



Maryland Volkssport Association Minutes April 28, 2018

Greeting: Bob called the meeting to order at 12:40 p.m. and those in attendance introduced themselves.

Attending: Bob Schmick, President; Mike Green, Regional Director; Sandy Lynch, Vice President; Darrell Neiley, Treasurer; Marie Wiser, Secretary.

Yvonne Pennington, Greenbelt -- thank you, Yvonne for today's great event and arranging the use of the meeting room.

James Farley, Baltimore Walking Club; Bob Wolfe, Freestate; Paul Lubell, Columbia Volksmarch Club; Ann Shilling, Antietam Pathfinders; Betty Green, guest

Reports

Minutes: Copies of the December 2017 minutes were distributed. Marie Wiser said that she repeated a section of Darrell's Treasury Report, from the October minutes to reinforce the suspension of the ten cents per credit walker fees. December minutes were accepted and approved. Today's Minutes should be reviewed by Bob and posted by Jim McDonald usually within ten days.

Treasury. Darrell Neily distributed copies of the MVA current treasury balance sheet and income statement. Total assets Bank balance is \$10,285.85. Additionally, we have merchandise (books, etc.) of \$3,020.00, for total assets of \$13,305.90.

Income and Expenses. For the Fiscal Year to Date, income exceeded expenses by \$2,938.92. As you know, MVA no longer collects ten cents per walker fee. However, there are left over walker fees collected from 2017 events. MVA expenses included a large expenditure, \$1,000 for new walker packets. Another large expenditure was for the purchase of, and mailing to, each club three hundred start cards. Darrell also keeps an emergency supply of walk-related supplies in his car. Mike Green requested that Darrell take over the AVA on-line start box Customer Support/Helpdesk, and Darrell agreed to do this. (As stated in the Regional Director's Report, Mike is contributing extensive IT assistance to AVA. And conversely, Darrell has a bit of freed-up treasury responsibility time by no longer receiving, tracking and depositing the ten cents walker fees.) Darrell said that there are over twenty new on-line trails spread out over the U. S just in the past month. The Treasurer's Report was accepted and approved.

Regional Director. Mike Green distributed copies of the report, attached below:

1. As presented at the Atlantic Region Conference, a new “Director's Toolbox” webpage has been created: <http://nodegreen.com/atrd/>
 - a. This webpage contains SW tools (mostly useful to PC users) and example directions to create walk directions and maps
 - b. I strongly encourage clubs to “up their game” and create high quality walk directions and maps for the YRE/SEs and TEs.
 - c. High quality event directions and maps is one way a club can contribute to the perceived value of an AVA event as compared to the ever-increasing number of activities that can be found on the internet with far less documentation.
2. The recent guided group walk in Harpers Ferry on April was created in response to an inquiry to AVA HQ from the Harper’s Ferry Bolivar Town Historic Foundation (HFBTHF).
 - a. The HFBTHF called AVA HQ about advertising a “Volksmarch” that they had planned in conjunction with their fundraising event but had NOT sanctioned with the AVA.
 - b. After notification from the AVA HQ of this event, I decided to work with this group to use the already sanctioned Harper’s Ferry Seasonal Event to conduct a guided group walk for the HFBTHF.
 - c. The HFBTHF agreed to pay \$3 the sponsoring SE club, KSVA, from their registration fees for each person participating in their event (paying as much \$25 per person for their fundraiser).\
 - d. The HFBTHF agreed to allow Volkswalkers not attending their event to only pay \$3 to the KSVA.
 - e. I agreed that the HFBTHF would not be charged for any walker paying for a new walker kit (\$5) who used a free walk coupon from the kit for the guided walk
 - f. The HFBTHF had a planned walking route for their event that was similar to that of the sanctioned seasonal event that did not go on the Appalachian Trail but instead included a loop through Bolivar.
 - i. I agreed to adopt their route just for this guided walk in place of the route used for this year’s seasonal event.
 - ii. Required text elements were added to the walk directions.
 - iii. Individual directions were re-written using a format (I personally prefer) that mentions all streets crossed and/or passed along the route.
 - iv. Descriptive paragraphs of historical points of interest found at the end of the original directions were intermixed into the walk directions as appropriate to their physical location.
 - g. We agreed to provide direction copies for the event.
3. Post HFBTHF Event Report from Dolores Grenier.
 - a. Attendance:26 (10 Credit Volkssporters, 16 Free Non Volkssporter, HFBTHF event participants)
 - b. 2 New Walker Packets were sold but no Coupons were used.
 - c. Even though the after-walk soup and entertainment were only for attendees who paid (up to \$25) for HFBTHF event, only 3 Volkswalkers paid the HFBTHF event Fee. But most of the Volkssporters did help themselves to the soup and enjoyed the entertainment. In light of this dilemma, Dolores agreed to donate \$48 (16x3) of \$3 walking fee expected from the paid HFBTHF participants to the HFBTHF.
 - d. Originally, the plan was for myself and Dolores Grenier to support this event. But due to a family issue, I was not able to attend. In my place, Bob Gambert and Darrell Neily stepped up (volunteered) to attend the event and staff the registration table (provided by Dolores).

- e. Dolores reports that she greatly appreciated the support of Darrell Neily and Bob Gambert.
4. The upcoming NEC/BOD meeting will be in Albany, NY, the weekend of June 8-10, 2018.
5. There is now a NEW required Youth Participation Waiver form that must be signed by the adult responsible for any underage (less than 18) person participating in an AVA Traditional Event.
 - a. This form, http://www.ava.org/Youth/AVA_Youth_Waiver_Release_2.6.2018.pdf is only required for underage participants in a TE (not a YRE or SE).
 - b. Clubs are advised to not take or post any pictures of underage AVA event participants.
6. A recent topic at a month NEC/BOD electronic meeting – YRE/SE Athletic Waiver Logs
 - a. The AVA does NOT require a YRE/SE walker to provide their name AND address in the YRE/SE log in a start box. A printed name and signature is sufficient. A walker should still provide both name and address on the start card for a YRE/SE that is later sent to club with the payment for the walk.
 - b. Leaving one's address in a log book in a walk box in a public location is perhaps NOT a wise thing to do in this day and age, where such info can be collected and used for nefarious purposes.
 - c. Clubs will still get to see who does their walks including the address when the completed start cards are sent in.
 - d. Providing name and address on TE logs should be continued since these logs are collected by club at the end of the event and are not exposed to the general public.
7. In the most recent Checkpoint, the AVA President authored a lengthy report on the recent AVA IT activities.
 - a. Included in this report was a discussion of the efforts to upgrade AVA ESR server (used for creating, editing, approving, and searching for YRE/SE/TEs.)
 - b. Your regional director was the IT committee member who worked with the AVA HQ consultant to successfully move the ESR web services from a server running at Microsoft Operation System (OS) WIN Server 2003 to a new/rebuilt server running the OS WIN Server 2012 R2.
 - c. As mentioned by the President, it appears that all of the problems we were having on the old server (including periods of slow responsiveness and/or request timeouts and the sporadic "invalid parameter/bad key" responses to attempts to search for events) have been fixed by "simply" upgrading to a new/current server OS.
 - d. Here "simply" means that no changes were made to the ESR system's basic web application as a part of this upgrade. It is fair to conclude that this system upgrade should have been done years ago.
8. OptOutside for 2018
 - a. Every club in the Atlantic region is expected to support the #OptOutside event for 2018.
 - b. This may be with either a TE/YRE/SE guided walk or by a selecting their best 2018 YRE/SE, appropriate for late November walking.
 - c. For the case of a guided event, the club may choose to support another club's guided event in the area.
 - d. In addition to selecting (and/or supporting) an OptOutside 2018 event, Clubs are expected to Improve the ESR comment field to reflect why this event was selected and to provide a single photo that is representative of a notable/interesting feature of the selected walk.

Website. Our thanks to Jim McDonald for his continued assistance with the MVA website. We are currently supporting six clubs.

Continuing Business:

Meetup and Facebook: Currently meetup walkers are 964. Our thank you to Linda Hassell for posting on Meetup and promoting our events. Club Presidents-- please utilize Facebook to promote your club activities. **Bob said he will check the accessibility of the MVA Facebook link.**

Atlantic Regional Conference: Bob commented that the Conference was very enjoyable. There were a good selections of trails, and a good silent auction. The VVA made a profit of \$2,700 on the Conference.

New Stamps: Bob said to date, the feedback he has received on the AVA new stamps has been positive.

Club Expenses Reimbursement: Bob said as an example of the MVA reimbursing clubs for expenses, MVA reimbursed the Greenbelt club \$75.00 for a donation paid to the Patuxent Research Refuge for the use of the meeting room for today's meeting. Additionally, MVA will reimburse the Baltimore Club \$135.00 for expenses to host the August 11 event at the Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area.

New Business:

Checkpoint: Club Presidents should pass the MVA Checkpoint to their club members to keep informed of changes, policies, etc.

NEC/BOD: Please refer to Regional Director Mike Green's comments on the NEC/BOD section contained above.

Emails After Posting Event Totals: Mike Green said the AVA is working to repair the emails they send to clubs after the posting of quarterly totals. He said there also will be a new method to enter your data on one page.

YRE Boxes: Bob reminded club Presidents to tell your POC's to check the status of your stamp pads. Many are in disrepair and should be replaced.

OptOutside: Please refer to the Regional Director's report above. Note: Mike Green commented that clubs should schedule their sanctioned event for OptOutside on a Friday in November. Can be any distance.

What is 72,711? Bob said that is the amount raised to date for AVA's Big Give.

Club Reports:

Antietam: Ann Shilling said the club supports Williamsport, two walks on the battlefield. Also, the club may possibly host a 5k for the November OptOut program. This will be human guided, not map guided, and of course, sanctioned. The club will host

Augustoberfest, and has added an art/cultural trail in Hagerstown. Antietam has been partnering with the Seneca Club and Cumberland Valley.

Seneca: Tony Laing said on March 23, the club re-elected the officers for another term. Their April 7 Westminster Event had 78 walkers. On April 21, the club took a bus trip to Harrisburg. Future events: September 29 - Frederick. October 13 - Muddy Branch. November 17 - Underground Railroad.

Freestate: Bob Wolfe reminded attendees that the club was hosting an event Sunday April 29, Fairland Sports Center. Their next event will be on October 6 at Darnell's Chance.

Greenbelt: Yvonne Pennington thanked everyone for participating in today's event, at the Patuxent Research Refuge. The club will hold evening walks from May through August. Future events: May 19 - College Park Airport. September 8 - Port of Bladensburg.

Columbia. Representing Columbia, Paul Lubell said Columbia hosted an event on April 14, Meadowbrook. Future events: June 2 Wilde Lake. July 2 Hickory Ridge. August event is to be determined. October 27 - Sykesville.

Baltimore: Jim Farley said the club is hosting an event on August 11 at Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area. Catonsville - date to be determined. November 3 - Conowingo.

Annapolis: Bob Schmick said the club is hosting an event on May 5 at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center. This is a woods walk. June 9 - Piney Orchard. This is a street festival. September - date (always a Sunday) to be determined for the Oktoberfest. December 8 - Eastport Yacht Boat Parade.

Next Meeting: July 7, Noon, Annapolis Amblers YRE, at the Severna Park Community Center, Severna Park, MD event.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.