

FOREST FIRE LOOKOUT ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the 2004 Annual Meeting, Board of Directors

Saturday, 16 January 2004, Mount Alto, Pennsylvania

The 2004 Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order at 10:00 a by chairman Keith Argow. Saturday, 16 January 2004, at the Mount Alto Campus of Penn State University at Mount Alto, Pennsylvania

Present: Chairman Keith Argow, Secretary Ray Grimes, Treasurer Gary Weber, Historian Rob Hoeye, Acting Eastern Deputy chair Bob Spear, Pennsylvania Steven Cummings, MA/CT/RI Henry Isenberg.

Keystone Chapter host Steve Cummings welcomed the group to Pennsylvania.

Minutes

The 2003 minutes were reviewed and approved as corrected.

Report of the Chairman:

Keith Argow presented the report of the Chairman including the top ten accomplishments for 2003. These are highlighted in his column in autumn issue of Lookout Network. He also commented about the apparent resistance of the association to adopt management by objectives annual program planning. He noted a major accomplishment for 2003 was the completion and distribution of the FFLA membership brochure. He displayed a Chairman's Award Certificate for Outstanding Service that will be presented to Wyoming director Pat Lynch and the Western Heritage Company of Loveland Colorado for their role in producing the brochure.

Treasurer Report

Gary Weber presented the Treasurer Report for 2003 which was reviewed by the board. The association completed the year well within budget. A copy of the Treasurer Report is attached as part of these minutes.

Moved by Weber and seconded by Isenberg to approve and accept the 2003 financial report. Passed.

Approval of FFLA Budget for 2004

Gary Weber present a proposed budget for 2004 based on requests from Committee Chairs and ongoing program funding needs already approved by the Board. After discussion and adjustments a balanced budget totaling \$10,003.was approved,

Moved by Weber, seconded by Spear to adopt the 2004 budget. Passed.

State Reports:

Written annual reports were submitted by the following chapters: ME, NH, VT, NY, PA, NJ, VA/SE, AR, AZ/NM, CO/UT, CA/n, CA/c, WY, WA, OR, and ID/MT.

Written annual reports were NOT submitted by the following chapters and are again requested for the record: MA/CT/RI, KY, MN, CA/s, CANADA, and AUSTRALIA.

The chapter annual reports are attached to these minutes. (Will be soon).

Group Photo:

Group photo and tour of Weistling Hall, the original structure at the Pennsylvania Forest Academy, 1906.

Committee Reports:

Election Committee: Committee Chair John Henshaw was unable to attend but had the ballots delivered to Washington, D.C. for counting and certification. The ballots did not reach FFLA in time to be delivered to the annual meeting. 15 ballots were cast by mail by deadline, 2 ballots arrived later, and 2 ballots were brought to the Annual Meeting for a total of 19 ballots cast. Since the election was uncontested for the positions of Chair, Eastern Vice Chair, and Treasurer, Chairman Argow declared an interim acceptance of the results until the ballots are certified by a third party. The results will be formally confirmed by email within 10 days.

Historian/Archivist:

Rob Hoeye summarized the results of the on-going Archiving Working Group that has been appointed develop and propose to the board for adoption a formal policy for archiving important and appropriate FFLA records and relevant private lookout material collections. He noted that existing archives are deficient and do not presently contain relevant material as specified in the bylaws. A copy of his report is attached as part of these minutes.

Fire Tower Restoration Grants:

Bob Spear reported that three restoration grants were approved in 2003. A total of eight grants had been authorized in the annual budget.

Webmaster:

Henry Isenberg reported for Bill Cobb who could not attend. There has been a steady rise in activity on visits to the website with more regular updates. During December that the web hosting was transferred to a new server with several disruptions that have been resolved. It is apparent that the importance of the web site to the implementation of FFLA programs continues to grow.

Chairman Argow announced the appointment of a FFLA Web Advisory Committee: Co-chaired by Rob Hoeye and Henry Isenberg with Bill Cobb and Gary Weber as members.

FFLA Email Answerman:

Henry Isenberg reported the site is getting lots of e-mail about the web transition. There were some questions about restoration and disassembly. For questions for which there is no easy answer, he passes them on to board members for response. He thanked members for their assistance.

LOOKOUT NETWORK Editor:

Gary Weber, Lookout Network editor, reported he now has redundant computer systems to avoid down time. His goal for 2004 is to improve the print quality, possibly via Adobe Acrobat. He is looking into the costs of adding a color cover. He is seeking additional feedback and activity reports. The Board commended Weber on the outstanding content of the Newsletter. Newsletter deadlines are: February 1, April 15, July 15 and October 15.

Membership Committee:

Gary Weber reported a 5% net increase to 2003. New members exceeded drops by 2 to 1. In addition to the written reminders, an attempt is made to email members encouraging them to renew before they are dropped. A transition is being made from monthly renew dates to quarterly. Australia membership is an issue because they are behind and their expense is being temporarily carried by the Executive Committee Account.

Membership Brochures: 50,000 have been printed and 30,000 distributed. FFLA renewal forms will be updated to include the VISA/MC payment option via the Vienna, Virginia address. (web, newsletter, and renewal card). There are 37 new members via the brochures.

Archiving Working Group Exercise

Chair Hoeye gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the current progress of the discussions within the committee. An open discussion followed with additional suggestions and ideas for the committee. There is more committee work to be done. When completed their recommendations will be circulated to the Board for approval.

Program: The Pennsylvania Fire Tower Experience.

Host Cummings reported that the unexpected snowfall apparently deterred two retired lookout observers from attending. He then introduced Jim Kauffman, the son of a former observer on nearby Snowy Mountain Fire Tower who gave a very interesting presentation on his experiences as the son of a lookout while growing up within the Michaux State Forest. He is currently a forestry technician with the Pa. Bureau of Forestry.

Discussion of Strengths and Weaknesses of FFLA.

At the Western Summer Meeting in Bend, Oregon in October Chairman Argow conducted a discussion with attendees of the strengths and weakness of FFLA. Due to the shortage of time before dinner, the Board held an abbreviated discussion. There was a consensus that an outreach to the membership via Lookout Network Newsletter could be helpful, especially to a Long Range Planning Committee. A discussion followed on the merits of such a committee, and it was tabled until willing candidates and leaders can be identified.

Old Business:

FFLA Video:

Cummings reminded the Board that at the 2000 Annual Meeting held at French Creek, PA the Board had approved in concept the development of a video that could be used by the FFLA to make the public aware of the importance of fire towers and promote their maintenance and restoration. He exhibited several VHS tapes on lighthouses and fire prevention as examples of what could be done. His preliminary investigation is that a video could be produced for a little as \$2000 in a volunteer script writer and producer was found. Spear volunteered to contact Minnesota Director Dave Qualm who has produced a video on Maine forest fires. The proposal will be tabled until a proposal is developed. Chairman Argow asked if anyone would be willing to chair such an initiative, but there were no acceptances.

FFLA—Approved Museums

Cummings reminded the Board that at the Summer 2000 FFLA conference in New Hampshire he asked if FFLA would ask the Board of the Pennsylvania Forest Fire Museum if they would agree to be a designated FFLA--approved repository for the protection and display of fire lookout artifacts owned by FFLA members and others. He noted that as yet, no action has been taken by the Board on his request.

*Moved by Isenberg, seconded Weber, that “the FFLA recognize the Pennsylvania Forest Fire Museum as an appropriate repository to receive donations of fire lookout artifacts by FFLA members and others. This is the first endorsement by the FFLA board of what is hoped will be a network of museums across the US with a mission to help tell the story of fire detection.”
Passed.*

New Business:

Meeting Schedule for 2004:

Eastern Summer Meeting: Fairview Outdoor Education Center, Maryland, August 14-15.

Western Summer Meeting: Truckee, California, October 8—10.

2005 Annual Board of Directors Meeting, January 15 (Petersburg, VA—tentative).

Timely Distribution of Minutes:

Chairman Argow reported that several members had expressed concern that it takes a long time before minutes of the three meetings of the Board held each year to reach the membership. Cummings, the first Chairman, reminded the Board that minutes of the meeting should be separated from reports of the lookout trips and activities normally provided by the host chapter.

Moved by Cummings, seconded by Weber, to " limit scope of meeting minutes to the business meeting alone, and the host chapter is responsible for a report to Lookout Network Newsletter and the website about the tours and related conference activities." Passed.

Adjourn:

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 PM.