



Maryland Volkssport Association Minutes July 7, 2018

Greeting: Bob called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

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

Yvonne Pennington, Greenbelt; Pat Astill, Antietam; James Farley, Baltimore Walking Club; Bob Wolfe, Freestate; Tony Lubell, Columbia Volksmarch Club; Jeff Giddings and Alice Filemyr, Seneca; Betty Green, guest; Mary Wolfe, guest; Margaret Neily, guest; Mike Cannon, guest.

The group wished Pat Astill a Happy Birthday!

Reports

Minutes: The April 2018 minutes were accepted and approved. Today's Minutes should be reviewed by Bob and posted by Jim McDonald usually within ten days.

Treasury.

Darrell said that we have begun a new fiscal year. Darrell said that he sold a significant number of new walker packets to the clubs. Also, as reported in April, Darrell is in charge of the AVA on-line start box Customer Support/Helpdesk. He has been getting feedback. There are some folks who are not comfortable, are reluctant, or do not possess the wherewithal to access and implement the on-line start box. Folks can grant the privilege to another individual to manage his/her account. It is suggested that a proxy person be appointed for each club to assist those persons who are in need of on-line start box assistance. Another suggestion is to charge a small fee (in addition to the event fee) payable to the proxy person for printing directions and stamped insert cards. It may be necessary for the proxy to establish a separate email account for those who are being assisted. Please feel free to direct any questions about on-line start box to Darrell in care of: dneily333@gmail.com.

The Treasurer's Report was accepted and approved.

Please see Attached MVA Treasurer Financial Statement July 2018, below.

Category	1/1/2018- 3/31/2018	4/1/2018- 6/30/2018	7/1/2018- 7/3/2018	OVERALL TOTAL
INCOME				
AAR Income	346.20	131.50	0.00	477.70
MVA YRE Events	186.00	57.00	0.00	243.00
FROM Blue KM Books (500-8000)	0.00	42.00	0.00	42.00
FROM Gold Event Books (1501 & Up)	0.00	60.00	0.00	60.00
FROM Green Event Books (1-50)	0.00	18.00	0.00	18.00
FROM New Walker Packets	0.00	224.00	0.00	224.00
FROM Orange KM Books (8001-22000)	36.00	66.00	0.00	102.00
FROM Purple Event Books (51-600)	0.00	132.00	0.00	132.00
FROM Rose Event Books (601-1500)	0.00	96.00	0.00	96.00
FROM Two-part Start Cards	0.00	20.00	0.00	20.00
TOTAL INCOME	568.20	846.50	0.00	1,414.70
EXPENSES				
AAR Participation and Processing	60.00	32.75	0.00	92.75
Discount	-236.00	-52.20	0.00	-288.20
Extra Expense Approved at MVA meeting	0.00	135.00	0.00	135.00
Fees & Charges	10.00	0.00	0.00	10.00
Gifts & Donations	250.00	75.00	0.00	325.00
Internet	89.94	0.00	0.00	89.94
Leased Space	0.00	112.50	0.00	112.50
Misc.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sanctioning Fees	10.00	25.00	0.00	35.00
Shipping	73.50	18.00	0.00	91.50
TO Blue KM Books (500-8000)	0.00	120.00	0.00	120.00
TO Gold Event Books (1501 & Up)	0.00	60.00	0.00	60.00
TO New Walker Packets	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
TO Rose Event Books (601-1500)	180.00	60.00	0.00	240.00
TO Two-part Start Cards	147.00	21.00	0.00	168.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,584.44	607.05	0.00	2,191.49
OVERALL TOTAL	-1,016.24	239.45	0.00	-776.79

Regional Director

7/4/2018

Mike Green, [at rd@ava.org](mailto:rd@ava.org)

Attached are three reports prepared by Mike Green: His Report, A Paid Participant Fee Increase Motion, and AVA Total Event Participation From 1976 – 2017.

Mike told the group that a subject to be voted on within two months by the NEC/BOD is the ability to cut out of an insert a walk(s) and to paste them into your book(s). This will be especially helpful for on-line registration. The following are Mike's Reports. Club Presidents – please forward these Minutes to your members, since there are many upcoming changes/proposals to our sport.

1. As announced to all club POC's, the AVA now supports club editing of the stamp text for newly approved events. The following link is to a page that provides a link to a pdf describing how a club may customize their event stamps: <http://nodegreen.com/esr/>
 - a. Clubs may edit the text of an event stamp after event approval up until the stamp is scheduled for laser cutting, typically about 2 months before the event start date.
 - b. Once an event is approved, it may take up to 2 days for the associated stamp to become available for editing. New (not renewed) YRE/SEs will take longer since a new YRE/SE stamp # needs to be first manually assigned.
 - c. This new stamp feature means it is even more important for clubs to submit their events at least 90 days before the start date to allow time for stamp editing/creation after the event is approved.
2. Please submit your 2018 YRE/SEs for renewal or any new YRE/SEs for 2019 by the middle of August 2018. The absolute deadline is August 30th.
 - a. This deadline is necessary to allow the approved YRE/SE to appear in the 2019 Start Point book.
 - b. If your club decides to not renew a 2018 YRE/SE for 2019, please use the AVA ERS system "Manage YRE's" feature to mark the event in question as "No Renewal".
3. The AVA NEC/BOD met in Albany, NY (at the site of the 2019 AVA convention) on June 8-10, 2018. Meeting minutes with attachments for the presentations during this meeting will soon be posted on the AVA site. Here is brief summary of this meeting
 - a. An AVA National Calendar was approved to better align AVA resources and maximize publicity efforts.
 - i. The National Programs Committee will be working to develop criteria and details.
 - ii. An example of an event that might appear on this calendar would be Crazy Horse.
 - b. The Annual Budget was approved.
 - i. It was recognized that we will again have a financial shortfall, and both the Board and Staff are working hard to improve both the expense and income side of the financial equation.
 - ii. As is standard practice, the budget will be reviewed and modified midyear as appropriate.
 - iii. While we continue to work to reduce expenses, the real solution would appear to be to increase the number of paying walkers. This isn't just about "free" walkers, but also about bringing in more people who want to walk with us.
 - c. Annual club dues were increased from \$50 to \$75.
 - i. This is the first dues increase in AVA history.

- ii. Dues continue to be less than the \$318 per club expended on general liability insurance, IVV Club Dues, staff time dedicated to club maintenance activities, etc.
- d. At the 2019 Biennial Convention, the NEC/Board will present a motion to change the AVA accounting year from a fiscal year ending June 30 to a calendar year ending December 31.
 - i. A previous study by the AVA Treasurer (published in TAW) indicated that the impact on clubs will be minimal. This will be a proposed change to our Bylaws.
- e. A motion was passed to create a policy for youth under the age of 18 who participate in AVA events.
 - i. The Standards and Evaluation Committee was tasked with drafting this policy which will then have to be approved by the NEC/Board.
 - ii. At this time there is no requirement for underage youth to sign an additional special waiver for AVA sanctioned Traditional Event.
- f. In the future, AVA Life and Associate Members will be allowed (not required) to electronically self-report updates to their lifetime achievement record books.
 - i. The process and implementation date will be prescribed by the Executive Director. This is another step into the digital world which is where everyone is going today.
 - ii. While we will work hard to not leave members behind, we know that we must move into a digital world if we are to have a bright future.
- g. Beginning in 2019, the AVA Centurion Program will be discounted 50% for all AVA Lifetime and Associate Members and available for purchase by everyone else at the regular price.
 - i. This is a new benefit for AVA Lifetime and Associate Members, and a new opportunity for non-members to participate in this challenge.
- h. The AVA will do what is necessary to create Sustained Giving as a donation method.
 - i. Think PBS and their fundraising methods.
- i. Since there is no restriction by IVV, the restriction by AVA has been removed to allow walking events to be sanctioned on cruise ships that originate from a U.S. port.
- j. A presentation was made by the IT Committee on the steps of the process to create our new stamps and how the clubs will be able to customize their stamps after their sanction request has been approved and before the stamp moves into production.
 - i. More information will be available in the July Checkpoint on customizing stamps.
 - ii. Information has been distributed to Atlantic Region Club POCs (See Item# 1 in this report)
- k. The Executive Director was given specific direction to reduce the cost of publishing TAW.

1. In the future, as an option, the AVA ESR will support download of directions/map pdf (Event pdf) for any AVA sanctioned YRE/SE.
 - i. The IT Committee and Executive Director will work out the operational details. Of note, a participant would still need to register at a physical Walk Box (for non-OLSB events).
 - ii. It will be optional for clubs to upload Event pdfs in support of this feature. This is another example of our incremental move into the digital world.
 - iii. The guidelines for this motion indicated that the user would have to pay a \$2 “convenience fee” to download an event’s directions/map. This convenience fee would be split between the club and the AVA. Walkers would still be expected to pay the usual \$3 walk fee to the club when they register and complete the walk.
- m. A motion to temporarily increase the paid participant fee for events from \$1.25 to \$2.25 was postponed to allow RD’s to get club feedback (see attachments) with a plan to vote on this motion during the September 2018 NEC/BOD electronic meeting.
4. 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 promoting 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 or traditional event in the area.
 - d. In addition to selecting (and/or supporting) an OptOutside 2018 event, Clubs are expected to
 - i. Improve the event’s ESR comment field to reflect why this event was selected.
 - ii. Provide a single photo that is representative of a notable/interesting feature of the selected walk.

Paid Participant Fee Increase Motion – mcg 7/4/2018

During the recent AVA NEC/BOD meeting held June 8-10, 2018 in Albany, NY, the following motion was considered:

Beginning January 1, 2019, AVA member clubs shall pay AVA \$2.25 for each paid event participant and shall be allowed to charge each event participant up to \$4. This policy change shall be reviewed and reapproved after 24 months.

This motion was postponed for later consideration by the NEC/BOD members until after this motion has been presented to and feedback is provided back from the clubs. There will be a vote on this motion during the September 2018 NEC/BOD electronic meeting.

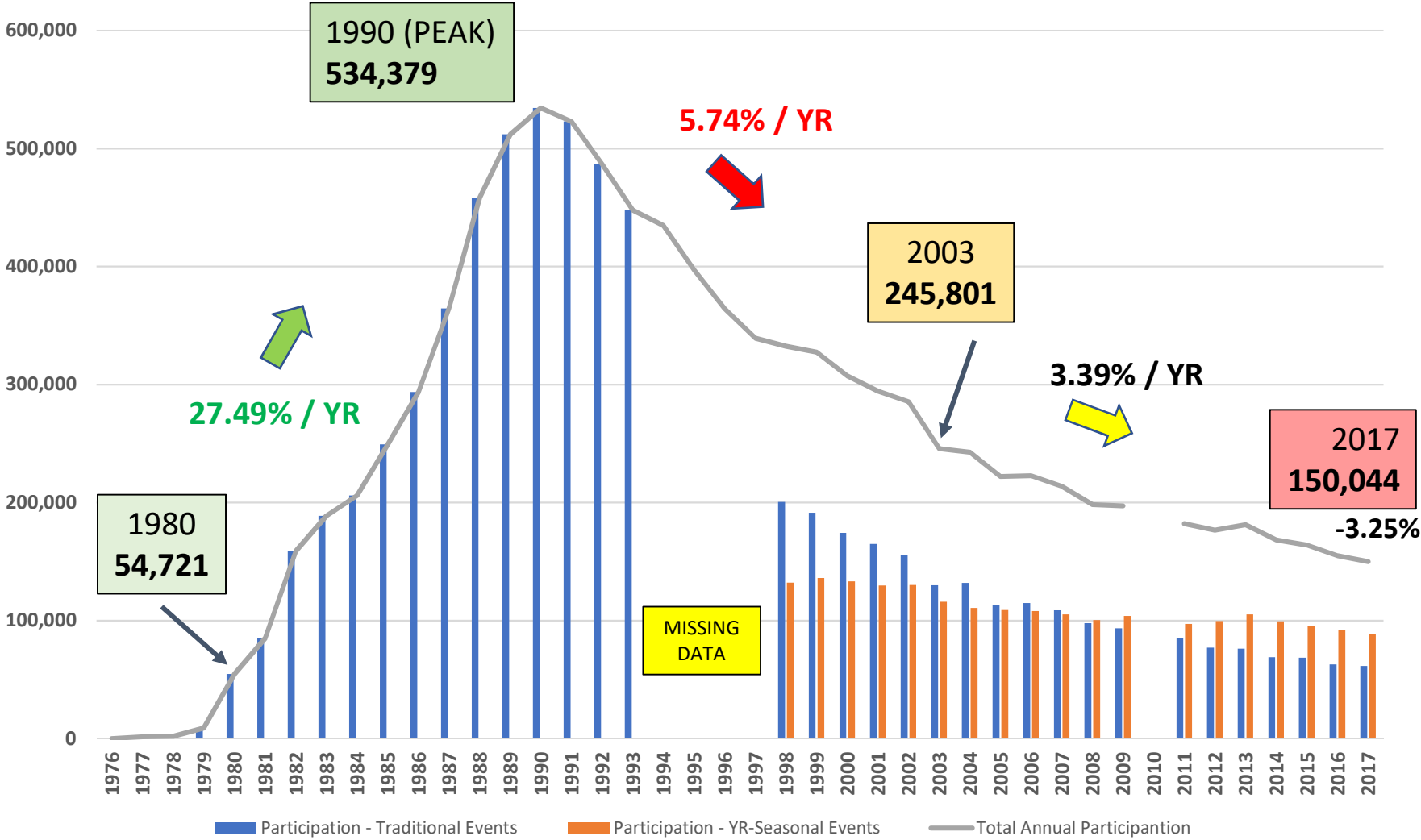
While your initial reaction might be to reject this proposal. I believe you need to be aware of the following facts.

1. The approved AVA budget for 2019 assumes a funding deficit of over \$100k to be paid out the AVA reserve fund. The AVA has been running a deficit of about \$100k for a number of years now.
2. If the AVA continues to run this size of deficit for the following years, then the AVA reserve fund will be completely consumed in 6 years.
3. Please find attached a chart showing the AVA event participation history. Note that the AVA HQ office staff count has remained the same since 1990 when there were 534k event participants until the present when there are 150k participants.
4. Cutting AVA HQ office staff to address the deficit would only address a portion of the deficit and significantly impact AVA HQ's support of clubs as well as currently planned activities to promote participation and secure external funding sources.
5. While a number of activities of the current NEC/BOD are aimed at increasing event participation, the downward trend of event participation that we have observed over the years has yet to be reversed.
6. By increasing the participant fee to \$2.25 temporarily, the AVA is able to extend the period of time for it to hopefully increase participation as well as secure external funding sources.

If your club is against this proposal, you should consider what you and/or your club are going to do to increase AVA event participation in next 2 years. How are you or your club going to double participation in the next 2 years to eliminate this funding shortfall? If you really want to assure the AVA will be around 5 years from now, you should consider supporting this fee increase.

Please provide your club's feedback on this important motion by the end of August 2018.

AVA TOTAL EVENT PARTICIPATION FROM 1976 -- 2017



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 968. Bob gave thanks to Linda Hassell for posting meetup, and he will contact Linda to suggest our Events be posted on Meetup closer to the actual event date. Club Presidents: please utilize Facebook to promote your club activities.

Second Quarter YRE Totals. Reminder to please send in your totals.

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

Club Expenses Reimbursement. MVA could, in certain circumstances, reimburse a club for some event expenses. MVA will consider and vote on proposals from clubs to subsidize extraordinary event costs in cases where a club might otherwise find the event unaffordable. A recent example of an event that received a subsidy from MVA is BWC's upcoming traditional event at the Fair Hill Natural Resource Management Area in Elkton, Maryland. MVA approved and paid a subsidy of \$135 for the required reservation fee.

New Business

Checkpoint. Club Presidents should pass the MVA Checkpoint to their club members to keep informed of changes, policies, etc. Also refer to the Regional Director's report above for detailed Checkpoint information.

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. Also, please see Club Reports below, for walk opportunities for OptOutside.

Lynette Reagan Memorial Service. Lynette Reagan passed away 6/08 - Past President of the Baltimore Walking Club.

This is a post from Facebook re: Memorial Service 7/28 in Jarrettsville, Md.

Hello friends & family- This is Lynette Reagan's son Tim. We appreciate all of the sympathy and condolences we have received. Her passing came as a shock to us all and we are beginning the healing process day by day.

For those on the east coast, we are having a Celebration of Life for her on Saturday, July 28th from 11am-3pm in Jarrettsville, MD. Given her extensive friends list I am not sure where

everyone lives so if you didn't get a formal invite my apologies and feel free to message me. Thanks again for all the love and support!

Address of Service:

[Tim Reuling](#)

2329 Northcliff Rd.

Jarrettsville, MD

Club Reports

Antietam. Representing Antietam, Pat Astill reported that the club will host Augustoberfest, on August 18, 2018. The club supports two walks in Williamsport.

Seneca. Below is the report prepared by Seneca President Tony Laing: Additionally, Jeff Giddings said that the club has sanctioned the entire length of the Appalachian Trail in Maryland (41 miles) as a Seasonal Event with the Online Start Box (OSB). You can walk any distance on the AT for event and distance credit.

Sanctioned **2018** Events:

Seasonal June 2 - October 13: Takoma Park and Silver Spring

September 29: Oktoberfest, Frederick, MD

October 13: Muddy Branch Greenway Trail, Gaithersburg, MD

November 17 Underground Railroad at Woodlawn Manor, Sandy Spring MD

Unsanctioned Group Walk - November 23 REI Opt Outside – Seneca Creek State Park

Sanctioned **2019** Events:

January 9: C&O Canal / Winter Wonderland, Carderock MD

April 13: Croydon Creek Nature Center – Rockville MD

There are two items to bring up that we (Seneca) want to discuss:

1. A suggestion that AVA have some mechanism for allowing walkers to say whether they want awards or not. Carolyn Thurber stated that many volksmarchers are not using event/distance books or sending them because they don't want the awards (pins, patches, and certificates). She suggested that the AVA have a way for the individual to select which awards they wish to receive (if any). This would save AVA money and reduce waste. Yvonne Pennington suggested that the certificate could be sent by email as a PDF. There was a suggestion that if people don't want certain awards that they send the books in with a Post-It note stating that they only want certain awards (or none).
2. Although we can only decide when events are sanctioned in Maryland, we need better communication with clubs in adjacent jurisdictions especially with DC to prevent overlap.

Freestate. Bob Wolfe reported their next event will be on October 6 at Darnell's Chance, Upper Marlboro. Also sanctioned are December 31, 2018 and January 1, 2019 events at the Savage United Methodist Church, Savage, Maryland.

Greenbelt. Yvonne Pennington said the club is sponsoring evening walks on July 18 and on August 15, at the Greenbelt Community Center. On September 8 there will be an event at Port of Bladensburg. Also, a bike stamp for the YRE bike. A Seasonal walk scheduled for October 1, with on-line registration, at the Botanical Gardens. The club will walk the OptOut walk in Hershey PA. The club now has a corporate membership for the Greenbelt pool—you only pay for the event, not for the pool use.

Columbia. Representing Columbia, Paul Lubell said Columbia will hold elections of officers in July. The club is hosting an event on Saturday, July 14, at Hickory Ridge and an event on October 27 in Sykesville.

Baltimore. Jim Farley said the club is hosting an event on August 11 at Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area. An event on September 22, in Catonsville. A Maryland Favorite on November 3, Conowingo Dam. And an event in Hamden, on December 15. Additional events have been sanctioned for 2019: Harbor East trail and Patterson Park trail on March 30, 2019.

Annapolis. Bob Schmick said the Club is hosting the Oktoberfest on Sunday, September 23. And on December 8 - the Eastport Yacht Boat Parade.

Mike Cannon, a guest attending today's meeting, distributed to the group a copy of Proposal for AVA Special Event Program: Airports ("Celebrating American Flight"). Seneca is the supporting club for this proposed special event. Bob Schmick directed Mr. Cannon to give the proposal for handling to our Regional Director, Mike Green, who accepted this.

Next Meeting: September 22, 2018, New Hope Church, 200 Ingleside Road, Catonsville, MD 21228. Time t/b/d.

Meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.