

NAR Board of Trustees conference call, September 2, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 PM Eastern Time.

Present: John Hochheimer, President; Carol Marple, Vice President; Mark Wise, Secretary; Kevin Johnson, Treasurer (arrived 9:00 PM); Becky Green (arrived 8:37); Ed LaCroix; Steve Lubliner; Lynn Thomas.

Absent: Jim Wilkerson.

Three members were present in the chat room and were welcome to submit questions and comments via the Q&A channel.

Todd Schweim managed the technical aspects of the Zoom meeting and provided his input as appropriate.

President's Update

John continues to hear from members who think that NAR should extend membership expiration dates because they cannot launch due to COVID-19. John lets them know that the NAR's business model does not support that, and the ability to support launches is just one of the services we provide. He cited the Colorado burn ban as a current example of non-COVID factors beyond NAR's control.

NAR Headquarters services have been intermittent due to storm damage from the derecho that struck Iowa on August 10th. Electrical and phone service to HQ had been intermittent, but is now back to normal.

We continue to interact with Tripoli regarding potential modifications to high power certification. NAR and Tripoli seem to be moving in the same direction of treating HPR certification as a learning process, rather than as a "sprint" to Level 2 or Level 3.

We are also discussing certification duration with Tripoli. NAR certification is permanent, while TRA certification expires after an extended period of inactivity. John will talk to the HPR committee, but we are not considering changing our policy at this time.

John also mentioned that he sent out a large number of 50-year member pins during the month.

Treasurer's Report

Kevin is working with Anne to finish the fiscal year 2019 financial reports and file the Form 990 with the IRS.

Our bank balances currently total \$219,309. Our liabilities stand at \$87,570, including invoices from Anne Heacock (accounting) and TD Type & Design (*Sport Rocketry* production), as well as a reserve for insurance claims and premiums.

The payment from NASA for the Student Launch Program arrived. Kevin said that most of that money will be used to fund scholarships and grants.

We still have some money in accounts at Americhoice Credit Union, which Kevin will transfer to the USBank accounts. He is also working on gaining access to the accounts at Collins Credit Union so that he can close them out.

Level 2 Certification Update

There is still some disagreement between the Board and the Level 3 Coordinating Committee (L3CC) about who should be able to proctor the Level 2 written exam. The HPR Committee, Section Activities Committee, and L3CC are concerned about cases where friends are proctoring exams for each other. Chuck Neff, Section Activities Chair, has told John that we are potentially logically inconsistent in how we are determining eligibility to proctor exam.

NAR's current policy is that anyone can administer the test. Steve said that the existing program was set up to make it possible to administer the exam when no Level 2 or Level 3 certified member was locally available to proctor. Steve said that he would support a requirement that a proctor to be at least L1 certified. Lynn said that sounded reasonable. Carol agreed that a proctor should be HPR certified. (Her section, MASA, requires that anyone administering the exam be at least Level 2 certified.)

Ed said he was not sure this was necessary. Since a proctor is present to make sure that a candidate is not cheating on the exam, does that role really require certification?

Steve moved that anyone proctoring the Level 2 or Junior Level 1 written exam must be HPR certified. Carol seconded. The motion passed 4-1, with Carol, Mark, Steve, and Lynn voting "yes" and Ed voting "no." (The President does not vote on motions except in the event of ties, and three trustees were absent from the meeting during the vote.)

Safety Committee Requests

1. Discussion regarding mandatory use of launch rails for HPR

Steve proposed that all rockets exceeding 3.3 lb launch weight / 4.4 oz propellant/ 160.01 Nsec (that is to say, all rockets meeting the definition of HPR) shall be launched from rails, specifically a minimum 1010 T-slotted rail 72 inches in length.

Member Don Carson asked if that would mean that launching high power rockets from towers would be prohibited. Steve said that was not his intent, and that he could modify the proposal. Member Marc McReynolds asked whether relevant measurements should also be expressed in metric units. Steve agreed.

Ed followed up on Don's question, asking whether a tower's minimum length should also be 6 feet/1.8 meters. Steve agreed, citing a Canadian Association of Rocketry policy from 2006.

John asked Steve to solicit input from L3CC, HPR, Safety, and Section Activities committees for an article for the *E-Rocketeer*.

2. Discussion regarding proposed liaison with Experimental Sounding Rocket Association

Steve has been in communication with Andy Berger, Vice President of the Experimental Sounding Rocket Association (ESRA), the organization that sponsors the Spaceport America Cup. ESRA is asking whether NAR would like to provide a liaison to ESRA, to be a non-voting member of the ESRA board. This would facilitate information exchange between ESRA and NAR.

Mark said that he was worried about NAR becoming involved with a rocketry activity that potentially fell outside the scope of our safety codes, since ESRA permitted experimental motors. Steve added his concern that any accident would damage the reputation of the entire hobby rocketry community. In

reply, John said that since 80% or so of the teams participating in ESRA activities use commercial motors, it would be a good thing if Intercollegiate Rocket Engineering Competition (IREC) teams could fly tests at NAR launches.

Carol said that she understood the point that NAR could be seen as endorsing a non-NAR activity, but if ESRA activities were observing at least the Tripoli safety code, it would be good to have a liaison to ESRA for situational awareness. This would not necessarily imply endorsement.

Ed moved to create a NAR liaison position to the Experimental Sounding Rocket Association. Lynn seconded. Motion carried 5-0, with Mark abstaining.

John will work with Steve to identify potential candidates for the liaison position.

Facebook Update

Carol told the Board that relaxing the rules regarding posting links has worked well. The admins have seen less anger, less drama, and a more positive tone in the group. Carol suggested continuing this policy for another month and reviewing it during the next conference call.

Peak of Flight reference to Insurance Info

The most recent issue of *Peak of Flight*, a biweekly electronic newsletter from Apogee Components, contained a lengthy article on NAR insurance. Although the content of the article was largely taken verbatim from the NAR website, it also included some inaccurate information. John will contact Apogee and ask them to coordinate any future such articles with NAR.

Cinco de Shepard/Mercury Request

David Newell asked that we help encourage some sort of event to give the rocketry community something to look forward to next spring. He suggested replacing Cinco de Mayo with a “Cinco de Shepard/Cinco de Mercury” to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Alan Shepard’s Mercury flight on May 5, 2021.

John will discuss the idea with Chuck Neff.

Miscellaneous

Carol reported that NAR currently has 218 chartered Sections (an increase of two from last month). NAR has awarded 32 section grants this year, and 17 Sections have awarded free youth memberships.

The next scheduled conference call will be on October 7 at 9:00 PM Eastern Time.

Call adjourned at 9:11 PM.