

NAR Board of Trustees conference call, December 4, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 PM Eastern Time.

Present: John Hochheimer, President; Carol Marple, Vice President; Mark Wise, Secretary; Kevin Johnson, Treasurer; Randy Boadway; Becky Green; Ed LaCroix; Lynn Thomas; Jim Wilkerson.

Absent: None.

Member Feedback

A member communicated with John to express his concern regarding what he perceived to be a conflict between NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) Code 1127, "Code for High Power Rocketry," (<https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=1127>) and the NAR High Power Rocket Safety Code (<https://www.nar.org/safety-information/high-power-rocket-safety-code/>), specifically with regard to how launch site sizes are calculated. John sees no discrepancy, and the Board concurs with that judgment.

The same member told John that he disagreed with the NAR's intention to purchase a Wilson launch controller for use at national events. He believes it's a poor use of NAR money. John discussed this question with Trip Barber and Steve Lubliner, who both agree with the decision to purchase the Wilson controller. John pointed out that it's ultimately a false economy *not* to buy the system, because otherwise the NAR provides money to host Sections to buy launch equipment for each national event as it comes up.

Another member let John know that he was not satisfied with the recognition accorded to new Life Members. He was also concerned with the "expiration date" on the card. (The current end-of-the-century expiration date for life members is an artifact of an old member data system.) John will talk to Jonathan Rains about getting "Life Member" printed on membership cards as necessary. The Board discussed other ways to recognize our valued Life Members. At the very least, we will create a member pin to recognize their support of the NAR.

John has received a handful of e-mails in response to his "most interesting thing you did in rocketry this year" solicitation in the December *E-Rocketeer*.

John also received an e-mail from member Robin Houston, who said that if you can interest a young rocketeer's parents, that helps to keep the youngster involved. [Steve Lubliner said something similar at the NAR Town Hall in August, pointing out that someone has to drive kids to Section meetings and launches.] John asked Lynn and Becky to coordinate with the Education Committee to explore what we can do in addition to TARC to reach out to younger members. He suggested reaching out to Robin Houston as well, and will pass along her contact information.

HPR and Junior HPR Exams

John thanked Jim for his work on the new Junior Level 1 written exam and the updated Level 2 exam. Jim has sent a draft certification form to John, Chuck Neff (Section Activities chair), and John Thompson (High Power Rocketry Services chair). John said the form looked fine to him.

John Thompson e-mailed drafts of three versions of the updated Level 2 exam and a study guide to Board members earlier today. He also asked for Board direction on the following three questions:

1. Does the Board approve the new exam format (Reusable Exam Booklet with single page Answer Sheet as well as Answer Key)?

The Board unanimously approved the new exam format.

2. Does the Board approve the submission of only the graded Answer Sheet to NAR HQ and the electronic storage of that form (instead of hard copy) once that format is figured out?

The Board took no action at this time.

3. Does the Board approve the procedure update from where any NAR member was able to proctor the L2 exam to only L2 or higher NAR members?

With regard to question 3, our current policy is to send the exam electronically to a Section officer or Level 2 certified member. However, NAR has also sent tests out in sealed envelopes to be opened at an exam site (for example, in the case of exams administered at the launch site the same day as the certification attempt). Ed said he did not see the value in requiring an exam proctor to be Level 2 certified, that it only makes it more difficult to find an exam opportunity. He pointed out that the person taking the exam is still going to have to know the answers, and having three versions of the exam (as we do) guards against cheating. Kevin agreed. John Hochheimer said he'd contact John Thompson, but the Board is in agreement that this is not a major problem. If John T. convinces John H. otherwise, he'll come back to the full Board for further discussion.

In his e-mail, John Thompson expressed his appreciation for Chuck Neff's hard work in putting the exams together.

Treasury Update

Kevin said that the general account is "pretty low" right now, so will look into cashing in two of our Certificates of Deposit for operating funds. (NAR has 12 CD's, with one maturing every month.) We are still waiting on payments from NASA. Kevin now has full access to QuickBooks Online, and is starting to pay some transactions electronically via QuickBooks Invoicing, rather than writing checks.

He has sent out the B division R&D prize money from NARAM, made payments to *Sport Rocketry* authors, and paid the *Sport Rocketry* invoice and other invoices to TD Type. One scholarship check was deposited late, which required a funds transfer to cover it.

Kevin will work with Anne Heacock, our accountant, to make QuickBooks more clear and easier to use.

National Events

Ed said that NARCON has been "slow to get rolling," but he expects things to start moving in the next 7-10 days. The website should be up and running by then. Tours are currently scheduled for the University of Arizona Mirror Lab, the Pima Air Museum, and the Titan Missile Museum.

NSL – The website should be open by the end of the month. Event director Matt Abbey has gone above and beyond in setting up the event well ahead of schedule. Ed says the town’s whole business community is getting involved.

NARAM – Ed expects CD Dan Wolf to start passing information to Todd Schweim for the website after the first of the year.

Ed has spoken with Steve Lubliner about national sport range equipment. They will meet next week to start working on a detailed proposal to cover purchasing, maintaining, and storing the equipment.

Other Topics

Bruce Canino is the new Northeast regional Contest Board chair.

Carol and Mark have worked with the admins of the Tripoli Facebook page to develop a joint policy on vendor posts, with the intention of curbing excessive advertising by some vendors. Vendors will be permitted to post announcements and ads on Thursdays to the NAR page, on Fridays to the Tripoli page. Advertisements and product announcements on other days will be deleted. Both organizations announced the policy early this week, to mixed reactions from group members. The new policy will not affect some vendors, while others will be cutting back significantly on their posting. Mark pointed out that we have been essentially giving away thousands of dollars in free advertising to certain vendors who do not buy ad space in *Sport Rocketry*.

John thanked the moderators for their work and gave them *carte blanche* to do what seems necessary.

Chuck Neff had a question about groups.io membership. He wanted to know whether members of our groups.io group must be NAR members, and does a member have to belong to the main group to belong to any subgroups (e.g. individual Sections, S&T, TARC). Randy asked whether we really need a “main” NAR group, since our primary means of communicating with members is the *E-Rocketeer*. Chuck has closed the group for now. He has been correcting a few people who were posting section information to the main group and redirecting them to the appropriate subgroup. John pointed out that we’re not in groups.io to create another discussion group – we have specific subgroups for specific purposes. Randy said that section subgroups need to be open to anyone, NAR member or not, who wants to join them. Carol agreed that we should allow them to join, adding that the exposure to rocketry in a positive way through Sections can’t be anything but helpful. Becky and Mark agreed. Ed wondered whether groups.io access could be viewed as a membership benefit. Carol countered that it was a benefit of Section membership rather than NAR membership. After extensive discussion, Ed concurred. Kevin and Jim agreed.

In summary, the main group will be closed to non-NAR members, and subgroup membership will be at the discretion of subgroup moderators.

Miscellaneous

Becky had a question about the rollout date for the Junior L1 exam, since she is mentoring an SLP team looking to qualify in January. The exam should be available in mid-December.

Jim thanked Carol and Mark for the opportunity to work with them on Facebook page administration. John thanked Jim for volunteering.

Mark said that Joe Whitman has volunteered to help Chuck administer groups.io. He has passed Chuck's contact information to Joe.

The next conference call will be on January 8, 2020 at 9:00 PM Eastern Time.

Call adjourned at 10:32 PM.