

Board of Directors' Meeting
Minutes
August 20, 2009

This was the first meeting of the new Board of Directors (BOD) for the 2009-2010 year. Patti Hart, NFLA webmaster, was scheduled to discuss our webpage and new hotmail accounts at this meeting.

North Fork Land Use Advisory Committee

President Betsy Holycross summarized an email (attached) she had received from Greg and Beth Puckett and which she had provided to the BOD members. Betsy drew the Board's attention to sections of the email in which the Pucketts seemed to be confusing the NFLA with the NFLUAC, (eg, where they stated that the NFLA had "ventured into public policies (land use planning, for example)," and where they requested the recorded minutes of the August 1 2009 NFLUAC meeting). She stated that she thought that a lot of people were confused and she wanted to spend time in the September meeting clarifying the differences. They are completely separate organizations. The NFLA is a private non-profit organization. The NFLUAC was created by Flathead County and it is the NFLUAC, not the NFLA which is responsible for land use planning. Many communities in the county have a land use advisory committee. To avoid confusion, the BOD noted that the secretary for the NFLUAC need not be the same as the secretary for the NFLA as has been the practice. Steve Berg said he would volunteer to serve as the Secretary for the NFLUAC. A list of other Flathead County land use advisory committees will be made available to the board. Both Betsy and John Frederick will talk at the next general NFLA meeting about the NFLUAC and its role.

It was further noted that some NFLA practices may have contributed to the confusion between the NFLA and the NFLUAC. For example, the NFLUAC report has been included in the "committee" reports which are given at each meeting. Neither it nor Lynn Ogle's "Fire Chief" report are reports of NFLA committees. Betsy said that she is going to make that differentiation during the September meeting and have other, non-NFLA committees and individuals make their reports following those of NFLA committees. There was also discussion of how to handle links to webpages of "external" organizations.

Bylaws and Policies

Only the housekeeping bylaw proposed by the board was approved by the membership at the August meeting. The other seven bylaw proposals were defeated by wide margins. The Pucketts' email indicated that "since the by-laws were not approved we now propose that policies be developed for each of the by-laws we submitted." The Board discussed the role of "policy" in the NFLA and noted that, other than policies governing use of the Hall, the organization does not have a history of adopting policies to govern its operations. What is in place already in Montana regarding issues of access to information and code of conduct were discussed. Molly Shepherd distributed a copy of standard for officers and directors (attached). She provided background concerning the October 2008 general meeting at which Bob Grimaldi requested a set of standards of

behavior, and that membership and new board members be apprised of same. BOD members believed common sense and existing state regulations are sufficient and the BOD discussed referencing them in the upcoming meeting. Molly asked whether the board, a committee or the membership should formulate policies, if the NFLA chooses to adopt them and she also observed that there was no process for formulating and adopting policies. The BOD spent time discussing the difference between “procedural” policy, such as that for the Hall, and “substantive” policy noting that the membership in the past has been reluctant to adopt the latter. The BOD noted that the nomenclature (procedural and substantive) might not be perfect but agreed that we need to stick with “procedural” ones since compliance and enforcement of others would be difficult and burdensome for a volunteer organization. We need to bring up the issue of policies before the membership. Some concern was expressed that “policy cops” might take away from the social aspect of the NFLA. We need to emphasize operating in “good faith.”

Website and Emails

Patti Hart presented the following information to the BOD. The NFLUAC has its own webpage and a link on the NFLA’s webpage as do the NFLA road committee and the NFRCHS (road coalition). We need to differentiate the “other organizations” as such. The NFLA webmaster maintains those pages, and will make the banners of the other organizations look different from the NFLA’s to avoid confusion, but still have a link back to the NFLA website.

Personal emails used on websites can attract spam. A generic NFLA email address keeps the officers one step removed for privacy reasons. Forwarding needs to be done through the hotmail account. NFLA officers’ email addresses will be permanent and easy to reach, for example: nflapres@hotmail.com. A blind cc or automatic forwards to other officers in case an officer is unavailable can be used. All BOD members will use the hotmail account and create new passwords, then email Patti that this has been done.

If a member has an urgent request, they should make an effort to have a face-to-face talk with a BOD member since neither email nor the post office is a sure thing and there can be considerable lag time. Remembering that remoteness is a factor for communications in the North Fork, notes in mailboxes can also be used.

The NFLA webpage will continue to feature community stories. Patti will function as editor. Stories should be of general interest, and can be reviewed by several others if Patti wishes. For backup security, the login password to the website should also be known by the past webmaster and the current president. The webmaster is an appointed and volunteer position. Patti will explain the community stories, webpage, and new hotmail account at the September general meeting.

Code of Conduct for members at meetings

The BOD discussed whether or not we should have a board resolution concerning rules of civil discourse for public meetings. The county commissioners use meeting participation protocols. We discussed if this issues should be in the form of a motion from the floor. It was pointed out that Robert’s Rules of Order covers meeting behavior, and can be used as our rules of conduct. Supplemental rules of conduct could assist the chairperson.

Guidelines from other community organizations might be useful. Each BOD member needs a copy of suggested meeting rules (attached) to take under advisement and discuss at the next BOD meeting. Also we were reminded that the members and officers can raise a Point of Order to either clarify a rule or procedure or call the attention of the assembly to a breach of conduct. Ultimately, the president can rule on acceptable behavior.

Mission of NFLA

The membership has never formally adopted a mission statement, but Article I of the bylaws is the understood mission (attached.)

NFLA Road Committee

Betsy will resign as chair and a new chairperson will be needed. The mission of the road committee initially was broad in scope. The committee's mission needs to focus on research and solutions to road dust and other improvements such as bridges and culverts, to do liaison work with agencies, and to continue its educational role of disseminating information to the membership. We discussed whether or not the committee should make recommendations for dust mitigation. The Neighborhood Plan calls for working together with agencies to reduce dust (see 3.6 of the Neighborhood Plan.)

Weed Committee

Val Cox is willing to chair a weed committee. Steve Berg volunteered to be a committee member, and can work with Jed Fisher of the Flathead County weed control department. Val will liaison with Dawn LaFleur of Glacier Park's weed division. Betsy will ask for volunteers at the September general meeting. Brad Bower of the Nature Conservancy is a potential contact person. Will Hammerquist was mentioned as a possible weed committee member. Molly noted that grant money is available for weed mitigation.

Fire Chief

Lynn Ogle serves as the North Fork fire chief, a county rather than an NFLA position.

Fire Mitigation Committee

This committee will carry on with its work.

Community Outreach

Some members who are "unwired" feel left out of the communication process, especially those people near the border. Meeting notices such as the September 8th dust mitigation information meeting, will be posted at the Polebridge Mercantile's information board and at the Community Hall. We will ask Larry Wilson to put a notice in his column also. Meeting minutes should be posted as well. A suggestion box was also discussed, or the idea that members could write notes to BOD members for introducing concerns and new agenda items. A suggestion box seemed to be a good gesture, but the logistics of checking it on a regular basis seemed daunting. Instead, members can send notes to the NFLA post office box, though it is a slow process, they can stop in to see a BOD member, or send a note up with the mail carrier. Jan Caldwell volunteered to make his

rural mailbox available for dropping off notes from members.

Hall Coordinator

Pat Cole has functioned as Hall Coordinator since she lived close to the Hall. Someone needs to keep the Hall key, keep the Hall stocked with supplies, rent it out, and show it to prospective renters. One person at a time should be consistently responsible. Val and Steve will divide the duties seasonally: Val will be in charge from May to October, and Steve will take over during the November to May period.

Business Meeting Time

Historically, the meeting has taken place on the first Saturday of the month at 8:00 p.m. Voting takes place during the August meeting at 9:15 p.m. by custom to accommodate those whose Sabbath is on Saturday until sunset. The BOD discussed the possibility of starting the meetings earlier but decided to leave meeting times and dates as they stand.

Nominating Committee

Dennis Groebe asked why the committee nominated two candidates per office. It was explained that two or more candidates were nominated in order to give the membership a choice. The nominating committee wanted to encourage participation. It's part of the community outreach mission.

State Statutes Covering Non-Profit Organizations

The open meeting and right to know laws do not apply to the NFLA because it is a private, non-profit organization.

Auction

Val suggested that the NFLA return to having an annual auction and suggested doing so as part of the 2010 fundraisers. The BOD liked the idea and would like to have members discuss this at the September meeting. A potluck will be included as part of the event. The date for the auction will need to be on the spring calendar in the newsletter.

Transfer of Treasurer's Duties

The treasurer's duties will be explained to Val by Pat Cole before the September meeting, and both Val and Betsy will complete signature cards at the bank.

Flathead Coalition

Ed Heger has resigned as the NFLA's representative since he is becoming chair of the Flathead Basin Coalition. Betsy will see Ed about the duties involved. Lee Secrest suggested we ask Will Hammerquist. Molly wondered if there would be a conflict with Will's existing position with the National Park Fund.

Response Letter to the Pucketts

Betsy will draft a response to the Pucketts' questions regarding "transparency" and the respective roles of the NFLA and the NFLUAC. The legal distinction between a private non-profit corporation (NFLA) and an extension of county government (NFLUAC) is

crucial.

Richard Hildner will send the BOD members a single page condensation of Robert's Rules which he uses with the debate team. When in doubt, the BOD will adhere to custom and tradition.

Adjournment

The BOD meeting was adjourned by president Betsy Holycross.

Submitted by Valerie Cox, NFLA Secretary