

NFLA Business Meeting
Sondreson Hall / October 6, 2007

Minutes submitted by Secretary-Treasurer Pat Cole:

Oliver Meister conducted the meeting in Molly Shepherd's absence.

Oliver took a roll call of the board. Present were Ed Heger, Jon Cole and Pat Cole. Absent were Molly Shepherd, Gerry Stearns, Frank Vitale and Lynn Ogle.

Oliver read the minutes from the September meeting and the minutes were approved as read.

Pat Cole presented the financial report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Land Use Planning: Jon Cole chaired a meeting earlier that evening to review the Draft Neighborhood Plan and there were no follow-up questions.

Fire Mitigation: Larry Wilson reported that the loggers were making progress creating a fire break at the border and they would be working to Trail Creek Road, and then out the main road. Jerry Wernick advised that the Forest Service has been laying out Red Meadow Road in anticipation of the fuel reduction project which they hope to commence by July of 2008.

Weeds: Robin Cox advised there is nothing new to report yet.

Patrol: Lee Downes advised to keep watching license plates now that hunting season is on.

Law Enforcement: Larry Wilson advised that it is open burning season, and while there is no law against leaving fires unattended, you are still liable for any damage to neighboring property resulting from that fire.

Trails: John Frederick advised that directional signs have been posted for Huntsburger Lake.

Mining: Ed Heger advised that the Governor of Montana is trying to meet with the British Columbia Provincial leader.

OLD BUSINESS:

Oliver informed the group that the issue about fixing the hall's front porch remains unresolved from the past. He asked for comments about starting a community work project to replace the deck and installing a roof over it. Larry advised the boards are rotting and it poses a liability concern, along with the threat of someone getting hurt. If the work proceeds, Larry offered to donate the Penta (sp?) to treat it, but stated we would

be better off to put a new roof over it. Oliver also mentioned that a roof sprinkler system was approved in the past, but never followed up on, and maybe we could combine these two projects.

Ray Brown said he would check with Tom Holycross about donating the boards cut from his mill.

Larry made a motion authorizing the Board to act in replacing the deck and putting a new roof over it. Ed Heger advised that Rob Fischer looked at the porch in the past and thought there were some architectural problems with installing a roof. Also, the timbers under the porch need to be replaced due to rot. Larry made a revised motion to first have the board explore what would be involved in putting in a new porch, deck and roof, and then come back to the members with a cost estimate. John Frederick seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and approved.

Oliver announced that Ed Heger would be reading a letter from Molly who is recuperating from a recent surgery. Ed read Molly's two-page letter to the group and stated that it would be posted on our website. The letter addressed several issues, including a proposed Contribution Policy that would provide for how requests for contributions come before the membership, and developing a committee to come up with recommendations for the following: 1) how work is divided between the Board and the membership; 2) a mission statement, and 3) a policy for dealing with taking positions on issues. The committee would report to the membership by the July, 2008 meeting and present the necessary bylaw amendments to accomplish its recommendations.

Larry stated what Molly has written is very well put. He pointed out that we gave money in the past to Montanans for Multiple Use and the Karelian Bear Dog Groups which had strongly divided supporters and opponents. He advised that we discussed back then that we needed a policy on how we would donate money, because we are a tax exempt group and the money is donated by the membership, for the membership. The reason the prior mission statement did not pass was that it proposed a bylaw amendment that prohibited giving any money to any group. He supported Molly's suggestion for a committee to really study it and have some well thought out ideas at the July meeting, when they can propose bylaws amendments, then we can decide in August whether or not to support what that committee comes up with.

More discussion following regarding the need for a mission statement and clearly defining the Association's goals and objectives and purpose. Ed Heger pointed out that only a very small group shows up for the meetings and what is done at one meeting, can be undone at the next by another group. Ed stated he is a firm believer that the Board should be empowered to make choices and those choices should be for the entire community. If that is unacceptable, then the board should be replaced. Lee Downes and Larry voiced disagreement with Ed's philosophy. Larry felt that might encourage an election turnout to put one side in power over another, rather than having a diverse board. Larry said the only way to keep things from being changed back and forth every month is to put it in the bylaws, because the only time that can be changed is at the annual meeting. Ed asked how the bylaws could deal with taking positions on issues. Larry agreed that is a problem, but doesn't agree that the board should be the ones that are placed on.

Ralph Hemp suggested one way of avoiding back and forth motions was to set an agenda for the upcoming meeting, so everyone is aware in advance of any issues that will

be discussed.

Larry made a motion that we support the concept of Molly's letter and urge her to continue with the forming of the committee. The motion was voted on and approved.

Oliver announced that Molly wrote a draft contribution policy. Ralph Hemp recommended that we table it until July to make it part and parcel of the mission statement. Larry asked if that was a motion, and Ralph made it a motion, which was seconded by Larry. Oliver asked if the members would like him to read the policy and Ralph Hemp said he had no problem with having it read, he's just assuming it will be part of the July presentation. Ed Heger advised it was intended to be a stop-gap, an immediate response. Larry said if we vote on this tonight, at the next meeting it could be voted out again, so we might as well just let it rest until it can be included as a bylaws amendment. Pat Cole advised that she thought policies were different from motions made on the floor, which could be cancelled out another night be a different motion. Larry advised that they were the same. Oliver read Molly's Draft Contribution Policy.

Ralph Hemp repeated his original motion that we table the draft contribution policy until July and combine it with the mission statement bylaws change. He added that his personal view is that he does not prefer to have the Board made the final decision. Duke Hoiland seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

Bob Grimaldi inquired whether we received the letter he sent on behalf of the North Fork Road Coalition for Health & Safety thanking the NFLA for its \$500 donation to the road dust hazard study. Pat Cole produced the letter and Oliver read it.

Ray advised that the Coalition will be renting the hall on October 24, at 6PM for a meeting. Oliver asked whether the meeting would be open to the public, and Ray advised it is.

The meeting was adjourned.

Text of President Molly Shepherd's Sept. 18, 2007, letter to members read at the Oct. 6, 2007, business meeting:

Dear NFLA Members:

I'm sorry I can't be with you in person at the October meeting. I hope that in my absence, this letter will lay the groundwork for discussion and action on a proposed policy governing NFLA contributions to other organizations. I also hope that it will prompt renewed commitment to addressing some unfinished business.

At the September business meeting, a majority of those present voted to contribute \$500 from the NFLA treasury to the North Fork Road Coalition for Health and Safety to help fund the dust study that the Coalition has commissioned. The situation was reminiscent of previous NFLA meetings at which proponents of other organizations have voted to contribute NFLA funds to those organizations for projects they have undertaken.

The NFLA doesn't have any bylaw or policy or statement of principle that governs

how requests for contributions come before the membership. We have wrestled with the problem in the past, with some members urging that we prohibit contributions to other organizations altogether.

I'm not sure that prohibiting contributions is the answer—some contributions may benefit the NFLA and its members. But we need to make sure that NFLA money isn't spent in ways that are inconsistent with the purposes of the organization or that jeopardize its non-profit status. We need guidance that's fair, simple, applies to everyone equally, and allows the NFLA to make thoughtful and considered contributions after informed discussion.

After talking with a number of you, I have drafted a proposed contribution policy. It's intended to provide reasonable advance notice that a request for a contribution will be made at the next NFLA meeting. Notice will allow board members to look into the request and to make a recommendation about its passage if they want to do so. Notice also will give others who are interested in the request a meaningful opportunity to be heard, eliminating or at least mitigating the effects of surprise.

The proposed policy isn't about the road, the dust study, the Coalition, or undoing what was done about the September NFLA meeting. It's also not about personalities, factions or alignments. Rather the policy is about establishing some even-handed guidelines for how we spend our money in the future.

As far as I know, the NFLA hasn't adopted policies in the past. But nothing in the current bylaws prevents us from adopting policies to guide us in handling recurrent questions or problems. Many non-profit organizations give their boards of directors the power to adopt policies. Our bylaws don't say anything about the subject. In fact, they don't say anything about how the NFLA's work is divided between the board and the membership. We have touched on the issue in the past but haven't ever decided how we want to allocate responsibilities.

I suggest that it's time to delineate the division of labor between the board and the membership. It's also time to have another look at some unresolved issues. Directly or indirectly, the September meeting raised them once again. The issues include a mission statement and a description of the circumstances, if any, under which the NFLA will take a position.

I propose to appoint a broad-based committee composed of both directors and other NFLA members. The committee would be charged with the following tasks:

- Recommending a division of labor between the Board of Directors and the membership, including responsibility for adopting policies to guide the organization.
- Recommending a mission statement after careful consideration of the NFLA's purposes.
- Recommending a policy describing the circumstances, if any, in which the NFLA will take a position on issues affecting the North Fork and North Fork landowners.

The committee would report to the membership no later than the July, 2008 meeting and would present any bylaw amendments that may be necessary to implement its recommendations. I welcome your input on the composition of the committee and on the

agenda that I have outlined.

We may not be able to resolve all or even some of these long-standing issues to everyone's satisfaction. The NFLA is an organization of individuals with diverse interests, backgrounds and philosophies. But we need to try. If we succeed, the NFLA will be a more stable and effective organization, confident of its purposes, and with a broader base of support than it has now.

I hope you all have a good fall on the North Fork and wish I could be there to enjoy it with you.

—Molly Shepherd

Text of President Molly Shepherd's draft contribution policy read to members at the Oct. 6, 2007, business meeting:

To maintain the Association's non-profit status and to assure that its business is conducted in a fair, orderly and consistent manner, any request for a payment, donation or contribution to another organization, except for ordinary, budgeted or authorized operating expenses, shall be submitted to the secretary-treasurer at least ten days before it is submitted to a vote of the members at a regular or special meeting. The request shall be made in writing, shall state the name and tax status of the other organization, shall specify the amount of the proposed payment, donation or contribution, shall explain how making the payment furthers the purpose of the Association, and shall be signed and dated by the person submitting it. The Board of Directors of the Association may consider and investigate the request and may recommend that it be approved or rejected by the members. In an emergency or when it is not feasible to submit the request to a vote of the members, the Board of Directors may approve or reject the request.