

American Avalanche Association Spring 2014 Board Meeting Agenda
NOLS Teton Valley - Driggs, ID
April 26, 2014

In attendance: John Stimberis, Kirk Bachman, Damian Jackson, Halsted Morris, Lynne Wolfe, Scott Savage, Stuart Thompson, Aleph Johnston-Blohm, Dave Hendrikson, Bill Williamson, Jaime Musnicki, Blase Reardon via Skype. Guests=Maura Londgen, Don Sharaf

Called to order at 8:42am.

Opening remarks: JS - story about D6 operator at Chinook Pass, taking the time to really analyze the situation. Outside pressures from state senators and increased risk.

Lynne has Blase's proxy, Scott has Ned Bair's proxy, John has Mike Ferari's proxy.

Fall Board Meeting minutes approval: Added "Bachman 2nd" of Stimberis nomination for President. No other changes. Savage moves to approve, Bachman 2nd, motion carries, minutes approved.

Executive Director's Report: Jaime

Financial Report: Quickbooks (QB) online balance sheet and P&L. Explanation of avy.org, NAC (Diva's \$5600 + ISSW Anchorage 2000, Theo Mieners research fund \$5000), operating account, endowment account, inventories. CIL Orion donation not received yet. Approximately 100K in non-AVPRO/sales revenue

Membership report: Jump in expired members, discussion about why – accounting, digital renewal process. Section reps can call/email people to remind them about renewal, has worked in the past. **John/Jaime will get section reps and ask them to contact folks individually about renewal. Jamie to breakout expiration length as well.** John S: Auto renewals, multi-year renewing? Halsted: Target AK Heli-Association members? Group discussion about AIARE requiring/recommending AAA membership for course instructors. KB: Our time better spent going after organizations rather than individuals. Need to attract the younger professionals and potential members to replace expiring members.

Pro development grants: JM: Received 5 applications to date for grant requests, total = \$3500. CIL check is for over \$9000 this year (was \$11000 last year). May need to trim/partially fund requests. LW - Utah hasn't written required TAR article on their event yet. NW still a strange scene politically, not sure if they will be asking for \$. **Jaime to determine applicant pool in coming months, Executive Committee to discuss and appropriate funds.**

SWAG update: Sold out this year, made a 2nd order, have a lot on hand. SS: Eric Lutz volunteered to be chief editor for next edition, need to talk to Ethan Greene and Karl Birkeland about when to do it. SS talked to Ethan Greene about next edition. Ethan is onboard to do the next edition with whoever will be taking over after him. Ethan feels that whoever does this should be paid something as it's quite an endeavor. Ethan is going to look at the need for a new edition at this time and create a timetable before our fall meeting. **JM will investigate eVersion of SWAG with publishers.**

JM general discussion on Executive Director position: Going well in general, getting feet on the ground. Would like more information about some history/big picture items but amount of empowerment is good. Need clearer vision for sponsorship proposals. Defining the AAA mission statement is very important. General discussion on being spread too thin, follow through on current projects, deciding whether to add more things to our plates, dealing with too much administrative material/minutiae at meetings. General GB consensus is we're not effective working how we currently do it, need to pull back and finish what we've started. ML: strategic plan, yearly action plan, "to do list" for committees/work groups. LW: Need to get summary of Snoqualmie Summit meeting from Dale. KB: need to get a handle on what the hanging items are. SS: Google Drive for to do lists, "what's hanging", minutes, general things to keep things moving. ST: Start with visioning meeting

sheets. LW and JM to summarize sheets and send to everyone by late May. BR: Need to finish what we have going before visioning, create a summer workplan. JS: Need to do that today, finish those this summer, reevaluate this fall.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS/REPORTS

Awards: Halsted – Confidential: Honorary membership for person #1. SS moves, LW seconds, motion carries. Honorary fellowship for person #2. ST moves, DH seconds, motion carries. Memorial list: Everett Birch Oct 21, 1968, killed at a mine in an inbore avalauncher pre-detonation. Collin Sutton, Wolf Creek, doing heli pre-studies, killed in avalanche March 4, 2014. Aaron Karitis, March 15, 2014 Haines heli-guide. BW moves, JS seconds, motion for memorial carries. **Wallowa accident to be added with more information.**

Publications/TAR: Lynne – Great year with avalanche review. One themed issue, accident analysis, issue. Need a new graphic designer, working on a new job description to be posted on avalanche.org. **Jamie, John, Lynne, Blase, and Karen will be the hiring committee and will submit decision to GB for a vote, need to have someone hired by August 1.** Advertising: Paul sold more adds, doing well in general. Avalanche history book – LW still has time and energy to do more interviews. TAR history book: not a priority for the organization, BR can't recommend putting time and energy into it at this point.

Membership: Stuart – Recommends to accept all new pro members as per sheet handed out in morning meeting packet. BW moves to accept list, JS seconds, motion carries. **SS: I dropped ball on revising pro application, will do so with JM so we don't have issues with application matching actual experience.**

New Pro and Member Affiliates: ST moves to eliminate the application deadline for the member affiliate process, JS seconds, motion carries. **SS will check to make sure this is allowed by the bylaws.**

Education: Kirk

AVPRO: Dallas did a stellar job running the course in a difficult year (staffing, snowfall, site logistics, lack of existing curriculum). Alpine Meadows staff was great, lots of support. Difficulty with finding AAA CI's to instruct, ended up finding very qualified but non-CI instructors. KB attended, was impressed with instructors and course organization. Discussion about CI Program director and AVPRO director working together in the future. KB says great venue, especially with Mr. Rose and Alpine Meadows participating. Question about material being passed on to Dallas – a lot of material has but not powerpoints.

CAA/SAS Request: Reference to email chain. SAS asking CAA to host pro module. AIARE talked to AAA about the plan. Questions: is this a one-time deal (professional development) or the beginning of a series of courses? What is the AAA's role in this matter? How will this affect our efforts to inventory current US educational offerings? Timing is difficult at best due to our desire to alter the US education track. JS: CAA (Emily) has no plan to run courses in the US, just responded to the SAS about a one-time offering of part of the level 2 module. BW: Supply and demand question, quality advanced field-based education options are limited. OJB: Jim Donovan may be naïve about this issue. JS: Jim Donovan still going to be running level 3's, views this as an extension and continuing education. Long discussion about this issue. GB feeling is to ask Jim and CAA to hold off for a year while we develop pro-rec split in education and to consider reciprocity issues with CA courses and US courses. OJB: if there is a letter, it should also go to the SAS board of directors. **JS to write this letter.**

Research: JM for Jordy (not present at meeting)

Zero practitioner grant applications this cycle. JH asks whether we should extend deadline to Sept 1 (same deadline as research applications). **JM to check with Jordy about using same deadline.** Dave Hamre, Jordy, and JM considering whether to change grading scale to encourage AK practitioner research. GB has mixed feelings about this, general consensus is to go with best proposals and use AK as a tie-breaker for equal proposals.

Other Committees/Section Rep report: Damian: Nothing significant.
East coast: is Kyle Tyler remaining with the GB or switching over to Chris Joosen?

Old/New Business (to be wrapped up by 4pm)-

CI representative: Jake Hutchinson only applicant. HM moves to appoint, KB seconds, motion passes.

SAR committee chair: Nick Armitage or Maura Longden. Discussion on chairs vs vice-chairs, the ability of the AAA to pay for one of them to attend IKAR meeting. MF moves to elect both as co-chairs, BR seconds, motion passes.

Upcoming executive committee and section rep elections: Electronic voting, JM to check with Mark. **JM and SS will make sure we comply with the bylaws for upcoming elections in fall 2014.**

Update on launching of new av.org homepage: waiting to hear from BR on listing criteria project, hoping to launch new site by June 1 at latest. **Listing criteria to be completed by May 15th for GB review and for other center input.**

Social media: SS – Need a social media blitz with the launch of the new avalanche.org website. **OJB volunteers to be “social media czar” for the AAA, an unofficial position.**

Corporate Partnerships and Sponsorships: JM and MF charged with looking into this. BCA on board in some way, Patagonia interested in continuing and furthering AAA relationship (gave us merchandise and different levels of pro deals), possibly funding avalanche education in some way. Also speaking with Ortovox and Black Diamond. JM could use guidance/expectations/empowerment. SS: Consider hiring a consultant to develop marketing/advertising/branding plan and educate Mike and JM about it. Also discussions about whether to have someone help with general revenue generation (foundations, members, sponsors, etc.). Stephen Barnes is one contact to consider. JM: Attending trade shows (SIA, Outdoor Retailers, etc) – gear manufacturers are asking if we are doing this, would be very useful in branding and making connections and deals. **Get ideas/contacts on who to use as a consultant to JM by May 15.**

Wild Apricot/eNewsletter launch: JM – Trying to strategically connect with membership, only in non-TAR months, using template in Wild Apricot. Current plan is 3 times each winter and once in the summer – JM will solicit material and input on newsletter content.

Membership Survey: **JS-Waiting for results/passwords from Dale.**

Strategic Plan: **JS-Waiting for results/passwords from Dale.**

Employment Policies: **JS has on his list, pending.**

Online Store: **JM says pending, gear is at Mike F's.**

AK Heliski Industry stakeholder meeting: Discussion about upcoming May 21, 2014 meeting in Anchorage with AKOHA and industry stakeholders about worker safety. May have implications that affect entire avalanche industry. LW to get someone to report on the meeting for a TAR article: Andy D, Hamre, Matt Murphy. BW: See what NSAA and other stakeholders say and think, participate, and support them as they wish – we don't need to issue edicts or tell stakeholders or regulators what they should be doing. **JS to talk to Andy D about representing the AAA at the meeting, but not presenting opinions on the AAA's behalf.**

Alaska Section Issues: OJB – Issues still present, especially with Anchorage Center. AAIC will want clarification on listing criteria, what makes an avalanche center, etc.

Avalanche Awareness PSA project request (Mike Friedman): JM – Received email recently about short film avalanche safety production project. Focusing on high risk backcountry users. MF has been approached by several donors who want to fund it via a non-profit, wondering if we can work as a pass-through agency. Discussion: do we have any editorial control? How are we branded/represented? GB instructs JM to negotiate with him about this, GB is good in theory with the general idea.

3:45-6pm: Revising US Avy Education Framework (Pro and Rec Tracks) – KB powerpoint and talk
Re-cap Alta Meeting (Pro/Rec Split): AIARE proposed revised education tracks, called a stakeholder meeting at Alta in October, try to determine consensus/direction. At that meeting, determined goals for the night and the future. Formed a working group that represents stakeholders – since the meeting, the group has morphed a bit.
'14 Pro Observation Project: Attended NAS classroom, AAI Level 3, AIARE Level 3, AVPRO. All referencing SWAG. Comparing apples to apples and apples to oranges. Collect questionnaires from course providers, students, industry employers (still being created) to gather information and feedback. Some summary observations: 1) Some deficits due to work conflict/volunteer nature of Kirk's observation mission this winter. 2) Two distinct audiences: Avalanche Recognition and Avoidance (guides, avalanche center forecasters, observers)...Active Avalanche Mitigation (highway, patrol, industrial). We need to develop a common standard for snowpack tests, observation, and recording (SWAG application) – need some continuing education for trainers/instructors where they all get together to get on the same page. KB explains the AIARE and AAI proposals for recreational splits. Don Sharaf – land managers starting to require certifications or move in that direction, not as interested in hearing about training completed. DS - AAA should recognize that this will be a very cumbersome and involved process. KB – Have a core curriculum that works for both avoidance and mitigation based. DS – All courses need to have some element of review, see that everywhere in reality and course design, even CA courses. AMGA lobbying to land managers to require “terrain certification” to operate on public land. AAI and AIARE core curriculum for level 3 are dictated by AMGA. Need to make sure the level 2 “split” happens – this is best first step. Level 3 issues can be fine-tuned with time. Could have the first 3 days of Level 2's be the same for pro and rec, then add more SWAG and pro intensive work for 2 days to complete the pro curriculum.
Questions/issues for board...

- Need formal position on next steps, provide direction...or maintain the status quo (step aside)
- Professional courses are linked to assessment and standards
- Recommending vs regulating
- Kirk's opinions are just that – need consensus and collaboration from board before doing anything
- AAA needs to address financial realities of program development
- Authorize “working group” to engage

Open board discussion about funding this project, recognizing that it will take substantial time and money to complete. ST moves (via DS) and MF seconds motion to support the pro-rec split within US avalanche education and to support a workshop to better support that process by financially supporting the workshop. Working group will determine who will attend the workshop, the location, and the itinerary. KB will be the project manager (start to finish, including workshop). Blase Reardon will facilitate the workshop. GB recognizes that much of Kirk's time will be above and beyond the scope of the Education Chairperson and the AAA will incur costs. Kirk suggests Stanley as

meeting location as housing and meeting site will be very cheap or free. Workshop to occur in May or June 2014. **Kirk to submit workshop and full project budget estimate to EC and GB.**

BW: Will talk to the NSAA to get their take on the event, check for funding options from them.

HM: GB fall meeting to be held in conjunction with ISSW 2014 in Banff. **SS will talk to KB about NAC scheduling issues.**

SS: Need to get fall general meeting scheduled at ISSW 2014. **JM to look into this when she talks to them about booth space.**

Meeting adjourned at 5:59pm.