

# **Pennsylvania Search and Rescue Council**

## **GENERAL MEETING MINUTES AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### ***MARCH 25, 1995***

The March 1995 quarterly business meeting of the Pennsylvania Search & Rescue Council (PSARC) was called to order at 12:00 by President Peter McCabe.

#### **Qorum:**

13 organizations represented by delegates were present. A minimum quorum to conduct business is 7 organizations. Attendance: See Attachment #1

#### **Secretary's Report:**

There were no changes or additions to the previous meetings minutes. Motion to accept was made, seconded, and carried unanimously.

#### **Treasurer's Report:**

The Treasurer's Report was given by Greg Sassaman and a written report was handed out. See attachment #2. Several teams were identified as not paying 1995 dues: Chester County Office of Emergency Services; Pennsylvania DER Bureau of Forestry; Endless Mountain SAR; Mon Valley Dive SAR Recovery, Pennsylvania Tactical K-9; Search, Rescue & Recovery Services of Southwestern Pennsylvania; and White Deer Search & Rescue. Evergreen SAR was added to the list of paid 1995 teams. The balance in checking and savings as of March 24, 1995 was: \$2,016.26. A Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made, seconded, and carried unanimously. President and Director's Report: President spoke of the revised order of the general PSARC meeting. He emphasized that the rough spots encountered today will work out over time and enable the committees to have a clearer understanding of what their responsibilities are, and to proceed with their important work.

#### **Regional Reports:**

EAST: Nothing to report.

CENTRAL: Ken Snyder, the New Central Regional Representative, was introduced. No activities were reported.

WEST: Mike Yee not in attendance; no report given. NORTH: McCabe stated the Council is in the process of recruiting a northern regional representative which will be appointed by the next meeting.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Committee Reports:**

Note: Individual committee meetings began at 09:15. This was the first venture in having the committee meetings prior to the general quarterly meeting. Attendance at 09:00 was

sporadic and discussion began and continued in the main meeting room. Gradually more people arrived and each Committee chairperson held their meeting in the main room. Gradually more people arrived and each chairperson present held their meeting. The new format for the committee meetings will continue and continue to improve at future PSARC meetings. Each committee will meet individually, in an area of their choice at HACC, between the hours of 09:00 and 11:00 with a committee report given between 11:00 and 12:00. We are very encouraged that holding committee meetings prior to the regular quarterly meeting will promote participation from all PSARC units in the committee process. It is emphasized that the major business of the Council should be conducted through Committees. It is requested that each committee provide the PSARC Secretary with a brief informal written report of their activities for inclusion in the minutes.

The following presents a narrative brief of each Committee.

### **Articles of Incorporation/By-Laws Committee**

Jim Hill, Chair

Chair not present. No report

### **Communications Committee**

Steve Houck, Chair

There are no pressing issues regarding radio communications. The communications committee will also look into coordinating a team wide computer communications network that will enable teams to share data via disk in a word processing program. This system should also look toward eventual computer archiving of PSARC records. Each team was asked to list their computer capabilities to find a common denominator. The committee will be responsible for developing the "mechanics" for this system not for the dissemination of the information. It was also mentioned that getting a plastic card to attach to radios or with radio frequencies and call signs would be helpful. The committee was additionally requested to do further research on the capabilities of a PSARC 800 number. Since the committee will need to be expanded to address these new issues anyone interested in being part of the committee should contact Mr. Houck at (703) 257-7659.

### **Membership Committee**

Don Scelza, Chair

Chair not Present. No Report

### **Nominating Committee**

Vicki Coup, Chair

Anyone interested in running as a candidate for the vacant Director position should send a biography to the committee. One resume has been received by Ms. Geary and forwarded to the committee.

### **Operations Committee**

Ken Boyles, Chair

The Operations Committee report is reported in the March 1995 SAR Net. The EPLO's (Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officers) named were: Sharon Feree, Eric Horner and Ken Boyles. These people all live in close proximity to Harrisburg.

### **PrePlan Committee**

Ron Wisbith, Chair

There are two very old Pre-plans currently in existence with Pennsylvania DER and the ASRC. These plans will need to be totally reworked to include changes and developments over the years in the SAR council and issues being worked on by the committees.

### **Standards Committee**

Tom Hirschak, Chair

Participation in attending committee meetings is crucial in getting the remaining standards finalized. Anyone interested in any aspect of developing standards should contact Mr. Hirschak. Rescue Specialist and Medical Specialist are still in the rough draft stages.

Equine Standards Subcommittee Irv Lichtenstein, Chair. Standards are in the developmental stages. There are several formats which have been presented for consideration by the committee. Standards have been received from various agencies and will be used as guidelines for finalizing the PSARC equine standards.

Canine Standards Subcommittee, Pat Hahn, Chair Chair not present. No report.

Discussion indicated that K-9 standards have been previously adopted by PSARC. The K-9 standards sub committee should meet to review the current standards for any updates and well as looking towards pilot test procedures for dogs and handlers.

Mr. McCabe indicated at this time the SAR council has not adopted or instituted a policy whereby we are in a position to activate any standards. We understand that some individual teams have opted to train to standards that meet or exceed the ones currently set by PSARC. He said this is certainly encouraged since PSARC standards are minimal standards. Mr. Hirschak suggested that the standards gradually be activated when the testing mechanisms are in place.

### **Training Committee**

Jim Howley, Chair with Terry Dewitt and Dan Geary

Jim Howley and Martha Geary addressed the possibility of developing a test for certification for the different areas of training to meet the PSARC goals in conjunction with the Fire Academy SAR courses. It was discussed whether to use the test as a training instrument, or to make it available to instructors for testing only. A suggestion was made to create a "test bank" of 300 questions to cover the different levels from Call Out Qualified to Field Team Leader. The test administrator would then pull from this "bank" questions appropriate for the group being tested. It was also considered that each team's training officer might be responsible for controlling and safeguarding test questions and conducting testing of individual team members.

1995 goals for the Training Committee are to: complete pilot testing programs; and develop a large testing question inventory or bank. Anyone interested in helping with the training committee should contact one of the participants listed above.

## **New Business**

President requested that all teams list their software program capabilities and forward them to Martha Geary. This will enable a software package that is relatively common to all teams to be identified. This will enable the PSARC to begin distributing disks instead of reams of paper.

There was consideration as to assigning specific job responsibilities to the three newly appointed directors; Mr. Appel, Mr. Haas and Mr. Keiser. However, a point was brought out that the original intent in expanding the board into specific geographic regions was that membership would have a direct regional voice through the director in their area.

Also discussed was the possibility of having a state-wide training simulation tentatively scheduled for fall 1995 cohosted by Strike, Northeast and Thornhurst.

Elections are in December nominations are to be completed in September. Please contact the nominating committee with your suggestions.

## **SAR COUNCIL OPERATIONS AND MUTUAL AID ACTIVITIES:**

Ken Boyles will keep the council advised as people are recruited as Mission Resource Coordinators. There were brief discussions regarding the following incidents: (1) Pike County cross country skiers search and possible civil law suits; (2) The Lehigh Gorge recovery for the two drowned Cambodian girls; (3) a delayed response by responsible authorities in beginning a search for an elderly person near Embreeville in southeastern Pennsylvania; and (4) US Army Ranger training accidental deaths at Elgin Air Force Base, Florida.

A point was brought up regarding the importance of properly documented paperwork, and the difference between a person who is "unaccounted" for, and a "missing" person. Comments were also made regarding the issues associated with teams responding to searches at the personal request of individuals or programs which are not designated local, county or state government personnel acting on behalf of responsible government agencies. It was noted that at this time Council does not have a specific policy regarding this, but that it may be an issue for future consideration.

There being no further New Business, a motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 13:25 hours.

Respectively submitted, Roseann L. Keller Secretary