

NAR Board of Trustees conference call, November 4, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 PM Eastern Time.

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

Absent: None.

Members present: Don Carson, Bob Kaplow, Jeff Taylor, John Thompson.

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

Ed moved to accept the minutes from the July board meeting. Becky seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

President's Report

Membership count

John reported that the NAR had approximately 7400 members at the end of October. Our membership trend is currently flat, but we are not losing members.

IRS 990

John sent the Form 990 tax return to the Board. If no one has comments by tomorrow afternoon (i.e. November 5), he will instruct Anne to file the form with the IRS. NAR's year-over-year income is down, but John believes that is largely due to changes in our accounting practices.

Accounting progress

Anne Heacock, our accountant, is working with the state of Iowa to register the NAR as a business in the state. Among other things, this action is necessary in order for NAR to close out our accounts at Collins Credit Union. We may eventually need a motion from the board appointing representatives (probably John and Kevin) to the state.

Anne is still working on our non-profit status with the IRS. John says that IRS has lost some paperwork, but Anne is working with one of their agents. We are waiting on a letter from IRS to Marie Stumpe, which will allow her to act as our representative.

AT&T savings

Marie, Anne, Kevin, and John have been looking at our phone bills. They discovered that we were paying for an antiquated service, which they removed from our plan. This should cut our monthly phone bill by about two-thirds.

Reminder for budget requests

John asked all Board members who are associated with committees to draw up a budget for CY 2021.

Motor list confusion

John said that there has been some confusion regarding certified motor lists. It appears that some people have looked at the list of NAR-certified motors, when they needed to look at the combined NAR/CAR/TRA motor list on the NAR website. We will work to resolve the confusion.

John also noted that there are a lot of "pending" motors on the competition-certified list. He asked Ed to work with the Standards and Testing (S&T) committee to update the list. John suggested contacting Ed Pattison-Gordon and John Lyngdal directly.

Treasurer's Report

Kevin is working on closing the Americhoice and Collins accounts. Collins now tells us that the full board will not have to travel to Iowa to close out the accounts. (See the Treasurer's report in the minutes of the October 7, 2020 conference call.)

Current liabilities include some invoices related to *Sport Rocketry*, as well as Iowa payroll tax.

Safety Report

Fast track HPR certification

Steve had received a letter from a recent college graduate (not a NAR member) requesting an expedited path to Level 3 high power certification. He wanted to make a "speed run," as he called it, to Level 3 so that he could proceed with several "research projects" he had in mind, including liquid fueled rockets. He cited his experience with his college rocketry team as evidence of his skill and knowledge.

The consensus of the Board was that we will not create a special program to accommodate people with real or perceived relevant experience. Steve sent a draft reply to the Board in advance of the meeting, and Ed provided some edits. Steve will send the letter in his capacity as Safety Committee chair. He will recommend that the young man get in touch with the Reaction Research Society to pursue his interest in liquid fueled rockets, since neither NAR nor Tripoli support such activity.

Flying during state/local burn bans

Steve has done some research into the definition of *fire ban* and *burn ban* but has not found any consistent definition across jurisdictions. For example, a burn ban in Arizona does not include rocketry activity, but a burn ban in Colorado does include a prohibition on rocket launches.

John added that Colorado and other states follow guidelines provided by the U.S. Forest Service. Steve says that Arizona is another matter, and that burn bans are generally imposed at a local rather than regional or state level.

Steve said that there is a great deal of relevant fire science regarding burn bans, and he hopes to make use of it to create scientifically based temperature/wind/humidity guidelines for flying rockets safely in dry conditions. In the meantime, Steve said that we should follow the guidelines and restrictions imposed by the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ), unless the AHJ grants permission to fly rockets as an exception to the restrictions in effect.

John pointed out that flying in defiance of a burn ban would definitely affect NAR's insurance. Ambiguous or poorly worded NAR guidelines that may encourage rocketeers to ignore local fire restrictions could potentially do great harm to the hobby.

Steve will draft an article for the *E-Rocketeer*. John thinks we need something more formal in addition to the article. Mark volunteered to work with Steve to draft an appropriate policy based on the forthcoming article and propose it as a NAR policy at a subsequent board meeting.

Mark moved that NAR require local and state burn bans to be followed, and that Steve write an appropriate article for the *Electronic Rocketeer* to inform our members. Steve seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Section Activities

Carol announced that we currently have 221 chartered Sections. We awarded five Section grants during the month, for a total of 42 for the year. Carol added that Chuck Neff, Section Activities chair, is doing a great job with grants.

Becky said that she sent two free memberships to HQ for processing during the month. (NAR board members can award up to ten free memberships per year.) John reminded all board members to be alert for opportunities to award free memberships.

National Events

NARCON: Ed said that he has lined up 13 confirmed presenters, and four more that are reasonably certain. The Friday keynote speech will be an update on the OSIRIS-REx asteroid sample mission. Ed and Becky are working on booking a speaker from SpaceX for the Saturday keynote speech.

Ed and Todd plan to have the website up and registration open on or about December 1.

The projected dates to open registration for NSL and NARAM are March 8th and May 10th, respectively.

Ed said that Dan Wolf, Contest Board chair, would like to hold a virtual Competition Forum before Christmas. The Competition Forum used to be a fixture at NARAM, but it has fallen dormant in recent years.

Ed and Don Carson have been discussing the possibility of holding a virtual NARAM in parallel with the in-person NARAM in 2021. The proposed virtual NARAM would begin on July 1st, after the contest year has closed, and run through July 27th. These dates would not sync with the in-person NARAM, in order to provide sufficient time to enter and validate the virtual NARAM results. This would allow for virtual and in-person NARAM awards to be presented simultaneously.

Carol asked what the registration price will be for the virtual NARCON. Ed said he estimates the price at \$20.00 for individuals and \$30.00 for families, but the final decision has not been made. Todd said that the fee for Accel Events (the meeting provider) would be \$500 per day (\$1500 total) regardless of the number of participants.

NARCON virtual tours: Ed said that four tours are coming into focus: two on Friday and two on Saturday. One will be John Pursley leading a tour of the Saturn V at Johnson Space Center, and two tours of rocketry manufacturers are scheduled. Ed is working with Carol on another tour, with details to be announced.

John said that the Academy of Model Aeronautics contacted him to renew our Memorandum of Understanding, which was originally signed in 2014. **Ed moved to re-formalize NAR's Memorandum of Understanding with the Academy of Model Aeronautics. Carol seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Education

Becky said that outreach launches continue to be difficult to hold due to COVID. She is currently doing outreach activities via Zoom, including a session with rocketeers in Costa Rica planned for the end of the month.

Civil Air Patrol

Lynn reached out to CAP's aerospace education department via e-mail to try to discuss their high-power rocketry program, which conflicts with NAR and TRA certification policies. She has not received a response. She will try to contact the Indiana Wing of CAP. Mark said that he is personally acquainted with the former commander of the Minnesota Wing, and would be able to arrange an introduction if necessary.

Social Media

TARC fundraising

The Facebook page admins had a request from a TARC team advisor to put a crowdfunding request on the NAR Facebook page. We do not generally allow crowdfunding on the page, but the admins felt that it was worth discussing whether we wanted to make an exception for TARC teams.

Jim expressed concern that the page could become bogged down with fundraising posts. He added that there was already so much cross-posting across rocketry-related groups (Model Rocketry Fanatics!!, Estes Rocketry, etc.), and he saw this as a can of worms that was not worth opening.

Kevin said that if we were to allow one TARC team to fund-raise on the page, we would have to allow the same opportunity all TARC teams. Mark added that a flood of fundraising posts could drive other traffic off the page.

Becky asked whether there was a way that TARC teams could reach out through their local sections and not resort to Facebook. Carol said that in this particular case, the team manager is the vice president of the local NAR Section.

John asked whether they reached out to the Aerospace Industries Association. He suggested that the team contact AIA, since they have funds set aside to assist TARC teams.

John went on to say that we want to help everybody but that there are limits to our bandwidth, and we do not want to be overwhelmed with 900-1000 TARC teams fundraising for the next six months.

Carol said that if we are not going to permit fundraising from a TARC team, we should change the "About" section of the Facebook page to delete the reference to asking a moderator for permission to fundraise on the page.

Bob Kaplow complaint about Facebook moderators

Bob thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak during the conference call.

He expressed his concern over what he called "Day 99 of a three-day suspension on Facebook." He maintains that his removal from the Facebook group over comments that he made on other pages was not right and was a violation of NAR bylaws.

He went to say that the NAR bylaws were specific regarding holding an annual meeting, which was to comply with Robert's Rules of Order. He contended that both stipulations were violated during the virtual Town Hall. He believed that the issues that he and other members brought up during the Town Hall had been ignored. "The NAR has not conducted an annual meeting that complied with the NAR bylaws in 2020," he concluded.

Bob had three other items that he would be happy to discuss at another time, but the two above items were his primary concerns.

John thanked Bob for his input. He said that the Board would discuss his concerns and that he, John, would respond to him privately.

The next scheduled conference call will be on January 6, 2021 at 8:00 PM Eastern Time.

Call adjourned at 9:38 PM.