

Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference
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ASRC Annual General Membership Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2016
Green Ridge State Forest – Flintstone, MD

Group Member Participation	Present	Proxies
Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group	3	15
Blue Ridge Mountain Rescue Group	1	7
DELMARVA Search and Rescue Group	3	18
Maryland Search and Rescue	5	11
Mountaineer Area Rescue Group	5	19
Northwest Pennsylvania K9 Search and Rescue	1	0
Potomac Valley Rescue Group	0	0
Search and Rescue Ohio	3	6
Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group	3	27
At-Large	0	1

I. Welcome and Opening Remarks

The 2016 AGM Meeting of the ASRC was opened with a welcome to all by Don Scelza, Chairman, at 0916 on Sunday, May 15, 2016, at Green Ridge State Forest, Flintstone, MD. Chair Scelza recognized Maryland Search and Rescue (MSAR) for all of their efforts in supporting and coordinating the exercise on Saturday, May 14, 2016. Chair commented that the AGM weekend serves as an opportunity to get all ASRC Groups

together and the exercise component of the weekend is an important collaboration opportunity.

II. Chair's Report

Chair Scelza provided an overview of the goals for the meeting and specifically addressed proposed changes to the Articles of Incorporation and proposed changes to the Bylaws. Last meeting as Chair. When started term, the ASRC was a bit in trouble, discussions were personal and non-professional. During tenure worked with Officers to develop Strategic Plan and drive new projects forward to restructure the conference. The next four years will be focused upon implementation of the restructuring concepts. Chair is happy with the progress made and the increased Group unity across the conference.

Chair discussed previous and current reasons why Groups should belong to ASRC:

- Old reasons: more call-outs, exceptional training standards, trust across Groups
- New/additional reasons: credentialing system that will be recognized across all states and access to the best research going on in search and rescue (sweep width studies, UAV, remote support functions, medical guidance documentation)

Chair discussed the importance of the 40th year anniversary several years ago and the theme “Looking Back, Thinking Forward”. Although the future of the ASRC may be a bit different than the past, it will be just as good. All ASRC Groups/members are passionate about the mission and are closely linked by what we do – saving lives.

III. Certified Membership – Documentation Vote

127 Certified Members are present or represented – constitutes a quorum. Passing vote for documents to come before the membership is 85 votes.

A. Articles of Incorporation

Discussion: Changes were in two major categories – shift from member centric to group of Groups and change in proxy voting by Board of Directors. Document under consideration was distributed as required to all certified members as outlined in the current Articles of Incorporation (2004).

A motion to approve the new Articles of Incorporation was made by Steve Weiss (SMRG), seconded by Brian Maier (SAR-Ohio).

Question/Answer: Were changes requested by a Group and what is the status of the version being considered for vote? The original proposed version of the document was disseminated to the Board of Directors in March 2016. Directors must adopt a resolution to allow the document to come before the membership for a vote. Board representatives from several Groups did request changes to the document. On April 18, 2016, the revised proposal was issued to Board Representatives and subsequently disseminated to the

certified membership of the conference. Any requested changes received after April 18th are not incorporated into the version of the document under consideration today.

Question/Answer: Is the document compliant with Virginia law? The document was relayed to a member of SMRG that happens to be an attorney – no comments for change.

AMRG comments/Answers/Discussion: If only have Group of Groups, but no ASRC members, AMRG has a concern that there will no longer be members of the ASRC with no AGMs, no membership votes and there will be insurance issues. The document was carefully worded to ensure Groups identified the certified members, which constitutes ASRC members. Important to ensure all members still have a voice and have a voice through trusted representatives, more efficient. Concern that voting members “in” is no longer identified in the Articles/Bylaws and that dissemination of information to “all” is no longer the only mechanism of notification included.

Steve Weiss (SMRG) requested to call the question, seconded by Roxanna Kish-Swenton (MARG); majority in favor to proceed with vote. 106 in favor, 21 nays, no abstentions - **Motion passed.**

B. Bylaws

Discussion: Same basic changes as the Articles of Incorporation – address proxy voting by Board of Directors, moving from a member centric organization to a Group of Groups, includes baseline for credentialing system. Distribution occurred with same process as Articles of Incorporation document.

A motion to approve the new Bylaws, pending acceptance of the Articles of Incorporation by the Commonwealth of Virginia, was made by Steve Weiss (SMRG), seconded by Keith Conover (AMRG).

Discussion: The changes to the Bylaws were significant. Proposal is to issue as new, replacement document versus revision to current version. At 2016 Retreat, discussion about requirements for Certified Group, these changes are included in the Bylaws – reduction in the number of members to be a Certified Group; all Groups have the same number of Board Representatives (2).

AMRG Comments/Answers/Discussion: Option to elect voting members of the Board without them being Certified Members is concerning. Article I, Section 2.7.8 was not changed from the 2004 version of the Bylaws. Problematic when others drowned out the voice of members. Since document does indicate that additions must be submitted to the General Membership, there may be no issue.

AMRG Comments/Answers/Discussion: Recommend removing the Qualified Evaluators section from the Bylaws and include only in the Credentialing Policy Manual.

Steve Weiss (SMRG), having made the initial motion to approve the Bylaws, accepted as a friendly amendment - Motion to approve the new Bylaws, with Article I, Section 5 removed (Qualified Evaluators), pending acceptance of the Articles of Incorporation by the Commonwealth of Virginia. No objections from the floor.

AMRG Comments/Answers/Discussion: Wishes Board to consider appointment of a Committee to develop/release information at the 2017 AGM to abolish At-Large membership in the conference. At-Large membership is not in the best interest of the conference.

Brian Maier (SAR-Ohio) requested to call the question, seconded by Robert Peterson (DMVSAR); majority in favor to proceed with vote. 91 in favor, 36 nays, no abstentions - **Motion passed.**

Discussion: AMRG has concerns about the document being in compliance with Virginia law (as outlined in their document comments disseminated to the conference after 4/18/16). SMRG attorney reviewed and did not raise concerns. Recommend possibly securing a second opinion or a formal opinion on the legality of the document. Defer further discussion about formal/second opinion to the Board Meeting for action.

IV. Review of Prepared Documentation Suites

In addition to the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws, many other documents have been prepared for review/adoption.

Training Standards v7.2:

Will be considered by the Board of Directors. It is understood that the content of the standards aren't ideal. Understood that current version is not perfect in that doesn't include clear, testable standards. Improvements made to 7.1 version to address typing errors and updated to incorporate credentialing system components. No way to get them completely changed without additional input from a conference-wide working group (v8.0). Moving forward with 7.2 and hope to have committee of conference-wide representatives work on new version in conjunction with credentialing system implementation.

Position Task Books (PTBs):

Based upon 7.2 Training Standards. Primarily just a standardized checklist in a format that is recognized by RA's.

Practical and Written Tests:

Samples are in the works. Standardized tools will be implemented with the new credentialing process.

Operational Guidance Manual (OGM):

Replacement for the existing Operations Manual (and Annexes). As the ASRC moves forward as a group of Groups, the OGM will serve to cover interactions between the

Groups and offer recommendations for best practices. Groups will manage their own operational requirements.

Discussion: Concerns that the 7.2 Training Standards still include Alert Officer and Dispatch Officer certification requirements, but these positions are not covered in the proposed OGM. Should require the Chair and the Conference Operations Officer to hold certifications for Alert Officer and Dispatch Officer. Current proposals in OGM are brittle, when consider limited contacts for alerts. Possibly augment OGM to include delegation of roles to others. Chair encourages AMRG to participate in creation of the new 8.0 Training Standards. New Chair will ensure conference members are invited to participate in the process to develop the new Training Standards document.

Question: Are there any updates to the Groups in the ASRC?

- PVRG has dropped out of the ASRC
- The vote to accept NWPAK9SAR as a Certified Group will need to wait until 2017, once the new Bylaws are in effect. At that time, NWPAK9SAR will have met all of the requirements for Certified Group status.

A motion as a non-binding endorsement of NWPAK9SAR and to document that the ASRC looks forward to their membership in the ASRC as a Certified Group was made by Steve Weiss (SMRG), seconded by Robert Peterson (DMVSAR). 119 in favor, 7 nays, 1 abstention - **Motion passed.**

Discussion: Ability to vote for Certified Group membership for NWPAK9SAR now, during 2016 AGM, versus waiting for an additional year until the 2017 AGM. Nays above were associated specifically and only with wishing to vote this year versus Group having to wait an additional year.

A motion to suspend the 2004 Bylaws in order to vote on acceptance of NWPAK9SAR as a Certified Group now was made by Brian Maier (SAR-Ohio), seconded by Keith Conover (AMRG).

Discussion: Requirements to notify membership regarding vote. Status of NWPAK9SAR certification levels. New Bylaws will not become effective until the new Articles of Incorporation have been accepted by the Commonwealth of Virginia. NWPAK9SAR gladly willing to wait the additional year in order to remain fully in compliance with conference requirements.

Brian Maier (SAR-Ohio) retracted motion.

V. Recognition Celebration – Chair and Vice Chair

Chair Scelza and Vice Chair Ferguson recognized the following members for their dedicated service and awarded length-of-service certificates and ASRC pins (5 year only).

TEAM	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	Recognized LoS
AMRG	Benson	Matthew	5
DMVSAR	Lavita-Harris	Irene	5
DMVSAR	Jackson	Jim	10
DMVSAR	Peterson	Robert	10
DMVSAR	DiPietro	Matt	10
DMVSAR	Malone	George	10
DMVSAR	Fox	Eric	10
DMVSAR	Strickler	Kathy	10
DMVSAR	Hansen	Mike	10
MARG	Rose	Bill	5
MARG	Scott	Matt	5
MSAR	Wolfe	Olivia	5
MSAR	Wavle	Gregg	5
MSAR	Woodard	Laura	5
MSAR	Guercio	Jesse	5
MSAR	Sward	Douglas	5

VI. Thank You - Adjourn

Chair Scelza provided closing comments – indicating that the conversations today represented an organization that is in full operation with good discussion. Open conversation allowed members to voice concerns, organization is moving forward in a positive way.

A motion to have members recognize and thank Don Scelza and Beth Huhn for their fabulous leadership over the last four years was made by Steve Weiss (SMRG). All in favor.

Chair Scelza announced it was his honor to help move the conference forward over the last four years. He indicated he could not have been successful without the support of the Board and Officers. Chair thanked all who participated in the meeting.

With no additional formal business noted, a motion to adjourn was made by Brian Maier (SAR-Ohio), seconded by Keith Conover (AMRG). No objections.

The meeting was adjourned at 1050.

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The foregoing minutes are reported to the best of my knowledge.
Beth A. Huhn, ASRC Secretary