

National Speleological Society, Inc.
Board of Governors Meeting
Minutes of the 247th Regular Meeting
Virtual Meeting
March 13, 2021

The 247th regular meeting of the Board of Governors was held virtually via Zoom. These minutes, when accompanied by corrections submitted by the Board, constitute the official record of the meeting.

President Geary Schindel called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. CST and welcomed everyone in attendance. Sue Schindel was present as recording secretary.

ROLL CALL

Officers

Geary Schindel, president (PRES)
Adam Weaver, administrative vice-president (AVP)
Scott Engel, executive vice-president (EVP)
Maureen Handler, operations vice-president (OVP)
Kristine Ebrey, secretary-treasurer (S-T)

Directors

Nick Anderson
Riley Drake
Nathan Farrar
Stephen Gladieux
Peter Johnson
Sonia Meyer
Julie Schenck-Brown
Carol Tiderman
Ben Tobin
Will Urbanski
Meredith Weberg
Cindy Wu

Approximately 20 guests were logged into the BOG Virtual Zoom Meeting

1) Approval of the minutes of the Fall 2020 Board of Governors meeting, held via Zoom

Schindel moved: The minutes of the November 7, 2020 Board meeting are approved as published.

VOTE:

For: Unanimous

2) Officer Reports

- A. President (PRES) - Geary Schindel
- Schindel will revise and republish the Presidents report to include the Public Relations Committee report
- B. Administrative Vice-President (AVP) – Adam Weaver
There were no additions to the submitted written report
- C. Executive Vice-President (EVP) – Scott Engel
There were no additions to the submitted written report
- D. Operations Vice-President (OVP) – Maureen Handler
There were no additions to the submitted written report
- E. Secretary-Treasurer (S-T) – Kristine Ebrey
- Merchandise sales are down because of COVID

NEW BUSINESS

Consent Agenda

3) Confirmation of 2023 NSS Convention host

Tiderman moved: The 2023 NSS Convention will be held in Elkins/Dailey WV.

Passed in Consent Agenda

PASSED

4) Amendment of Act 56-192, Surplus Revenue

Tiderman moved: Act 56-192 Surplus Revenue, is amended as follows:

Any surplus revenue from the Convention will accrue automatically to the ~~>>NSS<<~~ ~~<<Convention Surplus Designated Fund>>~~ regardless of the nature and number of other organizations cooperating in the conduct of the convention. Similarly, deficits in legitimate operating expenses entailed by the Convention ~~<<chair>>~~ ~~>>Chairman<<~~, after planning ~~>>his<<~~ expenses as carefully as possible with the Administrative Vice-President and the Treasurer will be made up by the ~~>>Society<<~~ ~~<<Convention Surplus Designated Fund >>~~.

Passed in Consent Agenda

PASSED

5) Approval of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Cave Conservancy of Hawai'i – ACT 26-995 & Appendix BL

Weaver moved: The Memorandum of Understanding between the NSS and the Cave Conservancy of Hawai'i, is approved.

Passed in Consent Agenda

PASSED

6) Amendment of Act 56-125, Convention Manual

Urbanski moved: Act 56-125, Convention Manual, is amended as follows:

The Society will maintain a NSS Convention Manual. The Manual will define the responsibilities of the various organizations involved in conducting an NSS convention and provide background information to guide the host organization in their planning process. The NSS Convention Manual will be maintained and distributed by the Convention Development Committee ~~<<Chair>>~~ ~~>>Chairman<<~~. The ~~<<chair>>~~ ~~>>Chairman<<~~ will solicit revisions and suggestions from convention staffs and those officers and committees involved in convention planning and operations at least once each year, and keep the manual updated with information received. Deviations from the ~~>>guidelines<<~~ ~~<<requirements>>~~ in the manual must be approved by the Convention Development Committee ~~<<Chair>>~~ ~~>>Chairman<<~~. Any issues not resolved will be referred to the AVP, whose decision will be final. Current Acts of the Board, Appendices to the Acts, and EC administrative policies related to conventions will be incorporated in the manual.

Passed in Consent Agenda

PASSED

7) Amendment of Act 56-942, Convention Steering Committee

Tiderman moved: Act 56-942, Convention Steering Committee, is amended as follows:

The Convention Steering Committee is created in the office of the Administrative Vice- President. The committee ~~<<must>>~~ ~~>>shall<<~~ consist of a chair appointed by the AVP and have a minimum of four other serving members, ~~>>subject to reconfirmation every two years<<~~, two of whom ~~<<must>>~~ ~~>>shall<<~~ be the previous two convention chairs. In addition, the AVP, the Secretary-Treasurer, ~~>>and the Convention Finance Officer<<~~ ~~<<must>>~~ ~~>>shall<<~~ serve as ex-officio members of this Committee.

Passed in Consent Agenda

PASSED

8) Amendment Act 56-778, Convention Accident Insurance

Tiderman moved: Act 56-778 Convention Accident Insurance, is amended as follows:

Conventions will self-insure against accidents to registrants up to \$5000. Conventions after ~~>>2011<<~~ ~~<<2020>>~~ will ~~<<contact the S-T for the current cost and>>~~ budget ~~>>\$3<<~~ ~~<<that amount>>~~ per registrant to cover costs.

Passed in Consent Agenda

PASSED

9) Amendment of Act 66-874 Committee, Convention, and Commission Websites

Urbanski moved: All NSS committee, convention, and commission websites must ~~>>physically<<~~ reside ~~<<on a server managed by the IT Division. Websites should utilize a subdomain (subdomain.caves.org) or subdirectory (caves.org/subdirectory) of caves.org.>>~~ ~~>>within the caves.org domain<<~~.

Passed in Consent Agenda

PASSED

10) Rescind Act 66-764, NSS Discussion Forum

Urbanski moved: Act 66-764, NSS Discussion Forum, is rescinded.

Passed in Consent Agenda

PASSED

11) Amendment to Act Section 43 -- Awards

Schindel moved: The following Act Section 43 – Awards is amended as follows.

43-116 Victor A. Schmidt Conservation Award

The Victor A. Schmidt Conservation Award is given annually to recognize outstanding dedication to cave conservation. The award may be given to one NSS member or to a pair of members who qualify equally for the award based on work they have done together <<over time>>. Names of candidates are solicited by the Awards Committee, and all candidates must have been members of the NSS for the two years prior to their nomination <<(annual nomination date November 15)>>. Recipients are approved by the Board of Governors on the recommendation of the Awards Committee, which will give preference to candidates who have not received Honorary Membership or the Outstanding Service Award

43-246 Outstanding Service and Honorary and Membership Awards

The single annual recipients of each of the William J. Stephenson Outstanding Service Award and the Honorary Membership <<must>> >>shall<< be selected by the Board of Governors from candidates submitted by the Awards Committee, which <<must>> >>shall<< be responsible for and limited to soliciting nominations and supporting material for the board's consideration and, if necessary, selectively reducing the number of candidates for one of the awards to no more than five. As stated in the membership bylaws, the Honorary Membership is for contributions to speleology broadly defined, and the Outstanding Service Award is for contributions to speleology and the National Speleological Society in particular. For the Outstanding Service Award, the committee <<must>> >>shall<< submit only candidates who have been members of the NSS for at least the past two years <<at the time of nomination (annual Nomination date November 15)>>. If the recipient of either award is not already a life member, the Society will pay to the Life Membership Fund the current life membership fee to support the life membership privileges received by the recipient. Each recipient will receive a certificate signed by the members of the Board of Governors.

43-374 Lew Bicking Award

The Lew Bicking Award is given annually to recognize outstanding dedication to the exploration of a cave or group of caves. The award may be given to one NSS member or to a pair of members who qualify equally for the award based on work they have done together. Names of candidates are solicited by the Awards Committee, and all candidates must have been members of the NSS for the two years prior to their nomination <<(annual Nomination date November 15)>>. Recipients are approved by the Board of Governors on the recommendation of the Awards Committee, which will give preference to candidates who have not received Honorary Membership or the Outstanding Service Award. The award includes money from the Lew Bicking Fund. (See Acts 43-375 and 18-715.)

43-375 Lew Bicking Cash Award 03-15-80

The Lew Bicking Award will be the maximum \$5 increment below the interest earned on the fund for that year. The balance of the interest <<must>> >>shall<< be added to the principle.

43-380 Fellowships

The Board of Governors, on advice from the Awards Committee according to the procedures in Appendix AU, annually selects Fellows of the Society. Recipients will be those members who, over a number of years, have exemplified by their actions their dedication to the goals of the Society or the Society itself. Recipients must have been members for a total of five or more years and must be

members in good standing of the Society for at least two years immediately prior to <<their nomination (annual nomination date November 15)>> >>being awarded fellowships<<. New Fellows will be announced at the annual convention and will receive a certificate signed by the <<president>> >>President<< and the <<chair>> >>Chairman<< of the Awards Committee.

43-507 Science Award

The Science Award is given annually to recognize outstanding dedication to the scientific study of caves. The award may be given to one NSS member or to a pair of members who qualify equally for the award based on work they have done together. Names of candidates are solicited by the Awards Committee, and all candidates must have been members of the NSS for the two years prior to their nomination <<(annual nomination date November 15)>>. Recipients are approved by the Board of Governors on the recommendation of the Awards Committee, which will give preference to candidates who have not received Honorary Membership or the Outstanding Service Award.

43-508 Spelean Arts and Letters Award

The Spelean Arts and Letters Award is given annually to recognize contributions to spelean arts and letters through artistic expression, management, or criticism. The award may be given to one NSS member or to a pair of members who qualify equally for the award based on work they have done together. Names of candidates are solicited by the Awards Committee, and all candidates must have been members of the NSS for the two years prior to their nomination <<(annual nomination date November 15)>>. Recipients are approved by the Board of Governors on the recommendation of the Awards Committee, which will give preference to candidates who have not received Honorary Membership or the Outstanding Service Award.

Passed in Consent Agenda

PASSED

Weberg moved to approve the consent agenda.

VOTE:

For: Unanimous

PASSED

Items for Individual Consideration

12) Amendment of Act 56-818, Convention Budget Planning

Tiderman moved: Act 56-818 is amended as follows:

Convention budgets should include the provision for a modest surplus estimated as at least >>10%<< <<5%>> of expected revenue from registration.

VOTE:

For: Tiderman, Weberg

Against: Rest

FAILED

13) Dissolution of Printed Members Manual

Engel moved: Act Section 84 – Publications, is rescinded.

VOTE:

For: Rest

Against: Handler, Schenck-Brown, Tiderman, Weberg

PASSED

14) Approval of FY 2021/2022 NSS Budget

Ebrey moved: The NSS FY2021-2022 [budget](#) is approved.

VOTE:

For: Unanimous

PASSED

15) Motion for Landowner Membership Recognition and Discount - ACT 28-966

Schenck-Brown moved: Private cave landowners will have the designation of “LO” behind their NSS number and will be eligible for a membership discount. Landowners who specify on their NSS Membership application or renewal form that they are a private cave landowner will be charged for regular membership with online access to the NSS News. The NSS Landowner Relations Network Committee will verify cave ownership and provide a code to the landowner that can be redeemed for a membership upgrade to annual membership with printed publications. Reimbursement for the upgrade will come from the line item for Landowner Relations in the budget via authorization from the AVP.

VOTE:

For: Rest

Against: Gladieux, Tobin, Urbanski, Wu

PASSED

16) Amendment of Act 56-910, JSS Convention Fee Reimbursement

Tiderman moved: Act 56-910, Convention Fee Reimbursement, is amended as follows:

The registration fee for Convention attendees who will participate in the Junior Speleological Society (JSS) program as students will be set at the ~~>>Accompanier or Student<<~~ rate ~~<<determined by the JSS and Convention Chairs>>~~ ~~>>whichever is lower<<~~. The Convention ~~<<must>>~~ ~~>>shall<<~~ reimburse this fee to the JSS Chair ~~>>man<<~~, minus any meal costs associated with the Howdy Party and the NSS Awards Banquet. Any shortage shall be supplemented by the Convention Surplus Fund up to 10% of the monies collected for JSS at Convention. Any unused funds will remain in that year’s convention account.

VOTE:

For: Unanimous

PASSED

17) 2021 Convention in virtual format

Urbanski moved: The 2021 NSS Convention is moved to a virtual format.

Meyer moved to postpone until April 17, 2021

VOTE to postpone:

For: Rest

Against: Anderson, Ebrey, Urbanski, Wu

POSTPONED

18) Rescind Act 56-818, Convention Budget Planning

Tiderman moved: Board Act 56-818 is rescinded.

Meyer moved to postpone the motion to the next board meeting.

VOTE to postpone:

For: Rest

Against: Gladieux, Urbanski

Abstain: Ebrey

POSTPONED

19) Offering a printed Members Manual upon request

Weberg moved: A printed members directory will be made available upon request to verified members at no cost to the member; only member information will be included.

Tiderman moved to postpone to April 17, 2021.

VOTE to postpone:

For: Anderson, Handler, Schenck-Brown, Tiderman, Weberg,

Against: Rest

FAILED

Weaver moved to amend: All membership information displayed in this and online member directories would be opt-in only. Members must agree actively to provide this information.

VOTE on Amendment:

For: Anderson, Weberg

Against: Rest

FAILED

Gladieux moved to call the question.

VOTE to call the question:

For: Unanimous

PASSED

VOTE on original motion:

For: Schenck-Brown, Tiderman, Weberg

Against: Rest

FAILED

20) Recess for the closed session of the board and directorate

President Schindel recessed the meeting for a closed session of the board and directorate at 12:16 pm CDT.

21) Reconvene

President Schindel reconvened the meeting at 6:34 pm CDT.

22) Report of the closed session of the board

President Schindel reported that there were no motions resulting from discussions during the closed session.

23) Report of the closed session of the directorate

Chair of the Directorate Anderson announced that Geary Schindel has been re-elected president of the National Speleological Society.

24) Adjournment

Johnson moved: The meeting is adjourned. President Schindel declared the meeting adjourned at 7:19 pm CDT.