

CT Region NSP Spring Officers Meeting (SOM)
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 15, 2021
Zoom conference 1800-2143

Patrol Directors: Michael Lapierre (Nutmeg Nordic, MTR); Mike Smarz (Mohawk); Ken Joyce (Pahquioque); Ron Fenner (Southington)

Assistant Patrol Directors/NSP Reps: Walt Behuniak (Southington); Eric Schmidt (Pahquioque);

Advisors: Melinda Mingus (Medical); Steve Goldblatt (Medical); Kathy Fitzpatrick (Safety, Election Comm); Peter Bayer (ROA); John Segretta (Website/Technology); Bob Cassello (Alumni, CISM Liaison); Chuck Boyd (Avalanche); Justin Regan (Certified, OET, Sr OET); Cally Regan (Women's Program); Austin Hochstrate (Assistant YAP); Tom Kim (Snowboard)

CT Region Admin: Skip Mudge (RD); Liz Fener (Treasurer); Larry Hyatt (Sr OEC, Administrative Assistant); Sue-Ellen Repeta (Pequot Section Chief, YAP); Tony Philpin (Housatonic Section Chief); Mark Pahmer (ARD); Jonathan Ruhe (Legal)

Election Committee: Tim Appleton (Chair); Rob Schumann

Guests: Dick Woolf (Eastern Division Telecommunications); Amanda Cannon (Eastern Division Assistant OEC Supervisor); Darin Kramer (Powder Ridge Proxy)

Absent: Randy McKee (Lakeridge); Scott Dawick (Ski Sundown); Justin Lonergan (Powder Ridge); Kenn Kostuk (Ski Sundown); Kevin Muravnick (Powder Ridge); Gadi Bourla (Telecommunications); Michael Gajdosik (ID)

Jonathan Ruhe, Region Legal Advisor, agreed to serve as the Parliamentarian for the meeting.

PAST MEMBERS REMEMBERANCES

- John “Jack” Barter – Otis Ridge, Southington, Ski Sundown
- Dawn (Czcinski) Pinkowish – Southington (20 years)
- A moment of silence was held in memory of both of these patrollers.

EXPENSES

- Due to the pandemic restrictions, many programs were either not run or were very restricted this past year resulting in reduced expenses.
- People are urged to use the most recent expense report form available on the website.
- Reminder that any expenses over budget must be approved by the RD ahead of time.
- Trips under 100 miles are not reimbursable.

REGIONAL AWARDS BANQUET

- Liz Fenner reported that there will be a banquet this year, Friday June 11, and that all patrollers were sent an invitation with information. A count is needed to determine size of room to reserve by the end of April. So far there are 29 people planning on attending.

CLOSING NSP COURSES

- In order for an NSP course to be properly closed, the IOR has to mark the course as Complete and the ITOR has to Approve the course for closure. It is important that this procedure is followed correctly and in a timely manner so that the participants can get credit for the course.

REGIONAL RECOGNITIONS

- It is important to recognize people for exceptional performances. The Region is looking to recognize a Patroller of the Year, an Instructor of the Year, and a Mentor of the Year. A few nominations have been submitted, but if there are other people deserving of the recognition, please submit their names with supporting documentation to Skip.

CONGRATULATIONS

- Congratulations are given to Kenn Kostuk for completing eight years as Patrol Director at Ski Sundown. Kenn will be stepping down from the PD position.

SECTION CHIEF ELECTION

- Tony Philpin was re-elected for the Housatonic Section Chief position. This includes Sundown, Mohawk, Nordic and Lakeridge.

RD REPORT – SKIP MUDGE

- Goals for 2020-21 season were reviewed (and performance to those goals) as well as goals for the upcoming season.
- The Googles for Docs program was successful, it included 500 goggles obtained from YNHH, thanks to Chris Chmura, and were distributed to patrollers in the Region.
- The COVID vaccine distribution to patrollers was made available by successfully interfacing with Hartford Healthcare; was approved January 12 and started January 13; vaccinations were also made available to all YAP that wanted them, with parental consent.
- The new website was made available, ctnsp.org; John Segretta was the designer and is now the webmaster. The site is continually updated, sometimes on a daily basis.
- Planning – Advisors prepared and submitted their Annual Reports including their recent goal accomplishments and projected goals for the coming year. Budget requests are tied to, and must be supported by, program goals. Succession planning is important for maintaining future success.
- Tim Appleton, who had and successfully accomplished two significant roles in the Region for several years, STC for the Sr OEC program and the Awards Advisor, has stepped down. Larry Hyatt has accepted the Sr OEC Training Coordinator position and Mike Bafuma has accepted the Awards Advisor position. Jumping right into the deep end, in his first couple weeks on the job, he orchestrated a very successful Hybrid Awards Ceremony from which he produced two videos, one for the Eastern Division and one for the Region.

- John Segretta has taken on the Advisor role for the website and technology support, bringing also a good business appreciation.
- Gadi Bourla has accepted the Region Telecommunication Advisor position.
- Two Regional positions are still open (ORM Advisor and Historian); Don Cirkot with his vast knowledge and experiences has offered to assist whoever takes the Historian position. There has been some interest in these positions, but will keep these open for a little while longer so that everyone has an opportunity. There is a desire to get both of these positions filled, so please check with your patrols.
- Youth Protection Training – 107 patrollers have taken the Youth Protection Training; most took the Armatus training which Mountain Guard pays for. Login credentials are obtained through NSP so they can track costs. 60% took Armatus, 33% BSA, 5% SafeSport, 2% other.
- The Safety Team (Melinda Mingus, ED Supervisor and Kathy Fitzpatrick, CT Region Advisor) is providing CISM awareness and education. Charlie Epstein (Operations Director, CT Critical Incident Stress Management Team and former Powder Ridge Patroller) is a key resource and valued member of this team.
- Skip provided a brief overview of two division committees he is on: Long Range Planning Committee which works on strategic planning and budget & financial performance; eCommerce Committee which utilizes Software as a Service. SmartSheet, a powerful administrative/management tool; PatrollerSchool.org for course development & administration used to manage large/complex events such as Spring/Fall/Winter Officers Meetings, YAP Seminar, Certified events, etc. PatrollerSchool.org also host Moodle School programs such as Division Avalanche, MTR, Nordic/Backcountry education.
- He was also a member of two Eastern Division Search Committees—Alumni Supervisor (Alan Miller) and Instructor Development (Lisa Radibeau).
- The utilization of technology has been important and significant; Zoom, especially with the Covid environment has made it easier to conduct meetings, in many instances, but a return to in-person training is still preferred in most cases. The Region website should be a first place to look for information; Fallon Repeta and John Segretta have been working on enhancing our social media presence.
- The Election Committee has been looking at electronic voting, which could enhance the Region voting capabilities, especially in times such as the pandemic environment where gatherings have been limited. The committee will report on details later in the meeting.
- The Senior Program will undergo a restructuring; there will be a new Sr Program Coordinator position who will work with the candidates offering support and interface with OEC, OET, Patrol Directors, Awards Advisor, and National.
- The New Jersey Region Awards Advisor has created a system designed to improve the ease and efficiency of writing award nominations and the review process. Mike Bafuma and Skip will participate in a demo on May 11. If it looks good, we will participate in the beta test, check the website for updates.

- The fiscal year will be changing from April – March to July – June, which will better align with National and the Division. This year in transitioning to the new timeframe, there will be a short budget period from April – June before the new period will take effect.

PROGRAM ADVISOR REPORTS

MEDICAL ADVISOR REPORT– MELINDA MINGUS

- Melinda announced there is a new Assistant Medical Advisor for CT, Dr. Steve Goldblatt.
- They are streamlining and speeding up process for processing awards requiring medical sign-off, such as Purple Merit Stars. Patrols should send merit star award requests and all supporting information to the Medical Advisor as soon as possible after the incident. It is important to have as complete information as possible so as to not delay the awards.
- Working on long range planning and succession planning.

EASTERN DIVISION TELECOMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR - DICK WOOLF

- Dick started patrolling 51 years ago as a Jr Patroller, he has been at Stratton 45 years.
- The Telecommunications Section of NSP is SEC compliant and is the largest non-profit license holder. In 1960 NSP became EMS eligible, is fee exempt. Patrols maintain their assigned license numbers even when not active.
- Gadi Bourla, the Region Advisor, was unable to attend the meeting, but had prepared the presentation.
- They are ready to assist patrols and area management that wish to take advantage of updating their services and licensing. Radios are available for about \$100 with 2-year warranties through Pro Deals; units are dual band (VHF & UHF). Also, FirstNet cellular for talk & data is available, operated by the Federal Government and run by AT&T for residential – fire – police – EMS (which NSP qualifies for); check on firstnet.com/NSP for details and various deals. Webinars for NSP are available Tuesday & Wednesday 4/27 & 4/28 with 4 sessions, emails will go out and everyone can attend.
- Goals for 21-22 include contacting each patrol for radio support and to visit each patrol during the season
- Contact Dick with any questions at telecom@nsp.org

ALUMNI ADVISOR – ROBERT CASSELLO

- Sent out survey; NSP allows patrollers to take advantage of Temporarily Not Patrolling status for 1-2 years, so some people chose that option instead of going Alumni. We hope that most of them will return to active patrolling.

AVALANCHE PROGRAM – CHUCK BOYD

- Most of the activities were canceled this past season. Goal is to put much content online but found it was a large undertaking, still working to hopefully have ready by September.
- Found there was more enthusiasm pent up than expected. People can contact Chuck if they want to get involved and are interested in helping out. He has a successor in place for his position (Avalanche Supervisor), but still looking for someone to take over as regional Avalanche Advisor. This is an administrative position; the advisor does not have to be an instructor. If you are enthusiastic and eager to learn. He can teach you everything you need to know. Someone to help coordinate things would be helpful.

MTR PROGRAM – MICHAEL LAPIERRE

- Program didn't run courses this past year feeling that while they are good to have it wasn't worth the risk. They're looking at having an online piece for next year.
- Succession planning: Dave Albano will be the new IOR and will likely step into the Advisor role in 2021-22.

AWARDS – MICHAEL BAFUMA

- Mike wasn't in attendance but can reference his submitted report. Notable items are: Life Saving Awards, Memorial Fund for scholarship available for any patroller continuing any education not just high school graduates.

CERTIFIED PROGRAM – JUSTIN REGAN

- All events were canceled this past year; group hasn't met yet for plans going forward.
- Some people needing to re-certify (doing a bump run and running a loaded sled) will meet at same location next year.

INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT – MIKE GAJDOSIK

- Mike wasn't in attendance, can reference his submitted report.

OEC – PETER BAYER

- Due to potential for COVID spike and the state tightening things up, this year's refresher will likely be patrol-based. The YMCA will honor commitment price and availability. We need to make go/no-go decision in August. Mt. Southington will likely not be able to host the Instructor Refresher as the Mountain Room is already booked for all weekends in October, with September filling up quickly. Can't even use the patrol room; will meet with Patrol Directors to discuss further.
- Every patrol ran an OEC course this past Fall, 27 new Candidates and 3 doing the modified program, 3 new OEC Instructors.
- OEC 6 was successfully rolled out to 62 instructors.

- Budget includes a Vacuum Mattress (\$500) for regional training, now part of OEC 6.

SAFETY TEAM – KATHY FITZPATRICK

- The program acquired a tent and frame this year which is available programs throughout the Region.
- Jenny O'Donnell, the Assistant Advisor will not be able to continue next season. Those interested should contact Kathy. Also still looking to get a Safety Captain at every patrol area.
- Providing CISM training. Working with Charlie Epstein as a gateway to the State group. There were at least 2 instances in the region that took advantage of these resources.
- The program hosted some programs this past year such as a Bike Safety Program at Powder Ridge, another at Powder Ridge, one at Sundown, during the swaps at some ski shops, but due to COVID, did not host as many as desired. Next year hope to have more public interaction.

SR OEC PROGRAM – LARRY HYATT

- The program was canceled this past year.
- A few excellent Sr Patrollers have expressed interest in becoming TEs next year.
- Two areas have already reported that they have several patrollers interested in participating in the Sr. Program this coming season.
- Will start reaching out to patrols and patrollers over the summer.

OET PROGRAM – JUSTIN REGAN

- Held a Zoom Toboggan Training workshop on February 25. Local TEs were able to do the on-hill observations. We now have 29 new OET Instructors.

SR OET PROGRAM – JUSTIN REGAN

- A number Mohawk patrollers are interested in taking part in Sr. OET.
- Bud Gardner, Catamount Patrol Director is stepping down. As Catamount has been a key location for the program, will look to continue the relationship.
- Hopefully next year there will be 3 or 4 new TEs.

SNOWBOARD PROGRAM – TOM KIM

- Snowboard clinics were postponed this past year due to COVID.
- Have received a number of inquiries for next year.
- Paul Katz (Assistant) and Tom want to expand the program with other regions next year.

WOMAN'S PROGRAM – CALLY REGAN

- There are 3 more Instructors for the Woman's clinics.
- Kristin Russo is the new Division Advisor and plans to bring all the Region Advisors together.

YAP PROGRAM – SUE-ELLEN REPETA AND AUSTIN HOCHSTRATE (ASSISTANT)

- Seminar was cancelled this year due to COVID, however, there were a number of Zoom events as well as divisionally organized and locally run events. The CT Region placed in the top 3 in both the Ski-a-thon and Scavenger Hunt events.
- Next year plan to go to Smuggs; also working on plans for possible summer events; looking to get new YAP instructors.

WEBSITE – JOHN SEGRETTA

- The new website has been put up this year; the platform is easy to keep updated by multiple people; can change to suit particular needs such as YAP Training or targeting recruiting to special demographics, such as youth and women.
- A question was raised if we should survey membership regarding web content, design, functionality. Need to look at what value site brings such as this past year much of the COVID restrictions were state based, so it was of value to have a CT based site, will be discussed in further detail outside of this meeting.

PATROL REPORTS

MOHAWK – MIKE SMARZ

- 95 Active patrollers (5 just passed OEC)
- 98 days of operation
- Had just under 250 incidents, none turned out to be serious
- Many patrollers were vaccinated so stress was down. Worked out of a trailer which went well
- Updates expected to main lodge and snow making

NUTMEG NORDIC – MICHAEL LAPIERRE

- Reported that this past season was the best winter in seven years; they had 30 days of operations; two new patrollers; management had things under control keeping everyone safe.

PAHQUIOQUE – KEN JOYCE

- 94 days of operation
- 180 accidents, 1 serious (up a little from prior season)
- More business Mondays – Fridays than ever had; weekends had limited tickets
- OEC class – 8 passed. New class (5 candidates) just started yesterday (April 14) using Zoom to go through all the bookwork. Will take their written in June, then start up in September with practical, hands-on work.
- 2 patrollers contracted COVID (not from ski area), but coverage was handled OK with a bump system

POWDER RIDGE – DARIN KRAMER

- Several members (4-5) opted out for this year, hopefully will return; a number of members went from primary to secondary classification
- Started a Ranger program offering OFC, intended as OEC feeder program; patrollers and Rangers logged 4000 hours; many worked during the Bike Patrol season over the summer. Hope to bring in new ski patrol candidates through the bike program → Ranger → Ski Patrol
- Over 180 incidents
- COVID precautions were a major part of the operations
- OEC class, had 6 Instructors and 7 candidates that all passed; Also 7 new Rangers (OFC)
- OET class, had 2 Instructors and 9 candidates, also had 4-5 new OET Instructors
- Hosted a Safety Day
- Started developing Hill captain positions, providing a pathway to leadership; Met every 3 weeks
- Shifts were Friday, Saturday and Sunday every 3 weeks
- Utilized guest patrollers to help out - 1 from Hunter & 1 from Mt Snow & 1 from another area

SOUTHINGTON – WALT BEHUNIAK

- It was a booming year, normally quiet sessions were busy, open December 18 thru March 27 except 2 days closed for rain, resulted in 97 days operating
- A tent was used outside, mostly on weekends, for triage and treatment of minor injuries
- There weren't any COVID issues
- 4 new Alpine patrollers

- 7 patrollers opted for Temporary Not Patrolling and 7 went Alumni

SUNDOWN – KENN KOSTEK

- Kenn wasn't in attendance, reference his submitted report.

SECTION REPORTS

HOUSATONIC – TONY PHILPIN

- Communications were great this year, including the Regional level

PEQUOT – SUE-ELLEN REPETA

- Hopefully next year will be able to get out more
- Good to see the Covid preparations with the Powder Ridge Bike Patrol
- Attended the Safety Day at Powder Ridge

ELECTRONIC VOTING – ELECTION COMMITTEE

- Election Committee: Tim Appleton, Chair, Kathy Fitzpatrick, Justin Lonergan and Rob Schumann.
- Recommended product, Association Voting. Features include: capability to allow candidates to upload photos, bios and position statements; voting integrity; 24x7 support. Conducted a demo and test group (mostly Southington patrollers) which went well; this product is a little more expensive than other products, but the committee felt the integrity capability and features was worth the extra expense. Same product used for National Board elections.
- Base cost is \$199 per year for size the CT Region (500 members); 2 features that might be desired are \$90 (Certification Services) and \$100 (Turnout Booster Campaign) per year extra. Suggested that we just use these add-on services in year one to build confidence in the system, so subsequent years would be at the base rates. In addition, the service can be “turned on and off” based upon need so that we would only pay in years we have a regional election.
- There was concern about the cost/benefit, given that we are facing a deficit budget this coming season and we only run an election for two positions every other year. The committee stated that while recent elections have been relatively smooth, that may not be the case in the future and spending the money for a quality product may well be worth the investment. We don't want to be in the position of needing a system with a high level of integrity and not have it.

- Sample votes were taken of eligible voters present (elected region officers, Patrol Representatives). 7 of 8 (87.5%) were in favor of electronic voting. Regarding the Association Voting, 25% in favor, 62.5% not in favor, 12.5% abstained.
- **Motion** by Walt Behuniak/Mark Pahmer to table the decision [regarding Association Voting] until additional information is available.
Yes: Behuniak, Joyce, Kramer, Mudge, Pahmer, Philpin, Repeta, Smarz
CARRIED
- **Motion** by Walt Behuniak/Sue-Ellen Repeta to approve amendment to the region bylaws to allow electronic voting as proposed by the Election Committee.
Yes: Behuniak, Joyce, Kramer, Mudge, Pahmer, Philpin, Repeta, Smarz
CARRIED
- The Election Committee will present the information in a more detailed form with graphics / charts / spreadsheets. Will pick a date for follow up discussion, likely in June.

TREASURER'S REPORT – LIZ FENNER

- Details for the Treasurer's Report were made available and can be referenced in the submitted report.
- Liz reviewed 2020-21 budget performance (\$5,281.38 favorable due to COVID) and the proposed 2021-22 budget (\$2,031.55 deficit). Of concern, is the trend to approve deficit budgets. If this continues, with more programs requesting additional funding, we could be facing dues increases in the near future.
- The Region has \$19,376.74 in funds.
- Justin Regan questioned the approved OET budget (2021-22) amount.

Motion by Mark Pahmer/Sue-Ellen Repeta to table the budget issue.

Yes: Behuniak, Joyce, Kramer, Mudge, Pahmer, Philpin, Repeta, Smarz

CARRIED

Motion by Bob Cassello/Sue-Ellen Repeta to adjourn the meeting.

Yes: Behuniak, Joyce, Kramer, Mudge, Pahmer, Philpin, Repeta, Smarz

CARRIED

Adjourned 9:43 PM

Respectively submitted,
Larry Hyatt