

Approved Minutes 3-29-2011



New England Society of American Foresters (NESAF) Executive Committee (EC) Meeting Tuesday, March 29, 2011

Location: Lake Morey Resort, Fairlee, VT

Members present:

Deborah Boyer	Website Administrator
Paul Dolan	Rhode Island State Representative; Nomination Chair
Andrew Fast	Secretary
George Frame	Council Representative Region VI
Peter Greeno	Membership Chair
Dana Hachigian	Massachusetts State Representative; Awards Chair
Mel Harder	Connecticut State Representative; Grants Chair
J Peter Howland	New Hampshire State Representative
Ron Lemin Jr.	Immediate Past-Chair
Margaret Machinist	Co-Editor of NESAF News Quarterly
Scott Machinist	Co-Editor of NESAF News Quarterly
Wilfred Mercier	Maine State Representative
Roger Monthey	Forest Science Coordinator
Ed O'Leary	Chair
Russell Reay	Treasurer
William Samal Jr.	Vermont State Representative
Kurt Zschau	Vice-Chair

Guests:

Gary Salmon
Jonathan Wood

Members not present:

Don Floyd Canadian Representative

Meeting opened by NESAF Chair, Ed O'L. at 1:10pm

A. Standard items:

Sign in sheet (Fast) - verify contact information: The standard sign-in sheet was circulated.

Welcome: Ed O'L. welcomed the EC and Will Mercier was introduced as the new Maine State Representative.

Antitrust statement: The antitrust statement was presented. Ed O'L. can provide a copy of the antitrust statement to members of the EC upon their request.

Add/Adjust agenda: Paul D. added nominations under standing committees. Russell Reay added annual meeting registration policy under old business. State reports will be presented at the business meeting.

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Corrections/Additions for the January 13, 2011 EC meeting minutes (Fast): Draft minutes were circulated. A motion was heard from Russell Reay to accept the meeting minutes as presented; a second to the motion was heard from Pete H. The question was called and the motion passed unanimously.

(Roger M. joined the EC at 1:17pm and the EC introduced themselves to him)

Treasurer's Report (Reay): Russell R. distributed a packet which included the net worth as of 3/25/11, net worth history, and the budget report 2008-2011 as reported March 29, 2011

Russell R. reviewed the net worth. The savings account has dropped below \$10,000 and is now costing NESAF \$12/month. There are no fee accounts with \$2,500 and \$1,000 minimums. Russell will open one of these accounts next week.

Total cash and bank accounts are \$13,836.48 (includes the grants account). Based on Russell R.'s research, the grant account was never a separate, discrete account. Instead, it continues to reside and be recorded as a notation at the bottom of the net worth report. Russell R. took interest from a CD that matured and added those funds to the grants account. Total assets are \$39,278.87. Liabilities total \$2,400. These are Forester's Fund grants that NESAF is obligated to spend.

Russell R. is in the process of accumulating all the information required from student chapters to file the 990. He is lacking only a couple chapters information, but has been in touch with all of them. One of Russell R.'s frustrations is that checks have been issued months ago and have not been cashed. It is helpful if checks can be cashed in a timely manner.

Last EC meeting there was discussion about a discrepancy between the bank account and NESAF's check register and records. Russell R. and his wife have been through the records again and there is still a \$191 discrepancy in NESAF's favor. Rather than putting that money in a separate account, Russell R. suggests that he keep looking into the issue. No EC members objected to that course of action.

Ron L. asked for clarification on the NESAF Grant Fund balance. He thought it seemed high after distributing money to Maine. Mel H. passed out his report to help address the question. Mel H. and Russell R. reconciled the financials on their reports; the numbers are correct, but from different dates - end of the year (Mel H.) v. March 25, 2011 (Russell R.). Russell R. informed Ron and the EC that there was \$2,833.18 that was not carried forward or reported at the end of 2009. This money is now accounted for. A motion was heard from Ron L. acknowledging that the EC is in receipt of the Treasurer's Report; a second to the motion was heard from Paul D. The question was called and the motion passed unanimously.

(Peter G. joined the EC at 1:36pm)

B. Old Business:

2011 Winter Meeting Update (Zschau): Kurt Z. planned to join the EC at 3pm so the agenda item was revisited later. Bill S. brought raffle items and passed them around for the EC to inspect.

Kurt Z. Provided an update at 2:40pm. The planning committee set a target for 13-15 vendors/exhibitors. They received approximately \$5,000 in donations. There are 250 registrants and another 80 speakers. With 336 people, the numbers are slightly ahead of where they were 4 years ago. Russell R. informed the EC that

Mark Twery established a good, consistent policy for speakers. SAF members get no discount on registration while non-SAF members get the day's registration fee waived. This guideline should be incorporated into the planning guide.

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NY-NE Joint Winter Meeting (Lemin): NYSAF would like to do another joint meeting with NESAF and has suggested Saratoga Springs again. GMD likes the idea, but would need NESAF members from other units to participate on the planning committee.

Ed O'L. informed the EC that Mariann Johnston is Chair-Elect for NYSAF and can work with NESAF when it makes a decision about whether to move forward with a joint meeting. Mariann J. says NYSAF is flexible about a location. The meeting would take place in 2013. Ron L. asked how the money would be split. Ed O'L. believes it is 50-50%. Russell R. suggested splitting proceeds based on attendees. If 60% of attendees are from NESAF, then NESAF should receive 60% of the profits and vice versa for NYSAF.

Bills S. voiced the concern that NESAF will be on a 5-year rotation if the joint NESAF-NYSAF meeting is institutionalized. Vermont depends on the winter meeting every fourth year to offset their deficit spending annually. Ron L. informed the EC that the meeting has been discussed as a one time event. No one has discussed incorporating it into the cycle.

Ed O'L. confirmed with the EC that there was some level of agreement to pursue a 2013 joint NESAF-NYSAF winter meeting. Peter G. pointed out that the Maine Division offered to postpone for 1 year. They did not offer to take reduced income through an abridged meeting (potentially with fewer registrants). If Maine is putting on the meeting, they may not have to split it with NESAF so that should offset fewer attendees and a shorter meeting. Wilfred M. and Ron L. will ask the Maine Division if they are comfortable having an abridged summer meeting. If the Maine Division is willing to have a summer meeting, Ron L. will contact Mariann Johnston to discuss what preliminary actions need to be taken. The EC thanked Ron for his willingness to make initial contact with NYSAF.

Winter Meeting Planner (Lemin): Ron L. sent out the latest winter meeting planner (revised December 2010). Ron L. would like to meet with Vermont planners at the post winter meeting wrap-up to discuss lessons learned and additional edits. Ken Laustsen currently holds the most recent version. EC members should contact Ron L. if they do not have a copy and would like one.

C. NEW BUSINESS:

Standing Committee reports:

Policy (Open): Ed O'L. informed the EC that Jonathan Wood would join them at 3:30pm

Ed O'L. attended the GSD winter mtg. and the Northern Pass Project was brought up. It is a big energy project that will bring energy from Canada to New Hampshire. Bob Berti, a New Hampshire forester proposed that GSD take a position on it due to its environmental impacts and impact to the biomass markets in New Hampshire. Janice Mulherin suggested Ed O'L. bring the topic back to NESAF since it is a regional forestry issue. Peter H. noted that GSD has decided to narrow their position to how the project affects NH and specifically, biomass plants and markets. Currently 2 legislative committees are taking testimony. However, it will be a long multi-year process before it is all done.

Bill S. shared his confusion that 4 biomass plants are being closed yet they are building a new plant in Berlin. There are 6 biomass plants operating without rate orders. The issue is a good example of what Policy Chair might be involved with and the EC should use it as an example for Jonathan Wood. The EC should all try to learn more individually so they are informed for future discussions. Peter G. pointed out that there is a policy process in place to vet issues and a Policy Chair is central to the process.

Membership (Greeno): Due to a number of other commitments, Peter G. will be stepping down as Membership Chair in June. He has identified someone to replace him and is waiting for confirmation. The membership drive is still in full swing and renewals are continuing. There is a recurring issue, that members

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do not renew early in the year; often only 60% of membership will renew by January with 85-90% renewed by June. Personal outreach is critical to retain members. Local units can help by contacting people they know who are on the non renewal list. If everyone chips in then each EC members only calls a handful of people. Peter can give local units a list of non renewals in their state. Peter G. requested that state representatives contact Peter after they speak with their units and are ready to move forward.

Ed O'L. shared correspondence from a member who is unemployed, cannot pay the dues, and wants to retain membership. He has sent in \$1 per year for the last two to three years and asked for a reduced membership rate for the last 6 years. Ed O'L. mentioned this because the member may be present at the annual meeting and share his frustrations. As such, he wanted the EC to know the background. There is one time reduced rate for members experiencing financial hardship and SAF will work with members to break dues into monthly payments.

Peter G. will send out the membership brochure to the EC by email. Future membership drive expenses will be coming out of the Forester's Fund Grant.

Dana H. asked if encouraging state forester licensing boards to provide SAF credits for members would provide an additional incentive for membership renewal. Andy F. shared his experience in New Hampshire that the licensing board was pretty conservative with the credits they assign. For example, they will not provide credits for self-guided tests at the end of the *Northern Journal of Applied Forestry*.

Bill S. shared concerns with how SAF has assigned credits. He believes more than 1 credit should be awarded for participation on professional boards because of the significant time commitment. He also has perceived a discrepancy between how credits are awarded to New Hampshire programs as opposed to other programs. Andy F. chimed in that he is responsible for assigning credits and is willing to discuss any concerns. Kurt Z. noted that some of the issue may be due to how the programs are structured. If program planners are aware of the nuisances of what is eligible for credit, they can better structure the agenda to maximize credits.

Paul D. suggested requiring SAF membership for CF eligibility. There was brief additional discussion about licensure and assigning credits.

Forest Science Coordinator (Harding/Monthey): Roger M. shared some ideas for upcoming issues of the *News Quarterly*. EAB-ALB, including training opportunities and ALB host preferences. Mel H. informed Roger M. that Connecticut is 940 sticky traps for EAB as part of a trapping program. Roger M. may want to look into the program as another article. Ron L. noted that spruce budworm is ramping up in Canada and Maine is getting nervous. May 22 is the next deadline. Other ideas include forestry education (PLT), and watershed assessments (contrasting public and private case studies).

Russell R. suggested an update on forestry licensure. Rhode Island and Vermont are the only ones not doing it. Some of the following questions could be answered: have any lessons been learned? Has there been a change in practice or change in attitude such as a reduction in complaints? What is the status of reciprocity (e.g. Maine and Connecticut provide reciprocity). Bill S. shared his experience in Vermont. It has been a hotly debated topic and he does not think it is beneficial. Ed O'L. suggested having two opposing views, for and against licensure. Ken Laustsen from Maine, Deb Markowitz from Vermont, and Nory Parr from New Hampshire are all good people to speak with about the topic.

(The EC took a break at 3:10pm and resumed at 3:22pm)

NESAF Website (Boyer): Deb B. thanked all state representatives who sent in updated rosters. Deb B. has sent out a number of emails. She has been updating the website. Ron L. acknowledged the fantastic job Deb B. is doing.

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Nominations and Election (Dolan): For the upcoming elections, NESAF is looking for representatives from Connecticut, Rhode Island and New Hampshire as well as a Secretary and Treasurer. Russell R. will run for Treasurer.

Grants (Harder): Mel H. covered grants earlier. Approximately \$3,350 is expected to be available. The deadline to apply is December 1, which is also the deadline for awards.

Awards (Stone): Dana H. has the awards (except the Integrity Award which should be coming and will be left at the desk for Ed O'L.). The awards brochures are stuffed in the packets. NESAF may need to switch vendors for future laser graved awards. Ed O'L. will recognize 50 year members. Gary S. noted that he did not realize there was a new award (David M. Smith) and suggested making some additional comments to let membership know.

(Jonathan Wood joined the EC at 3:30pm and Policy was revisited)

Ed O'L. welcomed Jonathan Wood. The EC introduced themselves, and Ed O'L. encouraged Jonathan W. to ask any questions he had about the Policy Chair position. John W. provided some background. He was not engaged in SAF temporarily while working for the state Governor. However, he worked in the Policy Chair position in the past (prior to Pete H.) so he has some perspective. In addition, he wanted to get a better idea what the EC expected. In the past, a challenge was responding rapidly to an issue with such a broad membership.

Ed O'L. raised the Northern Pass Project as the type of issue a Policy Chair might respond to. The Policy Chair would get information, become educated and facilitate a conversation on whether the NESAF should take a stance or a position.

Bill S. encouraged the EC to give the Policy Chair a lot of latitude because of how rapidly things move once an issue is going through the legislative process. The EC, at the discretion of the Policy Chair might approve an interim position.

Peter G. worked through the policy process over the last year or year and a half through a policy sub-committee. They came up with recommendations: 1) The process needs to be more fluid; 2) Ad hoc committees can form in response to an issue, pulling in appropriate committee members; 3) A response should be initiated after a state request; 4) it is helpful to have membership input. An email can get sent out with a deadline (short turn around) and a large portion of membership should be able to weigh in; 5) lastly, bylaws would need to be changed so we ad hoc committees can be developed as opposed to a standing policy committee (the Policy Chair may have additional recommendations for bylaw changes).

Someone coming into the Policy Chair position will need to rearrange the process to make it more effective, and it is helpful if that person can collaborate with other organizations.

Jonathon W. found Peter G.'s comments very encouraging.

Peter G. would be willing to continue as a sounding board in an informal role or on an ad hoc committee. Bill VanDoren is another good resource.

Andy F. questioned whether it would make sense notifying membership at the winter meeting that if NESAF secures a new Policy Chair this next year, there may be rapid responses to issue, such as interim NESAF positions, that have not gone before membership. The EC generally felt that there were sufficient mechanisms to speak to membership through email, etc. and this was not necessary.

The EC thanked Jonathan W. and Jonathan W. said he would review the information and get back to the EC about his decision.

The Policy Chair is a voting member of the EC and provided a \$599 stipend as well as mileage reimbursement.

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Budget Report (Reay): Russell R. reviewed the net worth history, 2007-2011. In 2007, there was \$27,060.42 in Savings. In 2011, there is \$9,371.93. 2008 conference proceedings were recorded as income in 2009. Income and expenses were reviewed over the last 4 years. In short, Russell R. pointed to the deficits over the last 4 years, the projected \$9,000 deficits for 2011 and 2012 and emphasized that there is not the money to continue doing it.

The 2011 revised proposed budget was reviewed. Anticipated income is \$21,820. Dues income is down. Vermont did not ask for the \$1,000 winter meeting advance so that will not come back to NESAF as income. Meeting profits was raised. Actual income may be well short (\$5,300) of anticipated income.

Expenses were reviewed. Bank charges were reduced. Each line item was reviewed and changes were justified. There is no winter meeting advance; website expenses went up to \$1,000 from \$800. A \$599 Policy Chair stipend needed to be incorporated. The *News Quarterly* and membership drive were billed on the same invoice. The \$1,305.22 includes \$70 dollars that should be attributed to the *News Quarterly*. The bill came in 2011 instead of 2010.

Maggie M. proposed giving membership the opportunity to get the *News Quarterly* online for 2012. The *News Quarterly* can be reduced in size and fewer copies can be made. Additional costs can be saved if NESAF stops paying for its own bulk mail permit. \$2,000 was reduced from the *News Quarterly* line.

Deb B. can inform membership that the *News Quarterly* is available on the website or as an attachment. Scott M. suggested zipping the file. It could also be accessed as a direct link from an email.

National leadership academy was removed. \$1,000 will go to a regional leadership academy and local units will provide additional support.

There was discussion about how to reduce the Executive Committee General Operations line. Mileage reimbursement can be reduced from 50 cents to 30 cents. There could also be a cap of \$3,500. After that no reimbursement for EC members. Ed O'L. asked if the EC was comfortable with those changes. There were no objections.

Bill S. asked if the *News Quarterly* could generate more advertising income. \$800 is budgeted for income there is a chance NESAF could get more. Bill S. suggested looking into advertising on the website as well. Winter meeting income was raised from \$4,000 to \$5,000 or \$6,000 based on registration. The deficit was reviewed after changes were made (approximately \$9,000 down to \$4,000), and the EC discussed the importance of finding additional revenue sources besides a dues increase.

Maggie M. will put information in the next *News Quarterly* informing membership that the *News Quarterly* will be transitioning to primarily an online newsletter. Andy F. suggested that members have to opt in if they want a paper copy of the *News Quarterly* rather than have members opt into the online version.

To further reduce the deficit, NESAF will write a grant to the NESAF grant fund for the regional leadership academy. There is a \$1500 match required for the Forester's Fund Grant.

NESAF News Quarterly (Machinist): Maggie M. informed the EC that the April *News Quarterly* is also complete. Winter meeting information will go into the June issue.

State Reports (NESAF State Representatives):

State reports will be provided at the business meeting.

Chair Potpourri (O'Leary): There has been a lot of email correspondence among the EC. Dana H. has noted that in some cases the "comment period" before a decision is made is very short. She asked if there was a bylaw or policy determining how many EC members (or percentage of the EC) must respond before a decision is made? Ed O'L. acknowledged the concern. Ed O'L. will think about the issue and it will be brought up again at a future meeting.

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Maggie M. asked if the idea of a NESAF special project will be brought up with membership. Ed O'L. is planning to bring up the general idea and get feedback.

Other items for the good of the order: There were no additional items for the good of the order.

Calendar: The NESAF EC will next meet on Wednesday, June 22, 2011 9:30am at Cabela's, Scarborough, Maine.

Upcoming Meetings

Friday, September 16, 9:30am-3:00pm, Groton SF VT

Wednesday, December 21, 9:30am-3:00pm, Concord NH

A motion to adjourn was heard from Maggie M. A second was heard from Paul D. The question was called and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Fast, Secretary