

AAA Governing Board Meeting

Friday, September 30, 2016

Breckenridge, CO - Breckenridge Library, Hopeful Room

In Attendance:

Attendance: Jaime Musnicki, Scott Savage, Erich Peitzsch, Maura Longden, Aleph Johnston-Bloom, Jake Hutchinson, Krister Kristensen, Dave Hendrickson, Blase Reardon, Halsted Morris, Gene Urie, Mike Schneider, Stuart Thompson, Matt Schonwald, John Stimberis, Patty Morrison, call in Jon Sheffitz and Andy Dietrick and Kirk Bachman for parts of meeting.

Meeting begins: 0816

Call to order, Introductions, Opening remarks. SS has proxy for Kirk Bachman
Review current AAA priorities and effective meeting practices (from LAP work)
August GB Meeting Minutes Approval: HM moves to accept minutes, Gene 2nds, motion passes.

Executive Director's Report (JM)

Financial Report Summary/Highlights - FY15 year-end & FY16 first quarter: Projected shortfall of \$11K, actual shortfall \$17K. Decreased CIL Orion revenue accounts for most of that, but we need to increase our fundraising efforts and results. Membership and donation revenue were both above projected. Still have \$150K in cash assets: of that, \$50K is designated as avalanche.org, \$50K is designated reserve, leaving about \$50K of undesignated cash. Although we ran a deficit this past year, we are on sound financial footing. We can't continue running substantial deficits, but accountants and financial planners generally suggest using the true excess cash-on-hand for projects. John S: we can consider using some of that surplus to hire a fundraiser to leverage the surplus. ST: we should be careful in case any of our large donors/revenue sources stop giving. JM: we are fortunate that we don't have any single entities contributing more than about 3% of our annual budget – this is healthy. JM: first steps would be having GB members write job description, pay structure, etc. ST: discussion about fund-raising staff member. John S: notes this will be covered later in the meeting. JM: first quarter of FY2016 shows a roughly \$3K shortfall from projected. While real, this is not a huge deal as membership renewals are fluid and change the way the books look very quickly this time of the year. Notes the \$4K in advance Snowy Torrents sales – doing well there. SS: is increase in FY2015 and 2016 donations due to large donors or more+smaller donations? JM: This was due to an increase in smaller donors. Notes that we asked last fall and made donations easier for people via the website. JM: 3 boxes of SWAG arriving for ISSW, Snowy Torrents project moving along, Matt S on board and will speak to education later. John S: thanks to JM for being the driving force for the organization. Any thoughts for 30th anniversary celebration? JM: none specifically but should do something at general meeting.

Leading Business Topics for Discussion:

- Revisit Board Strategic Planning session from spring - Honest evaluation of progress, how to maintain engagement of Board members, any details to revisit? (John S): thoughts on increase in meetings so far? General consensus is yes, summer meetings are great as people are scattered but can keep projects moving forward. Some technology issues but not insurmountable. Morning meetings are great for European GB members. JM/BR: have a designated amount of time where Jaime/Blase open up the digital meeting platform and train/assist members in use. Request to send "homework" out earlier, at least 1 week before meetings. Comments that the sheer number of people at the last phone meeting made it difficult to get things done. JM: I'm looking at size, structure, and other options to increase productivity with remote meetings. Need a central platform/place for all materials and documents.
- Fundraising Committee (John S filling in for Mike Ferarri): Fundraising committee follow-through can improve. Ideas from "fundraising drives" (NPR, etc) = radio spots with bids and you get schwag, matching fund opportunities. End of year is key to ask for money as people oftentimes try to get rid of money before Jan 1 for tax advantages. JM: goes over draft plan for FY2016/comparison to FY2015. Industry partners are a good target and this revenue source is increasing. Snowy Torrents will be a solid revenue source this year, should cover publishing costs. HM: asks Jaime to create job description for fund-raising position. General discussion on how much money are we trying to raise, why are we raising it? Discussion on merits of flat salary versus incentive-based staff members. JM: she will investigate what other non-profits do with development staff. JM: need to consider FY2017 budget to answer that question. Discussion about lack of budget/finance committee. Do we have someone on the GB with the time and skills to chair this committee? ML: the Budget Committee and process of hiring staff to do development/fund-raising could happen

simultaneously. John S and SS to create “call for chair for finance committee” at general meeting. Fund-raising committee needs another chair too with MF stepping down. PM: very willing to help but needs guidance, notes that this committee only deals with raising money. BR: could ask at general meeting or digitally for individuals who could either chair or help with this committee – we need help in this avenue. JM: continues overview of FY2016 fundraising plan/ideas. Questions: how to better engage GB in these efforts? How to be effective raising money without stepping on toes of avalanche organizations (centers, etc)? Synopsis: there are a lot of big picture questions that need to be addressed by committees (budget/fund-raising or both) and then directed by GB on how to proceed. **December meeting priority=fund-raising and development planning. Jon Shefftz (via conference call) notes his background is in this area and he may be of help with these pursuits.**

- Governance Committee: (AJB) pending proposal for changes to GB structure, discussion of details (discussion and voting), input on specific pieces, next steps and timeline for voting on/implementing changes (AJB): Overview of process to create proposal(s). Goal today = general input and straw poll/motion to continue moving forward with reorganization process. Goal = have this in place for next election cycle in 2 years. Key changes/points: add Membership Chair and Eliminate Publications Chair from Exec Committee. Extended discussion on whether Pub Chair should be on the Exec Com, voting trustee, appointed vs elected, etc. BR coming to the conclusion that Publications should be an appointed, voting trustee position. Straw pole shows strong support for proposed Exec Com makeup. Discussion on other voting trustees. Maybe designate one of the Member voting spots as Affiliate Member rep. Should be a designated Publications voting trustee. Discussion on number of voting trustees. Trying to be a little vague on the titles to not pin ourselves into a corner. Krister: notes the sector representation makes more sense than the geographical. Appointed vs elected discussion for proposed at-large trustees. General consensus that we want to keep the ability to appoint some trustees. Straw poll on 11-13 voting members, 0-2 appointed at large, 1 appointed Publications: strong consensus. Andy D (via phone) weighs in and agrees with move away from geographic representation but notes that phone calls and face to face time has great value. **Gene Urie: motion to move forward on creating a draft proposal using this board structure, with timeline and additional details to be determined by Governance committee. 2nd Erich Peitzsch, motion passes without opposition.**
- Membership Working Group: progress report, big questions for GB discussion and input, next steps, plan, and timeline for moving forward (HM): sorry about no written material before this meeting. Have had 2 conference calls for this working group. Goal has been to increase membership levels. Ideas: change term “subscriber” to “member”...new level of membership between affiliate and professional, calling it “apprentice”, retired/alumni/emeritus membership category. AJB question: rationale for adding level between professional and affiliate? SS: seems very complicated and will take a lot of GB effort and time...what does the organization gain by this? Continued discussion on membership levels and descriptions. Straw poll shows strong support to refine existing membership categories and not add any. Discussion about changing name of “Affiliate Member” to something else: possibly Aspiring? Membership deadlines: should we go to open enrollment and approve at bi-monthly meetings? **EP motion to move the application process to a rolling timetable with no deadline where members are approved or not approved at each GB meeting. BR 2nd. Motion passes 10 for and 1 against (ST).**
- Pro Training Program Update (Matt and Jamie): Matt S: sent email out to GB this morning with updates. Three (3) Pro 1 instructor training workshops planned for this winter. Discussion about guiding track people (AMGA) who can't ski well but still need advanced avalanche education (e.g. winter mountaineers/climbers). AVSAR in final round of edits and will be passed around to operations for input and review in coming months. Working on bridge course content/requirements now. Jake H: do we still need to figure out bridging/grandfathering requirements? JM: I believe so but will need to check to be sure, details available on wild apricot.

Lunch Break:

Other Business & Committee Reports:

- Education Committee Updates (JM for Kirk B): avalanche awareness guidelines is a priority as it hasn't been revised or evaluated in years. In the process of getting avalanche centers to help create these based on what they currently are doing with avalanche awareness programs. Snowmobile specific guidelines: should be able to take existing guidelines and adapt for motorized. AVPRO: Crystal and Alpentel, March 2017. AVPRO scholarship details to come with deadline to be near/before Dec 1.
- Publications Update (BR & JM):
 - *The Snowy Torrents, Volume 6* print available by November sometime. 11 ebook, 74 bundles, 91 printed sold

so far. Agreement with Knox Williams to pay him an amount as editor with some additional money with books sold. Maximum is approximately \$5000, well under market value. Spencer Logan working extensively on this project while on the clock for CAIC – thanks to CAIC. Straw poll shows strong support to give a percentage of project revenue or proceeds to CAIC to support accident database costs. **JM and BR to crunch numbers and present options at next meeting.**

- SWAG revision: changed layout and platform in addition to updating content. Available Monday October 1. Ancillary stickers (tables and misc scales) and ePub quick reference will be available later this fall. Quick reference designed for mobile phone use in the field. Long-term ePub version still being discussed and evaluated. Spanish version being contemplated, working with John Jackson in South America. For now, this will be an “in house” version developed by John Jackson...but there is more demand each year for Spanish version. Publications committee is evaluating the prospects for a Spanish version of SWAG.
- TAR: not much to say – good content, good comments and input from members. Progress w/ selling in selected shops and ad sales but won't go overboard with ad sales and detract from the publication. Rolling deadline for material, next deadline (Dec) is Oct 15. Looking for forecaster to answer “what at ISSW is going to affect or improve my practice?” for next issue. Continued good feedback on redesign. Feb issue unsure on theme. Will likely stick with decision-making for April issue. “Fear and Fascination” photo and essay contest was a great source for content. We have our first beer advertisement in TAR this issue, Upslope Brewery.
- MacKenzie doing TAR, SWAG, Snowy Torrents and is doing a great job.
- Membership Committee (JM): membership trends show 15-25% increase in membership.
 - New professional members for ratification (ST): **Gene U moves to approve all members as recommended by Membership Committee, Jake H 2nds, motion passes.**
- Proposed Bylaw Changes (SS): as part of Governance Committee work, we're evaluating Bylaw wording for text that will prevent potential organizational changes. **SS to work with Governance Committee and Membership committee to complete draft of changes that can be made via a Governing Board vote. This draft will go out to all GB members for review in coming weeks. Governance Committee will have hard deadline for input and comments on proposed changes and will present a version to vote on, hopefully at the next meeting.**
- Research Committee (EP): Jordy hasn't received enough evaluations yet, so no news on awardees yet. Jordy may be near the end of his “term” as research chair. If Jordy wants to resign, we can advertise the opening at the general meeting and solicit applications.
- Web/IT Update (JM): Clark Corey is new website/IT person, all “under one roof”, doing a great job. Solved WWAN Database issue quickly. Proposal for fresh content from Outlaw Partners: around the time we were transitioning to Clark, we discussed the potential for Outlaw to do some more web development work (videos on Pro Training program, membership recruitment/profiles, etc). JM just received proposal yesterday, will have more information and details shortly.
- Ethics Update (AJB): Scottish course provider was using the AAA logo and “certification”. Organization was very receptive and changed the website immediately. We need to remember the European course providers and include them in our outreach.
- SAR News (ML): Nick and Maura working on SAR course, getting close to completing objectives and guidelines. Medical protocols for avalanche: following up with MD's and determining if AAA should adapt any new recommendations. Snowy Torrents is viewed as a large SAR piece and is a great component for AAA SAR program. Outdoor recreation roundtable group exists but has very little winter “voice” – would be valuable for the AAA to engage as there are some standard operating protocols that are coming into play with land management agencies; it would be good to represent AAA and our members' interests. Should AAA make official recommendation to retire analog beacons? Ortovox and BCA are behind this, offering beacon retirement programs. CAA has already moved in this direction. Extended discussion. Consensus to talk with CAA about wording in their announcement. **Maura to talk with Mary Clayton and work with Lynne W on this topic and report back to GB.**
- Ski Areas: Donation to National Avalanche School? (Bill W proposal brought forward by JM): National Avalanche School has a matching funds grant opportunity. Scott recuses himself from voting and discussion due to involvement with NAS. Discussion about funding an education provider and associated implications (e.g. favoritism, competitive advantage, etc). **AJB motions to not fund NAS, ST seconds. All agree, no opposed.**
- Executive Session (opportunity for GB to discuss business amongst Board members only): Will evaluate staff wage scale at spring meeting as it was evaluated (and increased) at last spring meeting. **Staff evaluations: JS says it should be an Executive Committee task, meeting set for later this week (Wednesday or Thursday) to discuss and deal with**

- staff evaluations, expectations, etc. No significant problems noted with any staff members.
- Review agenda/plan and assign GB roles/responsibilities for Annual Membership Meeting: (JS & JM to handle assignments)

Old Business:

- AAA Media Relations (AJB): review of outreach to large, national publications. General input from them was that they need an event to comment on or something other than a “general interest” piece (e.g. worker safety, avalanche training and education).
- AAA Partnerships (JM): NAC partnership is formalized, agreement is in place. Avalanche Worker Safety request for formal partnership until 501(c)3 status is approved. **HM motion, PM seconds. All agree, no opposed.** General discussion on history of AAA being used as a “pass through” entity by Friends groups and what AAA charged for this work. **JM to evaluate creating a transaction limit for partnerships that are not charged a percentage or flat fee.**

Meeting Adjourns: Blase R moves to adjourn, 2nd by Jake H, motion passes. 1706 hrs