



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

17 Jan 2021

Virtual at [Meeting Link](#)

Tel: +16892060314,454673185#

0807 – 1105 hrs.

I. Call to Order.

Called to order at 0807 hrs. by Chair Dan Brizuela.

II. Participants.

Voting members in **bold**. Via teleconference in *italics*. If some other Group is primary name in (parentheses)

Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group (AMRG)	Keith Conover Drew Ballard
Blue Ridge Mountain Rescue Group (BRMRG)	Greg Stronko
Maryland Search and Rescue (MSAR)	Dan Brizuela Kyle Rhoderick <i>Michael Hansen</i> <i>Jocelyn King</i>
Mountaineer Area Rescue Group (MARG)	Carl Wertz Ken Chiacchia <i>Dave Rice</i> <i>Don Scelza</i>
Northwest Pennsylvania Canine Search and Rescue (NWPAK9SAR)	LuAnn Gatti Kathy Lamb
Remote Support Corps (RSC)	<i>Patty Lindsay</i>

Search and Rescue – Ohio (SAROH)	Brian Maier <i>Stephen McClanahan</i>
Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group (SMRG)	Katy Hart Sean McElligot <i>Steven Weiss</i> <i>Victoria Avery</i>
ASRC Fellow	<i>Gene Harrison</i>

III. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the October 3, 2020 meeting were unanimously approved with the following clarifications:

Don Scelza and Keith Conover were elected non-voting ex-officio BOD members (past BOD Chairs); Steve Weiss is also a past Chair but is represented at the BOD by virtue of being Credentialing Board Chair, and past Chair Michael Hansen is already a non-voting BOD member.

IV. Officer Reports

a. Chair/Vice-Chair (Dan Brizuela/LuAnn Gatti)

From the Chair:

At the opening of the Winter Retreat (16 Jan 2021), the Chair reported that the state of the ASRC was strong with good progress towards the strategic goals presented in the 2020 Strategic Plan (<https://appalachiansearchandrescue.sharepoint.com/sites/Meetings/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FMeetings%2FShared%20Documents%2F2016%2D08%2D20%2DASRC%2DBOD%2DDraft%2DStrategic%2DPlan%2D2020%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FMeetings%2FShared%20Documents>).

Strategic goals and plans to achieve by 2024 (the 50th Anniversary of the ASRC) need to be developed, approved by the Board, and filed with the Governance documents.

Nothing additional to report from the Vice-Chair.

b. Secretary (Stephen McClanahan)

Membership rosters have been received from most groups for the purpose of assessing annual ASRC dues and these rosters have been submitted to the Treasurer. Two outstanding rosters will be solicited.

The Bylaws (Article III, section 3.2.2.3) and Admin Manual III. C) both state that an assessment of each group's roster should be conducted each January by the Secretary for the purpose of determining group's certification status. The general discussion of the Board was this assessment is no longer needed for its stated purpose (i.e., a historical artifact from the time when 'A' and 'B' groups were tracked. Rather, the assessment has greater utility for helping each group informally track their membership and for the Credentialing Board to have a reading on where each group stands. As such, the assessment will be conducted with that goal in mind.

The Secretary will add these sections of the Bylaws and Admin Manual to the above to the log of changes to the Bylaws/Admin Manual per Bylaws I.B.

c. Treasurer (Victoria Avery)

The Treasurer's report is inserted below:

January 2021 Treasurer's Report

Starting Balance October 2020:		\$8,192.01
Income:		
	Donations:	\$400.00
	Group Dues:	\$559.00
	Total Income:	\$959.00
Expenses:		
	No Expenses this Quarter	\$0.00
	Total Expenses:	\$0.00
Ending Balance January 2021:		\$9,151.01
Projected to the end of April 2021:		
Income		
	Group Dues:	\$6,000.00 est
	Total:	\$6,000.00
Expenses		
	VaSARCo Annual Dues:	(\$10.00)
	Remote Support Training:	(\$375.00)
	Insurance (payment 1 of 2):	(\$2,500.00) est
	Class Mark:	(\$50.00) est
	Total:	(\$2,935.00)
Projected Difference		
	Total:	\$3,065.00

Budget items to note:

- Since the Winter Retreat was held virtually, no payments for lodging (Bear's Den) or food were incurred and no donations for food were received.
- There is income to report: dues received and a personal donation.
- No expenses in the past quarter (OND 2020)

In the quarter ahead (JFM 2021):

- Estimating \$6000 income in group dues.
- Expenses will be:
- SARCO conference expense in April
- Funding for Remote Support training remains in the budget as a placeholder.
- Insurance payment will be due this quarter.
- Class mark not in budget last year --\$25 due to LuAnn Gatti. Expect identical expense this year.

Vimco account is in operation for payment of dues; some groups are using this.

Invoices for dues payments will be sent to Group Reps via email this year.

Re: rosters. Each group's roster contains differing information. To simplify the work of the Treasurer and Secretary, the request is that each roster (generally an Excel spreadsheet) first present the member's name (Last/First), their ASRC level and their primary team name (since several ASRC members belong to more than one group). (See the Admin Manual II.C.2.)

d. Credentialing Board Chair (Steven Weiss)

The Credentialing Board is ready to go for written testing and field examinations as appropriate for all four field levels (noting that there is no Credentialing Board field examination for Field IV). We have completed full credentialing testing and field examination for each of the levels. We already have at least one group in the queue for field examinations in a post-Covid environment.

Greatest perceived shortfall: Need more communications with the groups regarding ASRC Credentialing.

Agenda for the coming year:

- Conduct more credentialing examinations.
- Improve ASRC-internal comms, particularly leveraging SharePoint (ASRC-internal) and Teams (internal to the Credentialing Board).
- Develop Examiner PTB.
- Develop Recertification PTBs.
- Complete some routine policy clean-up to update policy and introduce some internal processes used by the Credentialing Board.
- BIG DEAL: In parallel and coordination with development of the SM Training Standards, we will be developing SM PTBs.

On the last point, the Credentialing Board indicated that they have an expectation that the ASRC BOD, or perhaps a delegate of the BOD (e.g., the Search Manager Cadre), will have a role in the credentialing process for some or all the SM levels.

e. Conference Training Officer (Ken Chiacchia)

The Training Committee has held several conversations regarding the philosophy needed to approach changes to training standards and is reasonably well aligned at this time. Next steps are to compare the jobs we expect a member to be able to perform at any given level to those currently specified in Training Standard 8.0. The Committee will initially use a document previously prepared by Carl Werntz and John Rogowski that contains at least some of this information. The goal is to 'right size' the training standards. The Training Committee expects this work will take some considerable time; nothing should be expected to be submitted to the Board until at least the next AGM or beyond.

f. Conference Operations Officer (Stevo Solaya)

No report received.

g. Information Technology Officer (Michael Hansen)

As part of the Winter Retreat, Michael Hansen and Don Scelza gave a 45-minute introduction to Microsoft 365 platform, including SharePoint, which continues to be built out for ASRC. Ideas from Groups, Committees, Special Interests group, etc. on what to add to SharePoint are welcome. One goal is for every ASRC member to have access to these tools; teams are encouraged to forward their member rosters with names and current email addresses to Michael/Don and they will set up the needed accounts. Currently

have about 50 user accounts established with current capacity of 500. Groups are also welcomed to reach out to establish their 'members only' section of their team onto the SharePoint site.

h. Group Updates

This is a new item to the Board agenda and is a bit experimental. In years past, groups reported on missions and team status and this is an attempt to better communicate across the Conference. Reactions to this proposal were favorable, provided updates are brief.

MSAR (Dan Brizuela, Victoria Avery): team closed out a banner year. Call outs up 180%, recruitment and training are also up. Recognition given to MSAR's board, leadership team and individual members as well as other ASRC teams for help and assistance in weathering a previous difficult period. Despite the pandemic, MSAR has been able to get members advanced. It is noted that MSAR is working through issues associated with another team in a section of their response area (Baltimore County) that is calling themselves the Maryland Volunteer Search & Rescue Group but have dropped the 'Volunteer' in some instances, becoming MSAR. This team tends to self-deploy. Our MSAR is currently working through this.

AMRG (Drew Ballard): team had a good year, experienced very good relationships with Allegany Police (assisted them in a few crime scene evidence searches), AMRG's chief was asked to join the Missing and Abducted Task Force with regional police forces, there was good interest from new members, the team conducted a NASAR FUNSAR class and a summer bivy, individual members tested and advanced in ASRC rank. On a sad note, the team lost two search K9s. Lastly, AMRG is hosting the MRA International conference in June 2021 (6/10-6/14). Not certain at this point if the Conference will be held in person or virtually.

MARG (Ken Chiacchia, Carl Werntz, Patty Lindsay): 'MARG had a search, many hours combing the woods, video says otherwise'. Ken described a recent search with Fayette County police as an example of team activity. Good AHJ relationships particularly with Cooper's Rock, exceptionally busy with technical rescues in the Cooper's Rock SP area. Group size increased (10 new members), training has focused on getting members to Field IV.

NWPAK9 (LuAnn Gatti): 21 call outs for the year (several despondent related), a few new members, certified 8 members at Field III, have used mutual aid (MARG and AMRG) and Remote Support. Two K9s' certified.

SAROH (Brian Maier): Quiet year with only 2 call outs. 5 new members, monthly virtual trainings continue but field training is limited due to Covid. On a side note, the Ohio Search & Rescue Association recently dissolved.

SMRG (Sean McElligot): 25 call outs for the year (down a bit from past years). Good virtual training that included other local teams, one member elected to VaSARCo president, conducted the preventative SAR program at the Shenandoah NP as well as other preventative SAR programs with Boy Scouting, Safe in Town, etc.

BRMRG (Greg Stronko): Lots of virtual + some in person trainings. Under University policy, had to get waivers for in person training. Had usual number of searches for the year, including one for an autistic girl. (Interestingly, two former ASRC SAR members who happened to be in the area, participated in this search which had a good outcome.)

Remote Support Corps (Patty Lindsay): Group has grown to 12 active members, including a member from Iowa. The group has been engaged in some cross training with a SAR team in Washington state. Participated in two searches with NWPAK9 and three with MARG in the past year. Busy preparing for a SAREX to be held in February.

Search Manager Cadre (Don Scelza): Most work in past year has been engaging the Remote Support Core. In the coming year, a major goal to get Search Manager credentialing established. In addition, work is ongoing on how to best train SMS; the goal is to have flushed out a good direction on the best approach by the next BoD meeting.

i. Publications (Keith Conover)

Considerable work has been ongoing towards efficient tools for document collaboration. The ASRC Branding Guide has been updated to include best approaches to collaboratively building important documents (such as Training Standards, Admin Manual, etc.). To note, there are two extremes to consider when it comes to developing documents: one addresses documents like ASRC on-pagers which are generally short and graphics-oriented where Adobe InDesign Share-for-Review (currently under internal testing with editing the Branding Guide). Other documents like Training Standards lack graphics but contain outlines; here the best tools seem to be InDesign and Microsoft Word/Teams/SharePoint. (There is much work on how to move documents between these two applications.) There is general agreement to keep finalized internal documents in a file format like Word that is more accessible to a wider audience.

V. Unfinished Business

a. Potential new member groups (LuAnn Gatti)

Talks with Dinwiddie continue; Dinwiddie is in the process of filing for their 501(c)3. One concern expressed deals with the carrying of firearms when in the field (Dinwiddie is part of the local Civil Defense) and how this integrates into ASRC. Much of the concern lies in impact of allowing members to open carry weapons (while wearing the ASRC uniform) on ASRC insurance and the resulting need for appropriate safety programs. It is noted that expressly prohibiting open carry of weapons is not in our current Admin Manual (it was in prior versions), but our insurance is predicated on no weapons. Indicated actions are 1) investigate and propose changes to the ASRC governance documents, and 2) investigate the ASRC insurance policy (VFIS) with respect to firearms.

b. ASRC Position Task Books: Public Accessibility discussion

In the interest of time, the Chair requested a discussion on this item be tabled; nonetheless, a lively discussion ensued. No decisions were made but expressed concerns made were (in no particular order): 1) publishing PTBs explicitly states to the public/AHJs what is expected from ASRC members and this is valuable, 2) would publishing PTBs and having other groups claim them expose ASRC to any liability? 3) would publishing PTBs be giving away too much of value the ASRC has to offer teams? LuAnn Gatti has a more urgent need and requested permission to share our PTBs with PSAR (who is interested in looking at these documents). A motion was made by Keith Conover to this effect, seconded by Ken Chiacchia and unanimously approved by the Board with Steve Weiss, representing the Credentialing Board, abstaining.

VI. New Business

c. Outstanding Achievement Awards

Keith Conover made a motion that Outstanding Achievement Awards be given to Michael Hansen and Don Scelza for their work in developing and improving the IT infrastructure the ASRC is now using (Microsoft 365 platform, including Outlook, Teams and SharePoint). Katy Hart seconded. Passed unanimously.

a. Medical Committee (Keith Conover for Carl Solomon)

Medical Committee has been inactive but now restarting for 2021 with a smaller, more focused cadre of those passionate about Wilderness Medicine. Near Term Focus Areas are: 1) review medical components of training standards, 2) collaborate with ASRC Training Committee to craft a curriculum to match the medical training standards, 3) collaborate with Medical Advisory Committee on the creation of compelling white papers and one-pager working aids, 4) brainstorm future vision for the Medical Committee, 5) hold one or more “Vision Creation” sessions, and 6) interview stakeholders and 8) craft a future vision.

One additional idea was to establish a ‘best practice’ of having at least an ASRC Field II on any high medical risk task. This received considerable pushback; it should be left to the discretion of the Search Manager to assign the most qualified resource to a specific task.

b. Risk Management Committee

The Chair tabled discussion on this item in the interest of time.

c. Training Donation and FIND Software

William Dixon (former BRMRG and SMRG member) has offered generous support to the ASRC with the intent of strengthening the Search Manager function. Initial discussions between William, Steve, Don Scelza and Dan Brizuela were focused on what role the FIND software might play but discussions have broadened and are now coming to the Board.

William made a presentation to the Board (via slides) with the intent of finding the best means to support the ASRC as an alumnus. His comments included thoughts on what he viewed as the needs of search management. First need is to get the call as early as possible from the responsible AHJ for SAR resources. The second need in William’s view was thorough documentation of the search as it progresses, particularly on those incidents that become large and complex. In this context, William has discussed the FIND software with Robert Koester. Recognizing that search success often depends on qualified search management, questions that William posed include how best to learn from past incidents, how are junior SMs being trained, what is ASRC’s operational capability to deliver search management, what are the training programs for Search Manager 4, 3, etc.? William is keen on the idea of strong support for SAR from the State level as this has the potential of creating better training, training standards, credentialing at the state level, stronger awareness of capable teams and local resources, MOUs between varying organizations, etc. He sees the ASRC as having the level of expertise that should be driving towards this kind of future. William concluded his comments by circling back to frame the challenges: how to receive the early call and how to train search managers as both lead to better outcomes for individuals lost and in need of rescue.

Don Scelza’s was asked to comment: Some of the challenges laid out are within ASRS’s sphere of influence and some may lie beyond. ASRC does add value in managing large searches. Going forward, ASRS should be involved in providing training for local AHJs so they can better manage the initial stages of searches. The SM cadre needs to increase its participation in these matters. There are new tools that need to be evaluated. There is a need to understand how to interact with State/Federal USAR team and Survey123 for wide area searches. Search manager training standards need to address at least some of these issues and should incorporate both the technical and relational aspects of search management.

The question was raised as to how to tie the above to the ASRC business strategy, whether the ASRC should become a source of search managers.

William Dixon interjected that he was willing to fund conference-level access to FIND for a 3-year period if that would be helpful.

Don laid out three parallel tracks that need to be developed: what tools (FIND, etc.) are needed, search manager training standards and what SM classes the ASRC should be delivering and to whom.

Next step in this discussion is for William to engage the SM cadre.

d. Operational Data Repository (Michael Hansen)

- e. The ASRC should be collecting, at a conference level, some level of data from the searches made by individual teams to uncover mission trends and needs. Data collection does not need to be extensive, but data are needed to make discoveries. Discussion was in favor of some level of data collection such as number of searches, subject type, general response level. Keep the collection to the meta data level.

f. Future BoD Meeting Dates

Chair proposed a standing schedule of Board meeting dates and this was readily agreed with. The proposal was as follows (Covid notwithstanding):

January: Martin Luther King weekend, in person and tied with the ASRC Winter Retreat

April: Sunday of the second weekend, virtual

July: Sunday of the second weekend, in person and tied to the Annual General Meeting

October: Sunday of the second weekend, virtual

For 2021, this would mean:

April 11, 2021

July 11, 2021

October 10, 2021

VII. Good of the Order

Nothing offered.

VIII. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 1105 hrs.