



## **NATIONAL SEARCH DOG ALLIANCE**

### **Minutes of the 2022 Annual Members Meeting and Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

A quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Search Dog Alliance was held via zoom in conjunction with the Annual Members Meeting on Tuesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm EST. The following Board members were present and constituted a quorum:

President/Chief Executive Officer Terry Crooks  
Executive Vice President Susan Fleming  
Chief Financial Officer Jan Meyer

Corporate Secretary Gail Collins  
Board Member Amity Larsen

See attached list for those also in attendance.

#### Welcome from President Crooks

#### Rules of Order from Secretary Collins

Motion to approve the agenda. CFO Meyer made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by EVP Fleming, passed unanimously.

2021 Annual Members Meeting Minutes. President Crooks stated that there was no Annual Members Meeting in 2021, as such there are no available minutes.

Board of Director Introductions. Each Board member introduced themselves and gave a brief summary of their backgrounds.

Welcome to Program Leads. President Crooks introduced and welcomed the Program Leads.

- Membership Manager, Rena Ferguson
- Education Manager, Wade Boyd
- Communications Manager, Heather Proper-Van Valkenburg
- Testing and Evaluators Manager, Kristine Lesperance
- Testing Supervisor, Julie Gibson
- Evaluators Supervisor, Kathy Adamle
- Evaluators Administrator, Pat Lamson

Appreciation for past administrations. President Crooks acknowledged the hard work of past Board members and thanked them for their service.

Treasurer's report. CFO Meyer stated that as of August 31<sup>st</sup>, NSDA had approximately \$124,000 in several accounts, which is up approximately \$4,000 from last year. Several bills have been paid in September, approximately ~\$5,000, bringing the current balance slightly below last year's at this same time.

## Program reports

- **Membership Program.**
  - Manager Ferguson reported 8 new members joined in September. Currently, there are a total of 18 teams consisting of 254 members and 244 individual memberships, making for a total of 498 members. There are 24 members that live in Canada, 229 members that live in the eastern US, and 245 that live in the western US. The largest number of members live in Washington State (71 members) and the second largest is in Michigan (60 members). There are 8 states with no members and 10 states with only 1 member.
  - No membership cards were sent out in September; cards were sent out in August and will be again in October. Manager Ferguson has been sending email notices to teams that have expired – currently there are 45 members who have received notices and, if there is no response within 60 days, they will be deleted from the rolls.
  - Questions can be emailed to Manager Ferguson at [membership@n-sda.org](mailto:membership@n-sda.org).
- **Education Program.** Manager Boyd gave a brief summary of his background. He stated he plans to help manage the resources that available to members and potential members to help them be successful. Questions can be send to [education@n-sda.org](mailto:education@n-sda.org).
- **Communications Program.** Manager Proper-Van Valkenburg reported that only one communication had been received over the weekend to the Facebook page in relation a search in Alaska. She directed them to contact their local law enforcement. Questions can be sent to [communications@n-sda.org](mailto:communications@n-sda.org).
- **Testing and Evaluators Programs.** Manager Lesperance presented an overview summary of the new re-organization. She stated her goal is to help NSDA survive and thrive, and move forward with new opportunities.
- **Testing Program.**
  - Supervisor Gibson stated that she had received all of the documentation from the previous Testing Manager, and recognized that a good system of checks and balances was already in place to catch mistakes.
  - She also reported that she has implemented a paperless system with fillable forms for collecting testing and evaluator paperwork. All testing and evaluator documents are now available via fillable forms with the exception of Urban Trailing, which she does not currently have a test for. She will work to set up new training for evaluators on using and submitting the forms; all members will need to download the free adobe reader software.
  - As of September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022, 85 tests had been administered; 26 of those had been given since June 2022. By comparison, in 2020, 78 tests had been administered with 49 passes and in 2021, there were 179 tests given; she expects to see another surge in 2023. Some dogs are no longer active and she reported that there may the need to contact expired teams to notify them that they are no longer certified. The resource list has also been updated.

- All completed test information should be sent to [testing@n-sda.org](mailto:testing@n-sda.org)
  - Regional and small group requests should be sent to [testmanager@n-sda.org](mailto:testmanager@n-sda.org)
- **Evaluators Program.**
- Supervisor Adamle stated that currently there are 42 evaluators, 30 that live in the western US and 12 that live in the eastern US. Last year, NSDA successfully got new members in Maryland to join and be tested.
  - The two largest disciplines in NSDA are Area and Land HRD. Principle evaluators for both Area and Land HRD are also available to administer tests for Area with Large Source, which is the next largest discipline being evaluated. The smallest discipline is Backtracking, with only 1 evaluator, followed by Disaster and Avalanche. There are currently two members applying apprenticeships, one in Disaster and one in Area, and that individual will be seeking to become a Principle Evaluator for Land HRD as well.
  - Supervisor Adamle stated she is working with the Evaluator Administrator to update the flowchart and has reinstated a feedback questionnaire to be filled out by those being tested that she would like all evaluators to start using.
  - Any questions can be sent to [evaluators@n-sda.org](mailto:evaluators@n-sda.org) or [evaluatoradmin@n-sda.org](mailto:evaluatoradmin@n-sda.org).

#### Old Business

**Bylaws review.** Board Member Larsen stated that there has been a bylaws review committee formed that is working on updates to the bylaws, specifically with regards to contradictions related to membership and voting rights. Proposed changes will be made available to the membership prior to being implemented.

**Business plan.** President Crooks thanked the last Board for all of their hard work in developing the Business Plan that was passed in May 2022. However, the current Board has elected to nullify that Plan and move in a new direction.

**ZO Agency Contract.** President Crooks reported he had had several conversations with ZO Agency and thanked them for their efforts so far. They've realized that for NSDA that there is the need for more evaluators before we can look to expand the organization. As such, their work is on hold at this time and they have given us credit to use in the future.

#### New Business

**Liability Insurance.** CFO Meyer reported on recent conversations with the insurance agency clarifying NSDA's liability insurance. Originally the Board was told that the insurance covered our members while in the United States. The Agency came back this week and corrected that the insurance only covers the Board of Directors and again only when they are in the United States. The Board has requested a review to see what the cost would be to cover members for seminars and other Board sanctioned regional testing events. It was also clarified that there is no workman's comp coverage for members, as this is more on a state-by-state basis.

**Website redesign.** CFO Meyer reported that the Board has sought bids from five organizations to redesign the NSDA website; a decision should hopefully be made next week. Bids submitted varied by services offered and price. The goal is to implement a paperless system with all information in one place online. President Crooks recognized and thanked the current webmaster and Norma Snelling for their hard work on maintaining the website.

**NSDA Merchandise.** Board Member Larsen reported that the Board is in the process of developing a plan to sell NSDA merchandise through a 3<sup>rd</sup> party. Board Member Larsen would like input from the membership on the type of merchandise they would like to see carried. Suggestions can be sent to [alarsen@n-sda.org](mailto:alarsen@n-sda.org).

### Open forum for member questions

- Status of in-development testing programs (articles, flankers)?
  - o President Crooks reported that the flanker and article programs appear to still be in the early development stage, and the Board is still trying to gather the materials. Supervisor Gibson reported that she has a draft for the standard for articles and will be working to revisit it. Cassandra Bates stated that she was on the flanker program review committee and will forward the materials she has to the Board.
  - o Supervisor Gibson also stated that for the new Urban Trailing standard, two individuals to date have taken the test and had submitted suggestions for improvement. Supervisor Gibson will work with the Trailing Workshop Administrator to move that program forward. Supervisor Adamle reported that she has an Urban Trailing evaluation scheduled for November, and had a question about using the standard. President Crooks reaffirmed that the standard is active and that testing can proceed.
  - o President Crooks stated that the goal is to make sure that new programs are moved forward in a systematic process to get the best and highest standards.
- Any more detail on the budget? CFO Meyer reported that \$4,000 was spent on the ZO Agency contract and ~\$550 went to an individual who did work for the previous Board.
- Has NSDA considered having a booth at the HITS K9 Seminar or other high profile ones? President Crooks responded that was a great idea that that there had also been discussions about offering seminars and other things that NSDA can do to engage new members. All ideas should be sent to the Secretary as [gcollins@n-sda.org](mailto:gcollins@n-sda.org).
- Any focus on improved “benefits” for evaluators and members, such as the pro deal that was previously established? President Crooks stated the Board has not assigned anybody to a membership benefits role at this time, but it will hopefully be developed. There are opportunities that haven’t been tapped, such as canine insurance.
- What are the plans for the 24 Canadian members, and if a Canadian member wants to become an evaluator? President Crooks stated that this has been passed to the bylaws review committee. Board Member Larsen stated that they are working resolve conflicts in the bylaws and to develop changes that will work the best for the membership. As

previously discussed, one issue being looked at is the liability insurance and others that potentially impact membership outside of the United States.

- The need for evaluators: NASDN (North American Search Dog Network) folded this year. Are there any plans to reach out to some of their Directors and/or members to see if they might be interested in joining NSDA? President Crooks responded that any of those members are welcome to join, that there are many organizations out there. Supervisor Adamle keeps a list of organizations that NSDA has partnered with and we need to make sure that all qualifications and standards are being met. Please forward any suggestions on to the Board.
- Avalanche could be improved with the criteria of 3 actual avalanches required as a prerequisite and tree wells could be addressed? President Crooks, as the Avalanche Workshop Director, responded that avalanches and associated finds are rare. As such it is very difficult for handlers to be able to respond to actual avalanche events and therefore there is a different standard for qualifying deployments. Transceivers have also reduced the number of K9 deployments and finds.
- How does an individual get involved if they want to help on some of these items (e.g., advertisement, pro-deals, etc.)? If you'd like to volunteer, send your information to the Secretary ([gcollins@n-sda.org](mailto:gcollins@n-sda.org)). We are restructuring and we will always need good volunteers!

Closing remarks. President Crooks thanked the Board for their service and the membership for all you are doing!

As the time limit had been exceeded, a motion was made by CFO Meyer to close the meeting. Board Member Larsen seconded, approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm EST.

Members in attendance

Cassandra Bates
Kristine Lesperance
June Mansfield
Glen Van Ess
Scott Robbins
Kathy Adamle
Jackie McKuin
Wade Boyd
Sandy Boyce
Joe Stacks
Walter Snelling
Marla Vollmer
James Thureau
Norma Snelling
Laurie Maloney
David Decker
David Cook
Sherry Scruggs
Carey McNair
John Elwood
Johanna Solis
Eric Ronemus
Angela Breinin
Laura Texter
Julie Gibson
Heather Proper-Vanvalkenberg
Rena Ferguson
Vikki Gross
LENORE CEITHAML
Gail Holotuk