



**NATIONAL SEARCH DOG ALLIANCE**  
**Minutes of an Open Meeting of the Board of Directors**  
January 24<sup>th</sup> 2023  
*certified*

An open meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Search Dog Alliance was held via zoom on Tuesday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm EST.

The following Board members were present and constituted a quorum:

President/Chief Executive Officer Terry Crooks	Chief Financial Officer Jan Meyer
Executive Vice President Amity Larsen	Corporate Secretary Gail Collins
Board Member At-Large Zephryn Allen	

Others present were: No members attended the meeting.

Old Business

**Meeting Minutes.** Executive Vice President Larsen made a motion to accept the minutes from the Open Board meeting held on 27-Dec-22, Corporate Secretary Collins seconded, passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report and FY 2023 Proposed Budget.** Chief Financial Officer Meyer gave an update on the finances as of 31-Dec-22, where the total holdings were \$121,071.41. That is down roughly \$3,500 from the same time last year.

**Program Reports.**

*Testing Program.* Supervisor Gibson reported that for 2022, there were 117 total tests (86 passes, 31 reported fails). The most tests proctored by an evaluator was 23. One testing event was held in January in British Columbia. For February to date, there is a Regional testing event scheduled to be held in northern Idaho and a small group event scheduled in British Columbia. The Testing Program is continuing to work to try to help handlers requesting tests make contact with evaluators.

*Education Program.* Manager Boyd reported that he is working on reviewing the current online tests and developing a database with new questions. He is also working to update the recommended reading list and online training courses to go on the new website. Manager Boyd will be contacting the relevant program leads and workshop administrators for assistance with reviewing and updating the existing study guides.

**Website.** Corporate Secretary Collins reported that she and Chief Financial Officer Meyer met with the new webmaster and his team and received an updated demo of the new website. The development is progressing well, and Corporate Secretary Collins will start to provide the other documents and text that will be added to the new website. The estimated launch date is early March. Corporate Secretary Collins proposed having a photo contest on NSDA's facebook page for photos to go on the new webpage. She will contact the FB administrator to follow up.

**SAR Shop.** Vice President Larsen reported that she met with the proposed vendor and discussed options for the online store. The vendor stated they are able to produce items ranging from keychains to clothing, including both embroidery and screen printing, and can offer special deals for fundraising or seminars/conferences. The vendor will host the merchandise on their website, and NSDA will be able to link to it. Vice President Larsen presented a draft contract for review by the Board. Corporate Secretary Collins made a motion to approve the draft contract, Chief Financial Officer Meyer seconded, passed unanimously.

**Bylaws Review and Board Ethics.** Vice President Larsen reported on discussions forwarded by the Bylaws committee on the Board's recommended changes in regards to conflicting language regarding non-U.S. citizens. Chief Financial Officer Meyer made a motion to implement the amendments proposed at the 06-Dec-22 Board of Directors meeting, Board Member Allen seconded, passed unanimously. Proposed amendments to the Bylaws are as follows:

Existing:

*Article IV. Membership. Section 3. Classes of Membership.*

- A. Voting Members. Individuals approved by the Board upon completion of an application and payment of dues. Non-U.S. citizen voting membership will be limited to 25% of current membership roles.*
  
- B. B. Non-voting member. All honorary members, sustaining members and corporations and all foreign, (non-U.S. citizen) members.*

Amended:

*Article IV. Membership. Section 3. Classes of Membership*

- A. Voting Members. Individuals approved by the Board upon completion of an application and payment of dues. Non-U.S. citizen voting membership will be limited to 25% of current membership rolls. Appointments to the Board of Directors will be limited to U.S. citizens. Testing events will be restricted geographically to within the U.S. if there are international laws which conflict with NSDA standards.*
  
- B. B. Non-voting member. All honorary members, sustaining members, and corporations.*

**This constitutes the 30-day written notice to the membership. Any comments on the proposed Bylaw amendments can be sent to [Secretary@n-sda.org](mailto:Secretary@n-sda.org).**

**Volunteer Survey and Suggestion Box.** Corporate Secretary Collins reported that both the volunteer survey and suggestion box are working well. Submissions are being forward to the relevant program leads and/or the Board.

#### New Business

**Appointments and Personnel.** President Crooks reported that Testing and Evaluators Program Manager Lesperance has had to step back from the role due to personal issues; he will work to identify a replacement. The Board also discussed additional roles for Testing Administrator Bates to assist with helping handlers connect with evaluators. President Crooks reported there was no update on a potential appointment of a Seminar Coordinator.

**Evaluator application process.** President Crooks reported on discussions regarding the existing evaluator application process. The Board discussed proposed changes in order to clarify and streamline the process. The following updates were proposed, and to apply to both apprentice applicants and transfer applicants from another approved certifying organization. Chief Financial Officer Meyer made a motion that the following updates be implemented, Board Member Allen seconded, approved unanimously.

1. NSDA membership required
2. 5 years documented experience handling a dog in that discipline. Acceptable documents to include: field test certifications, deployment records, seminar certificates, training records, and/or a letter from a deploying agency.
3. At least one field certification from NSDA or an approved certifying organization with a dog in that discipline; certification does not need to be current.
4. Minimum number of documented missions each in the discipline for which applying:
  - a. 10 missions each for Area, Trailing, and Land HRD
  - b. 3 missions for Water HRD
  - c. 1 mission each for Avalanche and Disaster
5. Completed Evaluator Standards Workshops for each discipline for which applying.
6. Apprentice two (2) field tests under the guidance of a Principle Evaluator.
  - a. Mock and/or actual tests are acceptable, as approved by the Principle Evaluator.
  - b. For Area, Area [live; or live + large source cadaver] tests are acceptable.
  - c. Applicant must act as lead evaluator on at least one apprenticed test.
  - d. Field tests must be apprenticed under two different Principle Evaluators, neither of which may be on the applicants team.
7. Evaluator status in more than one discipline may be sought concurrently if requirements 1-4 are met for each discipline.

Other discussion included ways to improve the application process, to potentially include requiring three references for evaluator applications and reinstating mandatory background checks.

**Certificates.** President Crooks reported on discussions regarding the language used on the Area Live Subject with Large Source Cadaver certificates. Currently the certificates read: “*Area/HRD Awareness Search Certification*”. The Board discussed matching the language with that on the test’s field standard and scoresheet: “*Area Search with Live Subject and Large Source Cadaver Certification*”. Corporate Secretary Collins made a motion to revise the certificate’s language to match that on the test’s documents, Executive Vice President Larsen seconded, passed unanimously.

The Board also discussed the language used on the Land Human Remains Detection certificates, and potentially revising it to better align with industry standards. The discussion was tabled to another meeting.

**Membership program.** Tabled to another meeting.

#### **Seminars.**

President Crooks reported on an Avalanche seminar and testing event that will be held in Brundage, Idaho February 5-7<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Board Member Allen reported on his contact with different potential hosting locations for a seminar to be held in the Dallas, Texas area, date to be determined. The Board discussed the intent of the seminar would be a multi-discipline field workshop, to include Area, Trailing, and HRD. Chief Financial Officer Meyer and Board Member Allen will continue to develop the proposal for the seminar.

#### **Other Business.**

*President’s Letter.* The Board reviewed a draft President’s letter to go out to the membership. As no edits were proposed, Corporate Secretary Collins will send the letter out by the end of the week.

*SAR Dog News Newsletter.* Mrs. Snelling has notified the Board that she intends to step down from producing the “SAR Dog News” Newsletter. She has offered to transfer operation of the newsletter to NSDA if the organization has interest. The Board will explore if there is a member willing to step into the role. Any interested parties should send an email to [BoardAtLarge@n-sda.org](mailto:BoardAtLarge@n-sda.org).

**Apprentice evaluator candidates.** The Board reviewed two apprentice evaluator applications submitted by Evaluator Supervisor Lamson. One was voted on and approved unanimously, the second tabled pending more information.

**Member questions/comments.** No members attended the meeting.

The Board will hold an open business meeting on Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 7:00 pm (EST), followed by a closed Executive Session if required. Members interested in joining should send an email to [Secretary@n-sda.org](mailto:Secretary@n-sda.org) no later than February 11<sup>th</sup> to get the call in information. As there was no further business, a motion was made Executive Vice President Larsen, seconded by Chief Financial Officer Meyer to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm EST.