



NFLA - Membership Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Sunday September 10, 2023, at 6pm

Location: Sondreson Community Hall

Attendees: All Members invited

Board Members:

- ✓ Jack McFarland, President
- ✓ Jim Rittenberg, Vice President
John Zardis, Treasurer– not present
- ✓ John Stone, S. Director
- ✓ Kevin Ulrichsen, S. Director
- ✓ Cheryl Crane, N. Director
Steve Berg, N. Director– not present
- ✓ Beth Ulrichsen, Secretary
- ✓ Richard Hildner, Past President– not present
- ✓ Guest: Dan Jacobson, Maintenance Committee

6pm: Lois Walker, guest speaker – History of North Fork Schools

7pm: Membership meeting

1. Call to order at 7:17pm
2. Welcome and Opening Remarks
 - a. Jack McFarland shared that it is his first time serving as President. Learning ropes. Great team.
 - b. Jack explained that it has been 76 years since the NFLA (formally NF Improvement Association) was organized
Jack expressed that hopefully he will serve longer than my grandfather (4 months).
Jack shared the meaning of “Improvement Association”, it was meant to improve the relationship between the people. The community has grown, but the overall goal remains: Fostering a community of fellowship, caring and support in the North Fork valley
 - c. Jack reminded all to bring Veterans Pantry donations at October Meeting (please bring cans to that meeting on October 8)
3. Reading of August Minutes
 - a. Beth Ulrichsen shared the minutes from August 13th. Approved, accepted as read.
4. Treasurer’s Report
 - a. Jack shared Treasure’s report for John Zardis
 - i. We have 401 active members including 28 associate members
 - ii. Dues collected were \$5,305 representing an average of \$13.23 per member
 - iii. Special donations of \$3,750 were collected
 - iv. Interest on the funds was \$723
 - v. Total receipts were \$9,776 (\$6,026 without special donations)
 - vi. Total expenses of \$8,732
 - vii. Loss of \$2,706 from normal operations but a positive \$1,044 after considering the special donations.
 - b. Largest four expenses representing 76% of the budget:
 - i. Insurance at \$3,205 (37%)
 - ii. Mag Chloride at 1,643 (19%)
 - iii. Newsletter printing and mailing at \$931 (11%)
 - iv. Office supplies and postage at \$806 (9%) (Includes the projector)
5. Due’s Increase Discussion
 - a. Jack shared that dues are not keeping pace with increasing costs
 - i. \$8,732 divided by 401 members is \$21.78 per member

- ii. Dues on average collected are \$13.23 (combination of regular and associate members)
- b. Jack explained that the gap has been filled so far with special donations
- c. In 2024-2025, the plan is to increase dues by \$5
- d. Regular members \$20 (from \$15), Associate members \$10 (from \$5)
- e. Jack shared that if the averages hold, the actual receipts will average \$17.64 per member, for a budgeted income of \$7,074. This will still leave a deficit of \$1,658 to be covered by special donations
- f. Jack requested input from members
 - i. Margaret Heaphy shared that in the past people gave when something special was needed so that dues would not need to be increased.
 - ii. Larry Wilson shared that he thought we should not raise dues if we have funds. Wait to see if we don't get donations. He expressed that the Board did right to bring it up in advance.
 - iii. Gerry Sterns shared her concern about raising dues year after year, Jack clarified that dues would only be raised once, in two years.
 - iv. Kathy Korda suggested that we have an auction, like in the past, to raise funds. There was great interest in this idea.
 - v. Lynn Ogle said we need to plan for the future, we need to get started on some of our projects.
 - vi. Mark Heaphy shared that last time there was a dues increase he was the only one in the room to vote against raising them. He expressed that with \$30,000 in reserves it is hard to see raising dues.
 - vii. Jack shared that the Board wanted to try to start to look forward to be sure we are staying steady with the budget.

6. Committee Reports

- a. Sunshine
 - i. Bonny Ogle shared that 17 cards and FaceBook greetings were sent last month in total.
- b. History
 - i. Lois Walker shared that she will be presenting in Columbia Falls Historical Society on the Schools of the North Fork
 - ii. Lois expressed that there was a good turnout at Jack McFarland's for the McFarland Ranch and Homesteads on Big Prairie History Day.
- c. Maintenance
 - i. Dan Jacobson reported that the battery on the generator went bad and needed to be replaced. It has been taken care of.
- d. Welcome
 - i. Beth Ulrichsen welcomed everyone to the meeting, and shared that they continue to look for names of new neighbors and please let her know if you know of anyone.
- e. Fire Mitigation
 - i. Lynn Ogle reported that they are working on the NF Fire plan
 - ii. Lynn also shared that Molly Shepard needs hours and expenses for Firewise Community certification
 - iii. Kevin Ulrichsen shared that the Wildfire outlook for the remainder of the season is normal wildland fire potential. There are no fire restriction right now.
- f. Jack requested that committees submit budget requests to John Zardis.

7. Organization Reports (Non-NFLA)

- a. North Fork Patrol
 - i. Mark Heaphy shared that bear and moose season starts soon, hunters must wear orange. If issues arise with hunters, contact the game warden.

- ii. Malcolm explained that Doug Barns' estate items will up for auction through Gardiners Auction online September 25th.
 - iii. Jim Rittenburg reported that there is a mobile home trailer on Hornet Road, appears to be abandoned.
 - iv. Lynn shared that there is no place to hunt off the NF Road, game warden should be contacted and license plate number gathered and reported.
 - v. Larry shared that a grizzly, sow with cub, has been reported to have broken in to houses and garbage. The bear has been up at the airstrip by the border. A trap has been set at Ray Harts.
- b. Polebridge Bear Smart
 - i. Suzanne shared that she has Bear Aware posters, they are great for rentals.
 - ii. Suzanne also said that they are waiting to see how our bears are behaving, please reach out to Polebridge Bear Smart if you have issues.
- c. NFPA
 - i. Suzanne Hildner explained that their annual meeting was at the end of July and they continue to monitor all of the issues that need to be monitored.
 - ii.
- d. NF Trails
 - i. Bill Walker reported that they will be putting a new roof on the Grizzly Inn. This is a good time to go see it.
 - ii. Jim Rittenburg inquired about the Forest Service Fund Agreement. Bill shared that he was told that it will be ready for signature real soon now.
 - iii. The Forest Service has also now thrown in a little extra money. They are planning to do a few projects with the Forest Service.
- e. NF LUAC
 - i. no report
- f. Fire Chief
 - i. Lynn Ogle reported... Fall is coming! He thanked all for being careful with fire, shared a map from Hungry Horse News showing fires all around us, we were lucky, no fires.
 - ii. Lynn also reminded all to check and clean furnaces before starting them up for the season for carbon monoxide hazards.

8. Old Business

- a. Report from Ceiling Committee
 - i. John reported that we are moving forward with the ceiling project. It will be expensive.
 - ii. Jack, shared that we are committed to getting it done.
- b. Pest Control and mitigation efforts
 - i. Dan reported that 8 bait stations were placed around the building. The hope is to catch them before they enter.
 - ii. Thane from Apex, will come up to see where the bats are entering.
 - iii. Jack shared that we are taking the bat situation seriously.
- c. Building stain (oil) and repair of chinking/caulking
 - i. Dan is currently looking for quotes for staining and chinking. Looking to see what's needed to help preserve the logs.
- d. Fall clean up and chipping
 - i. Jim Rittenburg will get a group together to chip and pick up brush around the Hall to avoid burning piles.
- e. Jack thanked Dan, John, Kevin and Jim, as well as many others for their efforts to improve and preserve the hall.

9. New Business

- a. Fall Newsletter

- i. Beth Ulrichsen reported that she is working on putting together the Fall Newsletter. It includes, the membership renewal form, NF Patrol form, and the fall/winter calendar that Lorna is compiling.

10. Member Comments

- a. Gavin Wisdom, from Glacier Institute and Le Grizz, asked for volunteers for Le Grizz that is happening October 14. He explained that the race would be happening around Big Creek this year due to the road construction up north. He will connect with Bill Walker to put the request for volunteers on the website.
- b. Gerry Sterns asked if community floats could be added again to the calendar. Kevin Ulrichsen explained that it was decided a few years ago that it was an insurance issue for the NFLA, but that individuals could organize floats and post them on FaceBook.
- c. Richard Hildner thanked Bill Walker for the new PA system that he donated.
- d. Bonny Ogle inquired if the fire extinguishers had been checked; Kevin Ulrichsen responded that during the spring cleanup fire extinguishers were checked.

11. Next Membership Meeting

- a. Sunday October 8 at 6pm
 - i. Jamie Belt, The Glacier NP Volunteer Coordinator will be the guest speaker

12. Adjourn at 8:20