

Association of National Park Rangers Board of Directors Meeting MINUTES

Jan. 24, 2023

Time of BOD Meeting – 4:30pm AKT, 5:30pm PT, 6:30pm MT, 7:30pm CT, 8:30pm ET

ZOOM link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/97720779489?pwd=TFY5ZU9VWnBMR3JGbjFLOHA5eDRQUT09>

----- AGENDA TOPICS -----

Attendance (Secretary)

- Members Present: Demmy Vigil (Secretary), Mike Pflaum (Gov Affairs), Emily Johnson (Professional Issues), Troy Hunt (Seasonal Perspectives), Tom Banks (Training), Elsa (Internal Communications), Jonathan Shafer (Strategic Planning), Rick Mossman (President), Bill Wade (Treasurer)
- Members Absent: Shannon (Membership Services), Wendy Lauritzen (Fundraising),
- Others: Meg Weesner (International Liaison), Melissa DeVaughn (Business Manager)

Approval of Minutes from the previous BoD meeting(s) (President):

- [Dec 20, 2022 Minutes](#) Motion by Bill, Second by Mike. Vote to approve minutes 1.24.2023 by all members.

Treasurer's Report:

- [No Questions by board] I have made the final reconciliations for the budget vs. actual for both RR45 and the 2022 super raffle and distributed them to BOD.
- [Questions- clarification on final funds after RR45] I've distributed the financial reports as of the end of December to the BOD. The good news is that our actuals to date have outperformed the budget estimates, largely due to very successful RR and super raffle. Membership, both annual and life, is still lagging.
- [Approved by Board] Relative to Meg Weesner's email to the BOD about IRF dues, without objection I will plan to go ahead and pay the 2023 dues of \$200.
- [Send the link for corrections with what needs to be changed to Melissa so she can update items on the website] We have a LOT of updates to do on the ANPR website.
- [Information/Action Newsletter email updates will be done before the next one to be sent out. Melissa is correcting the old list with the new one] Next newsletter will go out Sunday, January 28 (and every two weeks thereafter, at least until further notice). Any input needs to get to me by **COB Saturday Jan 28, 2023**.
- [Action] As I informed the BOD, I've reimbursed Ben Brown again for 2023 for hosting the "housing reviews" website. We need to discuss how to make this more relevant to ANPR members and perhaps how to get more updated input from parks. The site is evidently

getting lots of “hits.” This site is valuable but is not necessarily getting the use that we hoped. A reminder on the website and on social media should help its availability.

- [Information] I have a person willing to revive the Rick Gale Oral History project. Working out some details that might allow us to again have some interviews at the next RR and also begin some virtual interviews. Tory Edwards is working with Bill on this project. Board approves.
- [After discussion the Board likes this idea of having a full performance PIO or developmentals position. Melissa is volunteering to take the initial emails and pass specific requests to subject-matter-experts. Jonathan has shared the draft press release for the “Lost...But Found” folder.] I recommend that the President appoint a person (non-voting to the BOD) as ANPR PIO. The “Ask A Ranger” link messages on the website are all currently directed to me, and I think it would be better to have a PIO field them, answer as appropriate, or allocate them to other “subject-matter experts’ as necessary. Another example: We now have an updated “Lost! ...But Found” program on the website. We should put out a media release, to as many destinations as possible, advertising the availability of the program. Who do we have to do that now? [Maybe as an interim decision on this specific issue, we could ask CPANP for assistance distributing the media release.]
- [Action Bill and Melissa would like to know what committees exist and who is on them for example, Finance Committee, Rendezvous Committee, Education & Training, Fundraising Committee, others??] I would like to get a list of all ANPR committees (with members) to not only inform ANPR members about this via the newsletters, but perhaps to solicit additional involvement. Task group v Committees and who’s on them would be helpful. Task Group would be a more focused short term thing whereas a Committee is an on-going long term action. With a list additional involvement and status would be helpful. **COB Feb 7, 2023 to Bill Wade.**
- [Action] Relative to the above two items, maybe it would be a good idea to assemble a list of opportunities for members to help and put out a “vacancy announcement” to solicit interest. Note in Newsletters the standing committees and task groups with invitation to participate.

Old Business (President):

- (Banks): Our Board webpage has last year’s board info on it. As discussed in December, can new Board members get their bio info to Melissa to update ASAP.
- Demmy will review old minutes to add any business that needs to be carried forward.

New Business (President):

- (Mossman): Do we want to write a letter in support of the Rosenwald Park Campaign? Suggestion by Jonathan to write a general letter saying “yes” and we especially support underrepresented communities and stories. Rosenwald was an original founder of SEARS and built numerous schools for African American children.
- Discussion about reestablishment of the NPS Advisory Board for the service and system.
- Rebecca Harriett and Jamie Richards are drafting a SOP to support employees that have undergone disaster and would like financial help.
- Wendy is looking at companies to support RR.

(Report on MNPR)

- (Wade): I have raised the issue of our inability to significantly increase our membership several times in the past, without much action or support. Given that this is my last year on the BOD (at least in my current position), I would ask to Chair a committee to analyze what might be done relative to restructuring ANPR to expand our relevance to other disciplines in the NPS. The purpose of this committee would be to provide options for discussion and action by the membership, prior to, and at the next Ranger Rendezvous.
 - (Banks comment): I see that we've had 35 members join in the last quarter (per Ranger magazine Winter 2023 issue). That might equate to 140/year. We attract new members, but they don't necessarily stay for years. It'd be interesting to analyze the member records to see if our member retention rate is any different now than in the past. >>I'd suggest we add to the Professional Ranger columnists to include Maintenance/Facilities/Buildings and Utilities, Trail Work, as well as Administration, Resources, and Interpretation. I'm not supportive of changing the name of our organization, except if it were renamed something like National Association of Park Rangers (to draw in more state and county park agency employees). I believe that the "ranger," broadly interpreted, is a key part of ANPR's identity.
 - >>>Suggestion: have Board members engage new members: write notes to all new members welcoming them to ANPR and asking how they would like to get involved, and what they'd like to get out of ANPR.
 - Rick noted the last RR 66% retirees and would like to look for ways to attract younger members and increased membership in general. Looking at "what's in it for me" to attract new members and a more diverse discipline membership too. Retention has always been an issue. A newly formed committee could look at new membership and retention concerns.
 - Bill has been given approval to move forward to start a committee for boosting membership.
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- (Banks): A site visit to Olympic National Park brought up a couple of issues. Does the Board want to take a position on these?
 - Permanent GS-5 "Guide" positions have no career ladder. Is this good or bad?
 - OPM has apparently told the NPS, "a Park can have one season to hire seasonals, not two." So parks (like Olympic) are hiring more permanent GS-5 Guides, and fewer seasonals. What's our view towards fewer seasonals, more permanents, in interpretation? (In the protection ranks, it has meant fewer rangers and a reduction of service to visitors. The same might become true for interpretation?)
 - Discussion of board has seen the repeat of low graded positions without career ladders and limited seasonals. Seasonal position hiring is cumbersome and especially in LEO ranks the number of seasonals has dropped in numbers. Career Seasonal is another term used to describe long term seasonal employees.
- Hiring, Training, and Housing are the core topics we may be able to help employees as an organization.
- Jonathan will update the strategic plan for 2023 and send out.

- Mike would like to find a current employee-member to attend the NPCA, Coalition, and ANPR to work on collaborative advocacy. Emily has volunteered.

Reports:

- President:
 - Yount Award update JT Townsend will head up this award nomination and awarding for future RR.
 - Rendezvous RR46 Jacksonville FL manager is needed, RR47 west of Mississippi area and 48 update. Bill is looking at locations and pricing. Boise, ID could not support the space and prices for us.
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- Secretary:
 - Melissa has been helping me get familiar with the Board info. As I get to know everyone I may ask who is talking etc. Thanks for your patience. I appreciate your corrections of spellings in the minutes.
 - (Demmy) I've met twice with a newly formed group of three organizations: NPCA, ANPR, and The Coalition. Rebecca Harriett has additional notes below. Demmy and Mike Phlaum are representing ANPR. Where can advocacy groups help? Subjects that are being discussed are
 - Low employee morale and root causes
 - Advocate for park funding
 - Increased workforce diversity and retention
 - Employee housing
 - Employee training and development
 - Federal Government best places to work
 - Celebrate effective and accomplished NPS leaders and empower future NPS generations
 - Improving bandwidth in parks and for employees

Demmy and Clara Wooden from The Coalition have been focussing on Diversity and Training. We were able to contact Sangita Chari, D&I program manager. The good news is there is progress in the area of diversity and inclusion with the newly formed Diversity Advisory Council (DAC). They have a new implementation plan and are creating focus groups to address issues. There is not a Policy problem but a Silo problem. Different resources are not talking and working with each other, and lack of communication. In 2021 with the Inflation Reduction Act Congress added to the NPS budget to hire three recruiters and HR staffing (30 Term employees). Sangita says that the passion for these topics have been affected by the recent retirement waves (like David Vela, Clara Wooden, etc.). We plan to meet with her next month to continue to see where we, as advocacy groups, can help the NPS.
- Treasurer:
 - All members of the Finance committee have agreed to continue their involvement for 2023.

- Dates have been established for this year's AK Inland Passage cruises with Royal Caribbean and applications will begin to be taken from ANPR members for the "enhancement presenter" opportunities. Looking for AK specific topics. The newsletter has all the information. We might look at sharing presentations if possible.
- We have tentatively scheduled the "re-presentation" of the Yount Award to William Yazzie in Chinle, AZ late in the afternoon on February 14. I will attend and Paul Anderson also might attend on behalf of ANPR. I have received the Yount bust from the foundry to present. The bust for Thelma Schrank has been shipped to her.
- Business Manager:
 - It has been a busy few months getting the website up and running, seeking out and updating website content and finishing the winter issue of Ranger magazine. Thanks to all who have offered input for website content
 - I am in the process of working with the ANPR archivist at Colorado State to ensure our content is continuing to be compiled.
 - I've also been connecting with new board members to ensure they are set up and prepared for our board meetings. All board members have an active ANPR email now.
 - Summer issue is Law Enforcement focus. Apr 30, 2023 is deadline to Melissa.
- RR46 Manager:
 - We need to follow up the very successful RR in Tucson with another one this year in Jacksonville. I am looking for anyone willing to serve on the RR46 management team. If you know anyone who might be interested, please have them contact me ASAP. Positions available are:
 - Operations Section Chair
 - Logistics Section Chair
 - Information Section Chair
 - Program chair
 - Exhibits chair
 - Raffle/auction chair
 - Field trips chair
 - And several other functions that always need to be covered.
 - Bill is making a major effort to locate a venue for RR47...
- Education and Training:
 - I plan to schedule a Bill Pierce Leadership 101 online seminar for members within the next two weeks. Any scheduling suggestions from the Board? Do any Board members have a hankering to put on an hour-long online training seminar on a topic for which you have expertise?
- Fundraising:
 - Wendy has won a bunch of Cruises and is out at sea. (hummm, could she invite any of us to carry her bags :)

- Internal Communications:
 - Sharing relevant content to our ANPR Facebook page
- Membership Services:
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- Professional Issues:
 - Emily emailed Bill Wade about starting a Professional Issues Committee and is contacting others that expressed interest during the Rendezvous.
 - Personal update: Baby boy due early Feb! Congrats!
- Seasonal Perspectives:
 - What have I gotten myself into?
 - Getting the lay of the land still as it relates to Board practices and actions.
 - Looking for a seasonal gig that works for a guy with arthritic knees...
 - Looking at social media to get what is important to employees.
- Government Affairs:
 - Rebecca Harriett, Former BOD-Government Affairs update from meeting held 1-5-23 with Coalition, ANPR, and NPCA about joint issues we may be able to tackle together.
 - Submitted by Rebecca Harriett while I still have an ANPR e:mail account. Attended a virtual meeting with work group from NPCA, CPANP and ANPR to discuss the HUGE topic of NPS Workplace Issues. This was a “get to know each other meeting”, but did spend time reviewing the 2018 NPS Voices Report that has a long list of issues that continue to impact the NPS Workforce. I briefed the group on ANPR’s emphasis on NPS Hiring, Housing and Training over the past two years recognizing there are many issues to tackle. As an organization ANPR had to narrow the list down and set priorities. ANPR’s newly elected Secretary, Demmy Vigil, and BOD for Government Affairs, Mike Pflaum, were also in attendance. It was recommended that ANPR also appoint an ANPR member who is a current NPS employee to participate in this workgroup since the others are either retired or not NPS employees. I sent that request to Mike, Demmy and Rick for BOD consideration. Now that ANPR is in good hands with this group, I will graciously step-off. Thank you for three challenging, but productive years serving on the Board. Go forth and do good!
 - Emily may be interested as the Professional Issues board member; time permitting. Addressing employee morale and workplace issues is a personal passion.
- Strategic Planning:
 - Jonathan will be updating the plan soon.
- IRF Liaison:
 - There’s still no official word on when the 10th World Ranger Congress will be held. All three organizations that submitted bids in early November asked for more time to finalize their packages. The IRF Board granted additional time, but I don’t know when the new deadline is. I’ll keep trying to find answers.

- The Portuguese Ranger Association (which had been planning to host the 10th WRC Congress until the IRF Board backed out) sent a message around that their planned meeting of rangers had been rescheduled from early June this year to late October. Just a couple of days later they sent another message saying there might be a schedule conflict and not to book flights yet. I haven't heard further on that.

Adjourn: [10:12 pm ET]

Next meeting: [February 28, 2023] (4th Tuesday of the month)