

# **Pennsylvania Search and Rescue Council**

## **Board of Directors Meeting and Quarterly Meeting**

*December 20, 1997*

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

Board of Directors meeting called to order at 1035 by President Martha Ackroyd. Board members present included: President Martha Ackroyd, Vice President John Miller, Secretary Peter McCabe, Treasurer Andy Appel, Keith Conover, Jim Howley, and Roy Keiser. Directors not present were Tom Hirschak, and Jay Cooke. Issues presented to the Board of Directors included:

#### **Council Membership Survey:**

Discussion of Survey results scheduled to be discussed during Quarterly Membership Meeting. There were no questions raised at the Board meeting except how the Surveys were distributed.

#### **Council Dues and Billing Issues:**

There was general discussion of some internal problems in crediting payment of annual dues. Discussion of a proposed new billing and payment processing system that will be put into place for 1998.

#### **Council Regions:**

The suggestion of dividing the PSARC northern region in to 2 regions; northeast region and northwest region concluded with the understanding this would require a By-Laws change. Proposal was referred to the By-Laws Committee.

#### **Pennsylvania VOAD Program:**

The PSARC is a member of the Volunteer Organizations Assisting in Disaster (VOAD) program coordinated through PEMA. All states have VOAD programs. The basic premise of the VOAD program is to provide logistical support services, along with other volunteer emergency services programs. In a large scale disaster in Pennsylvania, PSARC might be requested to provide support services. Additional information regarding the VOAD will be developed and distributed to member teams in the PSARC.

#### **Training Standards Developed by Pennsylvania DCNR:**

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has developed ground search and rescue standards for Field Team Member and Field Team Leader positions. These standards will be submitted for approval by DCNR in Harrisburg. [Standards were approved in January 1998 by DCNR/Harrisburg.] DCNR plans to develop standards for Incident Staff and Dog Handlers. The standards were developed from existing PSARC standards and Appalachian Search & Rescue Conference (ASRC) standards.

On a related issue earlier reported in the PSARC SAR\_Net, DCNR has developed a written and practical FTM test. An FTL test is in development. Beginning sometime in 1998, ground SAR teams can arrange with

DCNR rangers in their area for members of their team to take the DCNR written and practical FTM test.

DCNR will provide the PSARC with information on the counties in Pennsylvania where trained DCNR SAR personnel are located. DCNR also plans to have one of their SAR trained rangers from each DCNR region meet annually with PSARC representatives from the Council's four regions.

The DCNR SAR program has chosen the PSARC as the conduit to relate with voluntary SAR teams in Pennsylvania. However, non-PSARC teams have the ability to relate directly with DCNR if they wish.

### **Council Meeting Dates in 1998:**

By motion with unanimous consent, the following dates and meeting places were established:

February 21 at State College

May 15-16 at site TBD for possible SAR exercise in eastern region of state

August 15 at State College

November 21 at State College or during possible SAR exercise in western region

The Board of Directors meeting adjourned at 1127 hours Respectfully submitted:

Peter McCabe, Secretary

### **COUNCIL QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

The general PSARC quarterly meeting was called to order at 1150 hours by Council President Martha Ackroyd.

The first order of business was to distribute an election ballot to two PSARC member team delegates who had not received their ballots through the mail. After their ballot decisions were completed received and received, a ballot teller committee left to count and tally the election ballots.

The PSARC Minutes from the September 1997 PSARC quarterly meeting were accepted as presented.

The Treasurer's Report by retiring Treasurer Andy Appel was accepted as presented.

Incoming Treasurer Carol Manual (Delaware Valley SAR) was introduced. The President directed that an internal audit be completed as fiscal responsibilities are transferred to a new Treasurer. Election Results:

The ballot teller committee announced the following election results. Officers elected for two-year terms were: President John Miller. Mid-Atlantic Regional SAR

Vice President Joe Thrash, Somerset SAR

Secretary Peter McCabe, Maryland SAR Group

Treasurer Carol Manual Delaware Valley SAR

Directors elected for four year terms were Andy Appel, Roy Keiser, and Jim Norris

Note: John Miller, newly elected President assumed leadership of the meeting at 1215.

## **Training Committee Report:**

Training Coordinator Ron Sadd announced that during the September SARExpo 270 people participated. There will be a SARExpo in the eastern Council region (off PA Turnpike at exit 20) beginning Friday morning, May 15, and running thru Saturday, May 16. Further information will be provided as the program is developed.

## **Council Survey Results:**

Newly elected Council President John Miller presented results of the recent Survey of PSARC member teams. A summary of the results are:

- • Training has the highest priority.
- • Changes are recommended to better SAR programs. Briefly, people need to stop arguing and get something done.
- • In the DCNR SAR Task Force, 95% of the ranger members were not aware of the PSARC.

## **Other Business:**

DCNR will advise PSARC officers when they are ready to begin the testing program. The PSARC now has a list of DCNR ranger managers on a county by county basis who can serve as a liaison with ground SAR teams.

DCNR search managers are allowed to participate in ground SAR missions outside of their official responsibilities (parks and forests), but they are not routinely paid for these services. DCNR personnel can participate for one work shift, or complete their work shift, but for further participation in ground SAR on private lands, DCNR will make decisions on a case by case basis regarding further participation of DCNR personnel. The formal language of the DCNR policy is, "For SAR operations originating on private lands and not involving public lands, the Bureau(s) may approve involvement in the search. Employees can be granted civil leave by their, supervisor for up to one full shift per day. Any time spent on the search over and above a full shift will not be paid by the Bureau(s), although Bureau equipment can continue to be used by searchers."

It was emphasized that DCNR needs to relate with the PSARC through one voice. PSARC needs to determine who that voice will be. Mike Norris is the DCNR liaison with the PSARC.

## **Council By-Laws Actions:**

As preparation was made to make the second reading of the proposed By-Laws changes, a motion was made (A Appel) and seconded (K Conover) to waive the second reading. A recommendation was made to provide a short verbal summary of the proposed changes. The vote to waive was unanimous. A short summary of proposed changes was made. A motion was made (R Keiser) and seconded (Eric Gustkey) to accept the proposed changes to the By-Laws as read at the Council meeting in September, and printed and distributed to PSARC members with the December meeting notice. The motion was approved unanimously with 10 delegates present. The voting requirement is for a 213 plurality.

### **Other Council Business:**

Ron Wisbith (Rescue 40) presented a proposal for development of state legislation regarding ground search and rescue services in Pennsylvania. He discussed the legislative process and the importance for having ground SAR programs recognized as a state asset.

Council President John Miller asked Vice President Joe Thrash to develop a Council WEB site with mailboxes for officers, directors, and training and activity schedules. It was also proposed that PSARC develop an e-mail closed list server capability. Jim Howley, retiring Director on the Board of Directors was thanked for many years of service to the Council. A standing round of applause accompanied the thanks from the Council.

The meeting was adjourned at 1320 hours. Respectfully submitted:  
Peter McCabe, Secretary

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

A second Board of Directors meeting was called at 1330 to conduct necessary business by the new Board leadership.

President Miller indicated that it is important the Board establish goals and objectives for the next two years. Board members with input should contact him at first opportunity. The February 1998 Board meeting will begin at 0930 with the Quarterly Council meeting beginning at 1100.

It was suggested that a Board retreat be scheduled sometime this spring. All officers and directors were asked to bring their calendars to the February meeting. The meeting adjourned at 1355.

Respectfully submitted:  
Peter McCabe, Secretary