

## NAR Trustee Working Session

July 10, 2024

Session started at 8:07 PM.

Present: John Hochheimer, President; Steve Kristal, Vice President; Mark Wise, Secretary; Andrew Bean; Don Carson; Becky Green; Emi Sears; Lynn Thomas; Jim Wilkerson.

Absent: Kevin Johnson, Treasurer; Jasper Barnett.

Todd Schweim, NAR Communications Director, managed the technical aspects of the meeting and provided input as appropriate.

### **Youth Safety Statement**

Steve sent the following draft Youth Safety Statement to the trustees earlier today:

#### **National Association of Rocketry Youth Safety Statement**

Nothing in the NAR is more critical than creating a safe environment. NAR youth, in particular, need to be physically safe and protected before they can have fun and learn. As NAR members, each of us is responsible for youth safety during every launch, meeting, and activity.

NAR adult members can take the following steps to enhance youth safety:

- Always be mindful of the example you are setting – follow all safety rules.
- Recognize hazards and correct them.
- Demonstrate the proper use of equipment and tools.
- Emphasize safety at every event.

If an unacceptable risk or hazard becomes evident while an activity is taking place, promptly change the activity, establish controls to reduce the risk to an acceptable level, or correct the hazard. You may always discontinue the activity if needed.

As an additional step towards youth protection, it is advised that no one under the age of 18 should participate in any NAR activity without assigned direct adult supervision from either a parent or guardian.

It is up to every NAR section to establish any additional policies they feel necessary to ensure the safety of their youth participants.

As always, the NAR remains totally committed to the safety of all who join us in our activities.

John said that he would craft a bullet point to remind adults that they should not be in one-on-one situations with participants under the age of 18; rather, there should be two or more adults present. Steve said that the most common one-on-one situation is that of an adult and a child trying to locate a

lost rocket. Emi said that she thought that the situation was covered under another bullet point. Steve said that he would welcome John's input.

Don remarked that it is also a good idea to copy parents on any electronic communications with children.

### **Safety Concern**

Mark informed the Board that an applicant for a NAR scholarship wrote about mixing his own rocket fuel and "blowing up the patio" in his application essay. Rather than responding unilaterally to the member, Mark asked the trustees for their opinions on a response. The Board's consensus was that Mark should write a letter to the member with a copy to his parent (also a NAR member), reminding them that this type of activity is prohibited under NAR safety codes. Mark will point him to Tripoli's website, particularly any pages related to experimental rocketry.

Emi provided some suggested wording: "Thank you for your interest, but your activities are outside the scope of our scholarship. Please consult local regulations and contact your local fire department."

### **Treasurer's Report**

There was no treasurer's report, as Kevin was not available.

### **High Power**

Jim talked about the Almost Ready to Fly (ARTF) Level 1 rocket that Don had brought up during the June conference call. Jim is philosophically opposed to the use of this rocket in certification attempts, since the idea behind certification is to demonstrate a certain level of craftsmanship. Jim's position is that if you want to fly high power, there should be some skill involved. Also, the ARTF rocket has metal centering rings as noted last month. Pat Gordzelik, Level 3 Coordinating Committee chair, has looked at the rocket and is not as concerned as Jim about the centering rings.

Steve said that he was not too worried about aluminum centering rings but was equally concerned about a new rocketeer showing up at a launch, spending an hour building an ARTF rocket, and leaving the field with their L1 certification.

John said that he was "on the same wavelength as Gordzelik." He added that that the point we are trying to get across is that we are trying to get people to learn how to build high-power rockets safely. He suggested that a handout explaining *why* we feel that way would be useful.

Andrew's opinion is that this is not all that different from throwing together a basic LOC kit with five-minute epoxy. Jim countered that at least the rocketeer in that scenario needs to know how to work with epoxy.

Steve said that the kit in question is a well-done kit but that it is a dead end. A rocketeer would not learn anything that could be applied to future HPR rockets. Using the ARTF rocket in a certification attempt would just be a means to a quick "ticket punch." Jim agrees that it is a good kit, but that the ease of assembly and the use of metal in primary structure make it unsuitable for certification flights.

John added that education – explaining why the Board is opposed to ARTF cert rockets – is likely to be the most successful solution. Jim said that he did not think that education would change the behavior of people who are out to certify quickly.

Emi said she agreed with Jim, added that her L1 experience was about learning *techniques*. Not learning those techniques for certification may lead to certified rocketeers *never* learning things that we should regard as common knowledge for range safety and check-in officers.

John mentioned that he saw enforcement of any policy as an impossible problem. He said, “We have to change the narrative from ‘you can’t do this’ to ‘here’s what we want you to do.’”

Jim said that we need to do both – increase education and set standards. The challenge is getting away from the “certify in a day” approach.

Jim and Steve will continue to work on this issue. Steve thanked Jim for his coordination with TRA on this issue.

### **New Member Management System**

Our staff have been training on the new system. John and Todd are working on simplifying member registration categories from the current 18 by converting some of the categories to additional charges (first-class postage, donations, etc.). Digital membership cards will be available.

The new system will streamline family memberships, invoicing, and other processes. We are looking at an implementation date of January 1, 2025.

We are still working with TRA on integrated online L2 testing.

### **Expenses**

John brought up the issue of NAR’s increasing expenses. We would like to avoid increasing dues, but the only alternative is to cut expenses.

He recommended the following actions:

#### **August 1, 2024**

1. Eliminate mailed renewal notices. This would save \$12,500 per year.

#### **January 1, 2025**

1. Young Adult and Junior members would no longer automatically receive a printed copy of *Sport Rocketry*.
2. Young Adult and Junior members would no longer automatically receive a physical membership card.
3. Young Adult and Junior members could opt into receiving a printed copy of *Sport Rocketry* and or a physical membership card at an additional cost with membership.
4. Charge for HPR pins (a savings to NAR of \$7.50 per pin)
5. Charge for HPR membership cards and replacements (saving \$3.00 per card)

Available evidence tends to show that the printed membership renewal notices have little effect on actual renewals, so the Board decided to eliminate mailed renewal reminders immediately, for an annual savings of \$12,500.

Regarding John's five proposals that would take effect on January 1, 2025, Young Adult Trustees Andrew and Emi concurred strongly with item 1, believing that printed magazines are not important to many of our Junior and Young Adult members. The Board also concurred with items 2 and 3.

Items 4 and 5, the charges for HPR pins and membership cards, were more controversial among the Board members. The suggestion came up that NAR coordinate with Tripoli on the issue of pins and cards so that the two organizations could put up a unified front. Jim suggested deferring items 4 and 5 for a year. No action was taken on those items, but discussion will continue.

### **Miscellaneous**

Mark has been in contact with member Will Marchant regarding developing a curriculum on the use of amateur ("ham") radio in hobby rocketry. Will is a leading figure behind Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) and has given numerous presentations to radio clubs and rocket clubs on the topic of blending the two hobbies. Mark asked the Board for any ideas they may have for learning objectives, as well as for names of other subject matter experts that he and Will might consult.

Don asked about Sections using the NAR's Employee Identification Number (EIN) to open bank accounts. John said that he has been discussing the topic with Anne Heacock, our accountant.

Jim said that he is continuing to work on the transition from Ed LaCroix to himself as National Events chair. He added that planning for NSL-East is underway, and that Ed has been working on obtaining a site for NARAM-66. He said that NSL-West will be in Alamosa, Colorado again next year.

Andrew said that he has completed a draft of a guide for student groups attending Section launches. He will send it out to the Board for review in the next day or two.

The next planning session will take place on August 14, 2024, at 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Meeting adjourned at 10:08 PM.