



Society of American Foresters

Montana Chapter, Established in 1971

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: February 26, 2016

Location: Lubrecht Experimental Forest-Castles Center, Greenough, MT

In Attendance: Gary Ellingson (GE), Ed Levert (EL), Owen Retzlaff (OR), Steve Hayes (SH), Henry Fassnacht (HF), Jason Parke (JP), Tim Love (TL), Cinder Peterson (CP), Jared Richardson (JR), Gordy Sanders (GS), Keith Blatner (KB).

Call to Order: Chair Gary Ellingson called meeting to order at 10:33 AM

Introductions: GE welcomed those in attendance; introductions were made by all others present

Past Meeting Minutes: GE conducted brief review of October 20, 2015 Meeting Minutes, no changes suggested from anyone. OR made motion to approve minutes, EL seconded and motion passes.

Treasurer's Report: JR conducted review of Treasurer's Report and IRS Form 990 letter and Financial Position Statement provided to National office for tax filing (see attached).

TL asked if Eastside chapter needed financial help from State for State Meeting, GE stated that finances were OK for State Meeting and help from Forest Stewardship Foundation who is co-hosting the conference is making things easier, no need of financial help from State is anticipated but it is good to know that it is an option. This precipitated a discussion of the breakdown of finances for the April State Meeting, some in attendance suggested rates be adjusted however agendas and rates have already been approved by State Meeting Planning Committee. Registration rates for SAF Members vs. Non Members/Landowners are set and brochures are at the printers (draft Agenda and costs attached). GE tabled discussion until Chair Report.

SH made motion to approve Treasurer's Report, HF seconded and motion passes.

Chair Report: GE reports that Jim Thinnes plans on attending the State Meeting.

GE distributed 2016 Executive Committee list and thanked past chairs for their contributions. GE went over his goals as chair:

"Keep The Ship Afloat"

- Successful MT/IE Leadership Conference
- Successful State Meeting
- Maintain/Improve Student Chapter Involvement
- Simple Transition Process for future State Chairs
 - Task Calendar
 - Northwest Office Registration
- Support Chapter Efforts
- Be Mindful of Budget

GE also wants to do a better job communicating to members what SAF does on a National, State, and Local level, UM students have been good so far. TL asked about FVCC & CSKT students, CSKT may be forming a student chapter, FVCC could form one and attend Flathead chapter meetings. A discussion began on Accreditation for Forestry degree programs and CSKT is working on a SAF accredited program. Both schools were mentioned as a possible source for students looking for summer jobs, group acknowledged these programs had been underutilized in the past.

GE continued to go over State Meeting Agenda and fees. SAF member fees vs. "landowner" fees are very different, GE points out that SAF events are more than that for landowners; EL added that Forest Stewardship Foundation received grant for \$2,500 which helped offset "landowner" costs. Discussion arose from group about past SAF members (those who have not paid dues currently) could potentially register as "landowners" and pay lower rate; after much discussion the group acknowledged it was possible, however the consensus was SAF current/past members were an honest group and would register appropriately. Members could also pressure those who aren't current to renew memberships.

This led to another discussion about encouraging other natural resource professionals to join SAF. KB mentioned that this has been an issue at the national level too; discussions have been ongoing about adding more "Certification" levels, similar to the more recently added Certified Urban Forester.

GE finished reviewing Agenda for State Meeting.

GE updated on Foresters' Fund Applications for spring deadline: Libby Chapter Applied (Community Trail), Scott Keuhn applied (Historical Museum Shed), Flathead Chapter's application (Community trail) was deferred until June 15th deadline due to perception that Montana may be "over applying" and competing with one another. KB then encouraged any and all Foresters Fund applications to go in at every opportunity. National office now has \$60k annually to distribute to Foresters Fund grants (historically it was \$30k); 2015 only had \$55k in applications. Due to reinvestment of Foresters Fund money there is now \$2 million in principal and that amount will not decrease, over time the annual amount that can be distributed will likely go up. GS stated that in light of this, the \$6,500 Lewistown Spring Creek Project could likely be reapplied for. GE requested that Chapter Chairs communicate Chapters news about Foresters Fund applications.

GE distributed his MT State Chair task calendar and asked for reviews and comments later.

GE shared UM Student Chapter's letter of thanks to State Chapter for financial support (\$500) of student attendance to National Meeting.

GE shared State Chapter's letter to UM CFC (attached) on proposal to close Lubrecht Facilities. CP stated that bond on Lubrecht Lodge will be paid in full in 18 months and save roughly \$80k annually). Exec. Comm. Felt that in light of this there could be other opportunities for CFC to save \$ through better fiscal mgmt; consensus was that all UM depts. had to offer something for the chopping block due to UM's fiscal shortfall; this was CFC's offering.

Old Business: JP gave quick update on National Meeting; Scott Keuhn gave a presentation on the 2014 Blitz Build and received an HSD award. JP gave brief overview of National Meeting, brief synopsis of breakout sessions. KB attended field trips @ National Meeting and his conclusion was that it rained. A lot.

New Business: GS stated John Ottman is nominated for Fellowship. GS will pursue National Awards for other members in the Fall; GE thanked GS for handling this; SH reminded everyone he sits on the District Fellowship Committee. JP is submitting awards for the State Field Forester, due by June 15th. KB

mentioned that some Districts in the last year did not submit applications to National, he encouraged local and state chapters to submit applications at every opportunity. TL & JP stated there are three 50 year members who will receive awards at State Meeting.

GE distributed list of current Executive Committee members; communication chair remains vacant. EL nominated Russ Goutreaux from Libby Chapter as Communication Chair (*Note* Russ has since declined the position). KB states SAF National maintains a Facebook Page and is updated frequently.

GE distributes list of other Chapter Committees and members and did a quick review. A discussion on Eastside Chapter members precipitated; Liz and John Kasselli (former Missoula Chapter Members) were mentioned as they are now in Great Falls; GE said he would contact them about renewing membership.

KB made general reminder that SAF's Insurance Policy does NOT cover Rental Vehicles. If anyone is renting a vehicle for an SAF event, KB suggests to get rental insurance.

Flathead Chapter Report: Brad French (Chair) not present, JR filled in and gave quick updates regarding Foresters Fund grant application for Herron Park, will apply by June 15th deadline. Flathead Chapter is also doing a firewood cutting/sales operation as a fundraiser; chapter was donated a load of firewood and it is in Stoltze's log yard. Jarred Saralecos, UM graduate student, presented at last Chapter meeting on his research.

Libby Chapter Report: EL is chair (for the 3rd time) and gave updates. Kootenai Stakeholders Group presented at Libby's last meeting. Next month's presentation will be on phosphate additions to the Kootenai River.

Chapter has written the management plan on the 140 acre Alvord Lake Community Forest in Troy, Vital Ground now holds the title to the property. There is \$52k in grant work awarded for the site which includes USFS trail access, a boat launch, and interpretive site. JP suggests this could be used as an "HSD Success Story"; Russ Goutreaux already has a news release and video of this project; JP will pursue.

Missoula Chapter Report: HF gave updates; SH presented in January, Lorin Hicks presented his bat studies in February. Missoula continues to get good student turnout (4-5) at each meeting. Forestry Days at Fort Missoula will happen again this spring.

Mentorship Report: OR gave updates; OR & GE went to UM Student's meeting and presented to students on necessary skills needed for the post-college world; topics centered on field skills and interview tips. OR will be doing a field skills course for students also, topics will include: orienteering, tree measurements, tree ID, tire chains, HI lift jacks, etc.

Student Chapter Report: Not Present

Awards Report: JP continued updates from earlier; Scott Keuhn to receive award for Blitz Build at State Meeting; Lorrie Woods to receive Fellowship Award at State Meeting; both awards are at Glacier Frame Shop getting framed. Hope to have Governor present awards at State Meeting.

Other award nominations are due to JP March 4th, these include: Citizen Forester & Young Forester.

Membership Report: SH gave updates, he expects to get a current membership list from National very soon. Current membership: 212 paid members for 2016, 53 not current members (2015 members that have not renewed yet).

SH & KB went through how National contacts unpaid members; membership is now based on "Anniversary Date" (IE date of membership renewal) instead of calendar year cutoff. Monthly payment

plans are also now available if needed. National is also now contacting members from more than 3 years ago in an attempt to have renewed membership.

KB also discussed updates to SAF website where a lot is going on behind the scenes in order to make all the new parts talk to each other; as an example, membership lists will now be incorporated into the website. New website is scheduled to go live early April 2016.

Foresters Fund Report: GS had no updates to report, other than what was reported earlier.

Policy Report: National Policy Committee is involved in crafting Wildfire Funding bill for congressional approval, this is considered high priority. TL asked about Testers "Forest Jobs and Recreation Act", KB responded it was pretty stagnant at this point.

GS reminded everyone that MT Governor Bullock becomes chair of Western Governors Association in June; forest reforms are a primary focus of the WGA.

Natural Resources Youth Camp Report: Amy Helena not present, OR gave updates. OR states Amy wishes to step away from chairing the camp, SAF volunteers are needed. The fund maintained by the camp committee has about \$25k in it, however camp costs are going up and this fund will only allow for the subsidized cost of sending children to camp for another couple of years. The question was raised whether SAF State or local chapters could contribute some \$ for additional funding.

Education/Outreach Report: CP provided updates, CP has distributed a list of statewide chapter activities to chapter chairs and the list is also on the website. The website has also seen a bit of an overhaul, Sherri McWilliams continues to provide this service.

The Forest Stewardship Workshop dates and locations have been finalized and distributed.

Closing: GE stated that the Leadership Conference and the State Meeting have been pre-approved for CFE's

Next Executive Committee Meeting will be Thursday April 14th @ 4 PM (Evening Prior to the State Meeting)

HF made motion to adjourn, GE seconded and motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 12:19 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Jared Richardson, MT SAF Secretary/Treasurer