2022 NW NSTRA Region Members Meeting

May 21, 2022 - Chewelah, Washington

Members in Attendance: 16

Officers: Jeremy Lessmann, Mike Stotts, Laura McMahon, Gary Thompson

Board Members: Mike Ouchida and Jerry Youmans

President Jerry Lessmann leads the meeting:

**Opening Statements:**

Appreciation to Mike Stotts for obtaining grounds for regional trial(s) after the original site was no longer available (Condon).

Jeremy is moving away from an Officer’s position due to demanding and new work responsibilities. He will be able to enjoy running his dogs in our trials and will support his input as a Board Member.

A motion to approve our minutes from the 2021 Regional Member’s Meeting [Minutes](https://d.docs.live.net/7f974b2bfb4928fb/Desktop/NSTRA/2021%20NW%20NSTRA%20Regional%20Annual%20Meeting%20Minutes.docx.lj.docx) sent by the secretary many times through email. - All members were in favor, no oppositions.

**Treasurer**

New Treasure Gary Thompson replacement for Elected Treasurer in 2021. This is a one-year term position until next election year 2023.

Gary Thompson shared his financial and military experience and, values of being open, honest and transparent. He will be conducting a comprehensive audit of our treasury.

**Treasurer Report:** Issue involving questionable transactions. This is a sensitive issue ***and*** until all the fact finding (financials, cancelled checks, reconciliation, etc.) have been completed, tracking back for at least 3 or more years, rumors on this issue should stop until all the “facts” are fully researched and available to members. A report resulting from real facts will be detailed as requested by the members of our NW Region.

Reimbursement Policies and Procedures: The officers and board members have a new [policy](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cdnlmc%5COneDrive%5CNW%20Region%20Expense%20Reimbursement%20Policy%5B9190%5D.docx) on reimbursement: This policy requires an invoice and payout document [(voucher)](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cdnlmc%5COneDrive%5CNW%20Region%20Expense%20Voucher%5B9189%5D.docx) that requires the requestee and Officer’s signature before the Treasurer can send out payment. This serves as a protection policy and, multi-signature authentication for the Region’s financial obligations. Note: There will be times that a receipt is not available (I.e., bird purchases); please use the form identify the purchase, cost, and who you paid. Without a receipt pre-authorization from an Officer must be obtained and forms and receipts will be signed and given to the Treasurer: Please note that the Treasurer is ***not*** the first signature.

**Questions and Answers:**

Q: What are we doing about the loss of funds or questionable transactions?” Rumors” surface when we (members) are in the dark. There has not been a financial report for a few years, we have often asked for one without a response from the Officers/Board Members?
A. Gary has been asked from the NW Region Officers to look at our records and find what is or was not appropriate transactions. The files were just turned over and we’re working on getting Gary bank access. It will be a long process to investigate each document and transaction.

Q: Where are we today?
A: There were some deposits (checks) that were withheld until the previous Treasurer’s access was removed from the bank (Endurance funds, regional entries, etc.). there is currently $3860. Before those deposits there was around $350 in the account.

Q: Is the target to build up to $10K? It could sway how bidding on Auction items is done. It is known that the Region’s annual budget is $6000 for business expenses.
A: Yes $10,000 is a great target.

Q: After the investigation is done can we get a spreadsheet with full detail?
A: Yes, full transparency

Q: How is the request to spend money for the budget get decided?
A: Board and Officers come up with a budget. The only expense from the Region is the Regional with the exception of endurance trail. The Endurance trail is between 3 regions and we each put $1000 in the budget. Note: Even though we put in $1000 last year for two years the Region was paid $1577 from auctions, entries, etc.

Q: When should we expect a Treasurer report? A realistic timeframe for Gary to properly research? One year? Six months? Next Regional Meeting?
A: Gary believes he will be able to provide a report in six months (Nov 2022).

Q: We’re short a bunch of money. After investigating will there be legal action?
A: Once our findings are proven. We have had preliminary discussions and based on litigation against the Treasurer **and** where the Region was in all of this. There are other considerations: Attorney fees, cost of legal action, etc.

Q: Who decides?
A: The board will make a recommendation to the Members for a vote to proceed.

*The members feel that in good faith and trust in the Officers/Board Members that a motion was* ***approved to move forward with the fact finding/investigation.*** *Communication to the Members should be more open, transparent and factual. The current Secretary (Laura) has been doing a great job but there has been miscommunication in some of the messages (i.e., auction times, etc.). Jeremy acknowledged his role in the miscommunication. Once a meeting with the Officers/Board Members happen can minutes be sent out or... can Members be invited to our calls. Process planning considerations on moving forward from Officers.*

Q: Events are not happening, why (I.e., Judging clinics, snake aversion clinics)? Forcing members to obtain these training from other regions.
A: Jeremy acknowledged that is a president’s responsibility and overlooked. Mike Stotts promises that he will sponsor a judging clinic this year.

**Bi-Law Changes:**

What happened to the bi-law revision committee? Once was put together and Jeremy acknowledged that the committee needs to be carried over with the new President. One of the committee members advocates for the members to be both newer and older members for sense of history. Agreed by all.

**Officer Election**

The members voted to have the President and Vice President positions to be staggered. With the uncertain outcome of the investigation and other trust it was agreed by all that the 2022 President will serve a one-year term until 2023 and then it goes back to a two-year term. The 2022 Vice-President elect will serve a two-year term with re-election in 2024.

Presidential Candidate: Mike Smith elected as President.

Vice-President Candidate: Mike Ouchida elected as Vice President.

The members would like to know what the criteria for each position is. Mike Stotts mentioned that our first meeting last year was to discuss the roles of each officer. Members would also like mentorship options for Members for interest in running for office in the future.

**Dog nomination for Dog of the year**

Jeremy recommended a few nominations options a) High-point b) Champions c) Alternate placement (combination). Members anonymously voted for alternate placement. Last year a list of the top 26 dogs was given to the National NSTRA office should anyone from our region decide to enter.

**2023 Regional Request**

It was requested that the future regional trail be held over the Memorial Day weekend. The benefit of running the trial during that weekend is it is a long weekend and allows for additional trials (2nd Chance or a single trial). Ultimately, it is the Officer’s decision on dates and location. Concerns presented: Cheatgrass and active rattlesnakes and weather.

**Awards:**

* Sportsman of the Year 2022 - Congratulations to Dennis Gagner!!
* Highpoint Open: Mike Stotts and Stella
* Highpoint Amateur: Darrel Pernat and Noonan with 20 points