffic levels and overall web presence

Finally, the Board discussed what the measurable goals should be that the NAR should set our effort toward achieving by NARAM-56 (2014), since the goals previously established (in 2009) have now all been achieved. The new goals agreed to were:

- Number of NAR members: 5800
- Number of NAR sections: 140
- Number of HPR certified members: 2900 (50% of membership)
- Number of NAR members in sections: 3500

Motion by Vince Huegele – seconded by Tom Ha. The minutes of the July 2011 Board of Trustees meeting shall be approved. Passed unanimously.

Motion by Tom Ha - seconded by Vince Huegele. Passed unanimously. The NAR Board shall adjourn, to reconvene on Saturday, July 28 at NARAM-54. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 PM.