

Minutes

NAFA® Board of Directors Meeting, January 12, 2024

Held via Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

Board Members:

Emily-Rose Allred
Jonathan Bescher
Kathy Haney
Cindy Henderson
Paula Johnson
Meagan Langs
Lynda Mantler
Jayne McQuillen
Dana Nichols

Executive Director:

Steve Corona

Guest:

Karen Oleson

Jayne called the meeting to order at 3:06 pm CT.

Officer's Reports

Chair's Comments:

1. Jayne wanted to publicly thank Lynda for her seven years of service on the board, not just as secretary but all the work at CanAm and other duties she has completed and weighed in on. It has been greatly appreciated and it has definitely been nice to have a voice from the very west coast.
2. Thank you to the Elections and Nominating Committee volunteers, namely, Terry McClean and Curtis Smith who have done lots of work to make our elections run smoothly right until the close of elections. These are positions required to be filled by non-board members.

Executive Director's Comments:

1. Invitational Update
AKC/ESPN will not be able to hold an invitational early this year. There have been some problems with AKC/ESPN pinning down a time and venue. It may need to be held later this year or the beginning of next year.

2. FOWC Update

Unfortunately, NAFA will not be represented at the Flyball Open World Cup (FOWC) this year. There was not enough time for clubs to fundraise, vaccinate, etc. for international travel. We hope to have more notice before the next FOWC.

3. RD Update

- Jeff Wright is stepping down as RD in Region 6. With the board's approval, Steve would like to appoint Steve Heine as his replacement. Steve asked the board to approve Steve Heine. The board supports this appointment.
- We thank Jeff for his time as RD.
- He will continue as a NAFA judge.

Jayne asked if we have ever invited European clubs to CanAm.

Steve: We've had clubs/competitors from Japan, Australia and Norway. Steve indicated that we have not done this in the past, however it is a great idea.

There was discussion about how to assist clubs that might like to come to CanAm for the competition with logistics and equipment.

Steve will discuss this with Edwin Vinken from FOWC.

Dana: Do we know which building CanAm will be held in this year?

Steve: We still don't know which building we will be in.

Jayne suggested we get a 3-year commitment.

Steve is trying to get this accomplished.

Treasurer's Report:

Included with Finance Report

Secretary's Report:

The minutes of the last meeting September 26, 2023 have been approved and published.

Meagan asked about how the meeting minutes get created. Lynda noted that she listens to the recording of the meeting, types the minutes, and refers to Karen's notes.

Election Committee:

Kathy thanked fellow committee members Terry and Curtis as well as a special shoutout to Dana who helped immensely with the election process.

Jayne took the board into executive session at 3:19 pm.

Jayne took the board out of executive session at 3:57 pm.

The board ratified election results and elected officers.

Standing Committee Reports

Judges' Committee:

1. Randy Dillman – Provisional to approved.
On behalf of the Judges' Committee, Jonathan moved to advance Randy Dillman from provisional to approved judge. Lynda seconded. The motion carried with no opposition.
2. Update on Paula's efforts on judge recruitment
Paula has interviewed judges for a blog designed to generate interest in becoming a NAFA judge. Thank you, Paula, for taking this on and to the judges who responded and spoke with Paula. The answers were great.

Rules Committee:

1. Update on research regarding possible change to Performance.
The only outstanding Rules Committee issue is the possible change to Performance during an event that was discussed at the November board meeting.

We polled RDs to find out how often performance was being used. There was quite a bit of feedback. Some RDs were in favor of it and some were not.

The committee tried to come up with a proposal but it is a very complicated topic. The committee felt that to come up with a proposal for this meeting would have been too rushed. Any rule change would take effect October 1, 2024, so it makes sense to take a little more time with it.

Karen had an idea to change the FEO rule so that it would count for points if you run 4 dogs. Timesheets can't be changed once racing has begun.

Dana wonders if we should solicit input from the members of NAFA. This was not covered with the Rules Committee, but just curious if we should get a little more input from members of NAFA, i.e. an email where they sent their input. It would be a significant rule change.

Jayne: To take something to the general populous we need something more concrete regarding what the options are.

Dana: There are so many facets with this that make it very difficult to get progress in the Rules Committee. There are very strong opinions about this (for and against) and it gets complicated.

Dana is looking for direction on how to proceed.

Lynda: Suggestion for FEO getting points if there are 4 dogs running is interesting.

Jonathan feels very strongly that there should be very stringent criteria for deciding if a team should be able to do this or not. He doesn't want this used unless a dog is hurt.

Dana spoke to how difficult it will be for judges to police if the dog is hurt, or if the dog just cannot perform. She would rather have us go to an FEO team earning points than have us make a rule that is going to create a lot of conflict.

Karen: Looking back at the history of FEO, it was created because back many years ago, it was a way for a team to continue to participate and not have a whole weekend "wasted" because a dog on the team could not compete. It is similar to what is being asked here.

Jayne suggested perhaps the Rules Committee could have some further ZOOM meetings.

Dana noted the meeting will just go circular. We need to decide if we want this to happen and what that would look like.

Dana: How does the board feel about going out to the membership and asking them if they feel FEO teams should get points. This is a pretty radical departure from where we've been in the past. Open and performance classes started because of the prohibition on changing clubs. It was initially 120 days before you could run with a different club. Before open and performance, a dog had to completely sit out of flyball for 120 days. Now that rule is down to 87 days and only applies to regular and multibreed. The initial open and performance rules still required a height dog. So, open and performance were used to allow you to add a dog from another club. It's only in recent years that we changed the open and performance rules to allow teams to run any height. It wasn't about the height dog at all when the rules were first put in place.

Paula: Going back to what started this discussion. How widespread is the issue this is trying to address? There are strong feelings on both sides and the challenges that it is presenting. Is it worth opening a hornet's nest?

Dana: The original proposal was from Rachel Olson, a Co-RD in Region1. The concern was that the height dog either couldn't or wouldn't complete so the height dog was pulled and they ran at maximum jump height. She felt that was unsafe. In Meagan's region (6), a team had height dog problems so went FEO the first day and the second day they declared performance. In Dana's region (19), teams will run open instead of regular. Clubs entering multiple teams will sometimes seed a team at 15 seconds when they actually run 22 seconds because they don't want to race against themselves. Meagan and Rachel's concern is that for newer clubs/dogs trying to get height dog going, it is very discouraging to enter the teams in regular and then have a cluster due to a dog issue. Meagan and Dana's regions are smaller and have only 4 to 5 tournaments a year, so they don't really know what the dogs are going to do because of the long time span in between events.

Jayne: Let's have a Rules Committee ZOOM meeting and try to get some concrete proposals to come back to the board with and maybe have something for the public to work on. It could be that the committee does not have a recommendation for the board.

The matter is being referred back to the Rules Committee.

Finance Committee:

1. Update on financial reporting

One of the things that the committee has been working on since Cindy taking over as treasurer is revamping of the general ledger codes. A draft of the codes was compiled and Karen did a tremendous amount of work entering all those new codes into the system and remapping them all.

Crystal Cappel as a member of Finance Committee has been using her expertise and background to further refine that work and make recommendations on how to handle specific circumstances.

The Finance Committee held a meeting and Crystal walked the committee through what she had worked on with Karen in cleaning up, refining and providing recommendations.

Three statements were provided:

1. NAFA First Quarter 2024 Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet Statements
2. NAFA Fiscal Year 2023 Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet Statements
3. CanAm 2023 Profit and Loss Statement

Jayne took the board into executive session at 4:28 pm to review detailed financial information.

Jayne took the board out of executive session at 5:14 pm.

Commented [LMI]:

The board went through all of the financial data that was provided to us by Crystal and Karen's in-depth reporting. We will be using this information to have budget projections for our next meetings in a more timely and regular fashion.

We are working to establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and tools for use during transition of officers.

A very special thank you to Crystal for all her hard work.

In looking at finances, one of the things the board discussed was would it be more financially feasible to have participants print off certificates rather than mail them out?

There were ideas about how to make it possible for people to print their title certificates at home. Some members felt that it should be all or nothing i.e. all owners need to print the awards or no owners need to print the awards. Steve will check with Annie about what she thinks about the process.

There are other dog organizations that do this. There are some people who like the award presentation so that is also a consideration.

Steve will talk to Annie about the cost of awards, certificates, plaques, postage, etc.

Dana asked if we are searching for a database administrator as Emma had asked to step down from the position. Has progress been made finding a replacement? Steve will address this as it comes under his purview.

The board took a break for 15 minutes at 5:30 pm.

Nominating Committee:

No report.

Marketing Committee:

1. Update on CanAm apparel sales.
 - More shirts were sold this year than last.
 - 255 web orders and another 189 at the event.
 - This was the first year that ladies' products were offered. The women's apparel fit small. Any issues with that we were able to exchange with unisex items and still able to provide them with something.
 - \$2333 will be received after the worker shirts were expensed, \$2855 - \$522. Judges' shirts were separate.
 - Since 2019, the best year for shirt income was 2019, (\$2432) and the second-best year was 2023.
 - The most popular items have always been the hoodies.
 - Team colors and number of participants on each team determines the most popular color sold.
 - Mylogoshop provides very good service with providing sales at venue. They will even make up more shirts during the weekend if running low on a specific product.

2. Online store update.
 - We are looking at having an online store that includes 40th anniversary goods, judges' shirts, title patches, tournament prizes.
 - We had previously considered Bonfire, however, experience of current board members found that the product was varied in quality and supported looking for a different supplier.
 - Printful is a print on demand store; a printing and drop shipping company that sends goods directly to our customers. The only labels for shipping would be NAFA labels. There is some interface involved with that. Ordering from the site would be seamless to the customer.
There would be some setup involved (ecommerce platform).

 - Shopify seems like something which might be useful to us. It is one of the most popular ecommerce platforms.
 - One of the simplest to use
 - Quick set up
 - User friendly interface
 - Helpful customer support
 - Live carrier shipping rates. Free shipping is best from a client perspective. We would need to set parameters for that in the ecommerce

platform. Many shopping carts are abandoned when the customer sees the added shipping costs. If we include the shipping costs in the item cost, we would likely sell more.

- Easy to add products
- Taxes are charged according to the jurisdiction where the product is being shipped. There is a flyball club that is currently using Printful and they would recommend it. The quality is consistent and the complaint they had was resolved quickly.
- We've asked the flyball club which ecommerce platform they are using and if we can have a look at their store.
- Printful offers DTG – Direct-to-Garment printing of digital printing uses a modified inkjet printer to apply digital designs directly to fabric.
- Printful also offers all over printing, sublimination, UV printing and embroidery.
- They provide the product. Alternatively, we can send them a product of our own and they will store it and fulfill orders of that product. A storage fee would apply. This could be possibly be a way to offer tournament prizes, ribbons, etc.
- Printful ships to Canada, same products. Shipping times will vary but will be most likely be sent by mail.
- We set the price. If the Printful price to us is \$12 and we put a price of \$20 to the consumer, we make \$8.
- So far, Printful ticks the most boxes for features that we are looking for.

Dana mentioned how nice it is to see the committee getting a social media presence out there.

Lynda: The Facebook page that Meagan created for draft NAFA Facebook posts has been very useful to see how posts will appear and also for collaboration on ideas for the posts.

We now have access to Instagram.

Paula: We should put together a spreadsheet with information about access to our social media accounts.

Disciplinary Committee:

No report

Disciplinary Committee Report:			Effective Date
Terry Griffin	Suspension	Conduct prejudicial to the sport of NAFA flyball	09/21/2022
Whisper, 110704	Suspension	Administrative excusal	05/01/2020
Prank, 140408	Suspension	Administrative excusal	05/01/2020
Ripple, 120746	Suspension	Administrative excusal	05/01/2020
Daisy, 120612	Suspension	Administrative excusal	05/01/2020
Marion Brinkman	Suspension	Conduct prejudicial to the sport of NAFA flyball	Indefinitely

Mike Mattos	Suspension	Conduct prejudicial to the sport of NAFA flyball	Indefinitely
Janet Nelson Morris	Suspension	Conduct prejudicial to the sport of NAFA flyball	1998
Dave Mueller	Suspension	Conduct prejudicial to the sport of NAFA flyball	1998
Cheryl Mueller	Suspension	Conduct prejudicial to the sport of NAFA flyball	1998
Jennifer Nelson	Suspension	Conduct prejudicial to the sport of NAFA flyball	1998

Review Panel – no report

Special Committee Reports:

Technology:

1. EJS - Scoreboard Values

Dave Thomas has figured out how to get the split times from the EJS rather than having to rely on cameras on the console or the scoreboard displays. This is mainly for the invitationals. Fewer scoreboards needed.

2. Light Tree (Thomas Tubes)

There are 4 or 5 of the Thomas tubes in use. The connections are not really sturdy. Jonathan would like to get those replaced and 4 backups made. Mike Smith and Karen Oleson have volunteered to build them. Would like to get approval to purchase the parts. Jonathan will ask Dave to get the parts ordered and send to Mike and Karen. Approximate unit cost of a completed light tree is \$250 excluding the link modules already purchased.

Dana: Shouldn't this be something that should be brought before the board and ask for permission to spend \$1000 on Thomas tubes?

Steve: Has authority to spend up to \$5000. For 8 tubes it's less than \$2000. Dave does not tend to charge us for R & D or labor. He only asks for parts.

Communications Committee:

No Report

CanAm Steering Committee:

Steve: Waiting to hear back from ISF regarding what building will be available.

Invitational Selection Committee:

No Report.

NAFA Blog Committee:

Related to Communications Committee: Blog post for judges will go up shortly. Jayne will roll this committee into the Communications Committee.

Junior Handler's Committee:

Paula: Angelica Tambor and Shelly Switick have been added to the committee. There will be a Jr. Handler feedback webinar next Saturday.

From there, some goals can be set for the year and be brought back to the board.

For consistency, Lynda would like us to choose Jr. Handler or Jr. Participant and not use both terms. Jr. Participant is the preferred term.

NAFA 40th Anniversary Committee:

Meagan: Lynda posted a number of 40th Anniversary logos. The group has not yet had a formal meeting and they are just getting started.

Jayne will promote the committee at the AGM.

Jayne: Potentially have a social (Pot Luck) at CanAm one evening. Jayne has a volunteer willing to organize this as part of the 40th celebration.

Old Business:

New Business:

1. AGM Outline
 - Question for the AGM quiz. How many points were accumulated by all dogs in FY 2023?
 - There will be introductions at the beginning of the meeting.
 - Announce election results.
 - Recap of the 2023 statistics
 - Junior Participant
 - 40th Anniversary
 - Q & A at the end of the meeting.
 - The meeting is at 1:00pm CT.
2. NAFA was asked to support the Dog Genome project. There was no opposition to lending NAFA's support to this effort. Jayne will correspond to let them know we will support the project. Communications will let competitors know we are supporting the research.

Old Business

1. Website progress: There is no current update. Feedback from board members was lacking. Perhaps chairs of Communications and Marketing could be more involved with feedback. Jayne will form a special Website Advisory Committee. She will head the committee and pull in Marketing, Communications and anyone else interested.

Cindy: Maybe people external to the board would be helpful, Dave Strauss, or others like him such as Mackenzie Maidl who assists with the Animal Inn site.

2. Dana: Good to have SOPs for positions. Dana is happy to help organize it.

Ideas: New board member orientation, basic parliamentary procedure, etc., business operations manual, transition documents for the various roles, information about what the ED responsibilities are vs the board or chair responsibilities.

3. Steve received an email from Indiana State Fair stating they are looking for options to share with us and that a 3-year agreement makes sense. No decision yet on which building will be available for CanAm.

Lynda moved to suspend the meeting. Emily-Rose seconded. The motion carried with no opposition. The meeting was suspended at 6:50 pm.

The meeting will resume at 1:00 pm CT on Saturday, January 13, 2024.