

NAR Board of Trustees conference call, June 1, 2022

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

Present: John Hochheimer, President; Mark Wise, Secretary; Becky Green; Steve Kristal; Steve Lubliner; Lynn Thomas (arrived 8:15); Jim Wilkerson.

Absent: Carol Marple, Vice President; Kevin Johnson, Treasurer.

Others present: Ed LaCroix, National Events Chair.

Todd Schweim, NAR Communications Director, managed the technical aspects of the meeting and provided input as appropriate.

President's Report

Events

The National Sport Launch went well. John said that the crowd was a good size and the flying field was "awesome." There were lots of great flights, and John certified a number of high-power flyers.

The TARC finals went really well. Trip Barber did his usual incredible job putting the event together.

Burn Ban Policy Discussion

John said that as much as we encourage people to do the right thing, it is looking more and more as though we need to enact policies to keep people from doing stupid things. In particular, we need to craft a policy that states that *Sections shall not fly under conditions that present a fire danger* (red flag warnings, state/local/Federal bans on open fires, or local equivalents thereof). This could be relaxed in cases where the launch site and surrounding range are free of vegetation that could sustain burning.

Steve L. said that the Fire Service has relevant supporting documentation, and that we need to quantify the risk of fire for go/no-go decisions. John said that there may be a way to do that for places like Alamosa, but he saw a potential problem with Sections looking for loopholes.

Steve K. said, "If your area is covered by a burn ban, you don't fly.... If you're talking about the salt flats, that's different." Becky noted that California has burn bans that are so strict that lawn mowers are banned during windy parts of the day.

Lynn asked how we codify a rule that basically says, "*Don't be stupid*"? John replied that that was the dilemma he faced. He said that he was comfortable with the idea of using a checklist. Ed proposed some language, which Steve L. said was too draconian. John wondered whether we could use Ed's proposed language as the basis of a policy, with exceptions granted based on risk assessment of individual sites (for example, Black Rock). Steve L. said that unless the risk is zero, we have to be in lockstep with our insurer. Black Rock is an unambiguous case (no vegetation, therefore no fire danger), but the situation would be less clear at most other launch sites.

John asked Steve L. to send him the documentation for a risk assessment. John and Mark will check in mid-month to review insurance information (John is looking into that) and draft a policy. Steve L. said

that we need to determine who the appropriate people would be to grant exemptions, if we decide that exemptions are a good idea.

Becky asked about coordination with Tripoli. John said that he was scheduled to talk to them in the next few weeks, and that he will bring up the topic.

Steve L. said that he can remind readers in his next article for the *E-Rocketeer* that multi-stage rockets, using delays on saucers, and some other rocketry activities present an increased risk of fire, and that things not directly related to rocketry, such as catalytic converters, smoking on the field, and so on, also present risks.

Jim asked about socializing the policy with a few select Sections before general release. Steve L. suggested giving it to Chuck Neff, Section Activities Chair, to send out to a few selected people. Todd said that he can start putting "Think before you launch" messages in the social media queue. Steve L. asked John if he could work with Estes to spread the word. John said that he has an upcoming call with Bill Stine of Estes, and will discuss it with him.

Treasurer's Report

John provided a summary of the Treasury in Kevin's absence. He said that NAR currently has about \$225,000 in cash less \$50,000 in the Jay Apt Endowment, \$78,000 in accounts receivable for *Sport Rocketry*, and \$80,000 to \$90,000 in pending accounts receivable for the Student Launch Program. He commented, "We've made an awesome recovery.... We're doing well."

(Note: Kevin e-mailed a summary to the Board the day after the meeting. We have \$222,693.51 in cash. He is about to send the final \$2,000 of NARAM seed money to NARAM-63 CD Chad Ring.)

Miscellaneous

Becky has not heard from the Girl Scouts since the Board's May conference call.

Steve K. praised Todd for his work on social media. Steve, Trip, and Robyn Jackson are meeting on Zoom with prospective FAI Junior team members. He asked if he could give NAR memberships to Juniors who are not already NAR members. John said that would be all right.

Todd asked Board members to feel free to contact him with suggested topics for social media posts. The social media initiative has driven page visits to nar.org to 70,000 per month.

Lynn gave out a NAR membership or two at a launch during the month

Jim worked with Bob Kaplow to come up with a successor to the Best Midwest Qualified Flight Award at NARAM. Jim thinks the revised award is "in a good spot" where we can satisfy the longtime competitors who cherish the award. **Jim moved to create the "Ric Gaff Memorial Prang Award" as a successor to the Best Midwest Qualified Flight Award. Steve Lubliner seconded.** Ed expressed reservations about the motion, reminding the Board that he had been directed to discontinue it. John reminded the attendees that Jim has been tasked with reviewing all existing awards. **Motion passed 6-0.**

Jim mentioned a certification question that had come up, with a paperwork irregularity on a Level 3 attempt. Chuck Neff has asked that the current requirement that the two preflight approvers be the same individuals as the two observers that witness the flight be eliminated. Jim does not want to go that far and would rather add a field on the certification form to explain why a preflight observer was replaced by a flight witness in case a preflight observer must leave before the flight. Todd said that the

process and paperwork are currently under review. Steve L. would be happy if the L3CC member on the team remained constant, but that the second observer need not be the same person. Becky said she could see both sides of the issue and added that TRA does not have a similar requirement for the preflight and flight witnesses to be identical. John said that his sense was that the Board was comfortable with the Level 3 Coordinating Committee making the decision and keeping the Board informed. Jim will inform Chuck and Pat Gordzelik (L3CC chair). Todd will get the changes for the form from Chuck.

National Events

Ed said that there will be no Board meeting at NARAM since John will be out of the country. Lynn will run the NAR Town Hall in John's absence. Ed reminded the Board that the second NSL will roll out in 2023 and that NARAM-64 will not have a sport range. NARAM will be a five-day competition-only launch, probably in Muncie, Indiana. Ed would like to have some time during the Town Hall to announce the changes in conjunction with Steve K. and Dan Wolf, Contest Board chair. Ed noted that separating NARAM from a major sport launch makes it easier to find NARAM sites, since no waiver is required for NARAM. Steve K. reminded the Board that the idea is to have one NSL on either side of the Mississippi River each year. Alamosa has already offered to host NSL West in 2023, 24, and 25.

The next scheduled conference call will be on July 6, 2022, at 8:00 PM Eastern Time.

Meeting adjourned at 9:39 PM.