

Minutes of the
2015 FFLA Board Meeting

San Diego, CA

The FFLA Board meeting was held at the Cleveland National Forest Supervisor's Office in San Diego, California, on January 17. The meeting included a conference call which started at 0900 Pacific Time.

Present were Chairman Keith Argow, Southern California Directors Pam and George Morey, Treasurer and North Idaho-Montana Director Gary Weber, Secretary and New Jersey Co-director Ray Grimes, San Diego Riverside chapter leader Curt Waite, San Diego-Riverside chapter officers Bill Ulmer, Ramon Thomas, Scott McClintock, Bill Luedeke, and Neil Cadwallader. Cleveland NF officials present included Forest Supervisor Will Metz, Partnership Coordinator Anabele Cornejo, and Fire Management Officer Brian Rhodes.

Joining the meeting by conference call were Oregon Director and Western Deputy Chair Howard Verschoor, Southern Deputy Chair Ron Stafford, Eastern Washington Director Rod Fosback, Northern California Director Vicki Lamoureux, California-Sierra/Nevada Director Chris Fabbro, Wyoming Director Buddy Washington, Pennsylvania Director Steve Kidd, Arkansas Director Smoke Pfeiffer, Indiana Director Teena Ligman, Maine Director and Webmaster Bill Cobb, Southern New England Director Henry Isenberg, New Hampshire Director Chris Haartz, New York Director Laurie Rankin, Florida Director Bob Spear, and Hawaii Representative Ray Kresek.

The minutes from the January 2014 South Carolina Board Meeting were approved as posted on the website.

The election results tabulated by Elections Officer Rob Hoeye were read; 19 ballots were received. The results were: Southern Deputy Chair - Ron Stafford, 6 (no write-ins), Western Deputy Chair - Howard Verschoor, 6 (no write-ins), Secretary - Ray Grimes, 16 (no write-ins), Historian - Ron Stafford, 13 write-ins, Bob Spear, 1 write-in (no nominee on the ballot). Chairman Argow advised that no one can hold two officer positions; Ron Stafford then stepped down as Southern Deputy Chair and accepted the Historian position.

Chairman Argow then announced that he was stepping down as Southeastern U.S. Director and appointing Ron Stafford to the position; it covers those southern states that do not have chapters.

Treasurer Weber summarized the Treasurers Report that had previously been sent to board members. Income from Dues, Donations, and Merchandise Sales was higher than estimated in the 2014 budget. Several budgeted expenditures did not take place, or came in lower than estimated with only the Merchandise Purchase line item exceeding the budgeted amount.

Weber then summarized the Membership Report that had also previously been sent to board members. Membership had a net gain of 38 members in 2014 for an ending total of 955 paid members.

The Historian's Report was summarized by Chair Argow as outgoing Historian Bob Spear had not yet joined the conference call. The full report is posted on the FFLA website with the chapter reports.

As an offshoot of the Historian's Report, Ron Stafford and Steve Kidd gave a brief update on the status of Steve Cummings' research files on Pennsylvania fire tower information; it has been moved from his house in Chambersburg to the Pennsylvania Forest Fire Museum facilities. The museum will not be going through Steve's material until spring, since at this time it is being stored at an unheated museum building.

At the 2014 Board Meeting, Chairman Argow appointed a committee (Spear, Isenberg, and Haughwout) to seek the most appropriate means of honoring Steve Cummings. Spear had recently circulated a proposal for creating the Keystone Preservation Fund to honor Steve and to help preserve historic lookout materials and research. Isenberg then advised that he had been in contact with Spear and the fund was supposed to be called the Steve Cummings Memorial Fund rather than the Keystone Fund. Weber moved to establish the Steve Cummings Memorial Preservation Fund, seconded by Isenberg, and approved with no opposition.

Webmaster Bill Cobb advised that the website has been updated and has seen a 214% increase in traffic this past year over the previous year. Bill advised that he still looking for state chapter reports and asked everyone to please get them in so he can post them.

It was reported that efforts are still underway to get PayPal set up on the website to enable members and potential new members to more easily renew or sign up and pay for their memberships online.

Henry Isenberg advised that the "Answerman" has been busy this past year; it seemed that a lot of the questions received were about renting lookouts.

Chairman Argow reported that there is nothing at this time on the topic of liability insurance, but he is still working on getting it for the FFLA at a reasonable price.

Chairman Argow gave a report on the National Historical Lookout Register; at this time certificates are only being produced when requested by the chapter director or the lookout owner/agency. It was requested that directors be notified when lookouts in their area are accepted to the register from online nominations.

Brief chapter reports were given by all present or on the call. Full reports will be posted on the FFLA website after being submitted.

Chris Fabbro announced that the Western Conference will be held at Grant Gove, in the Kings Canyon portion of Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park, California, September 18-20.

Howard Verschoor announced that there will be a Northwest Social July 10-12 at the Fire Lookout Museum in Spokane, Washington. Ray Kresek advised that the museum will be the hub for the weekend for those who want to go out to visit area lookouts or to come and just relax and socialize.

Treasurer Weber presented the proposed 2015 Budget to the board; it was approved as presented.

2015 FFLA Budget			
	Proposed	Approved	
<i>Income</i>			
Balance Forward	\$8,303.31	\$8,303.31	
Dues	\$14,000.00	\$14,000.00	
Donations	\$300.00	\$300.00	
Chapter Grants/Donations (Pass-Through)	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
Merchandise Sales	\$1,800.00	\$1,800.00	
Interest	\$20.00	\$20.00	
	Total		\$29,423.31
<i>Expenses</i>			
		-	-
Publication	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	
Chapter Distributions	-\$2,000.00	-\$2,000.00	
Brochures	-\$3,000.00	-\$3,000.00	
Restoration Grants	-\$2,500.00	-\$2,500.00	
Emergency Stabilization Grants	-\$300.00	-\$300.00	
Chapter Grants/Donations (Pass-Through)	-\$5,000.00	-\$5,000.00	
Insurance	-\$2,000.00	-\$2,000.00	
Merchandise Purchase	-\$1,400.00	-\$1,400.00	
Operations	-\$1,000.00	-\$1,000.00	
History/Archive/Preservation Fund	-\$1,000.00	-\$1,000.00	
Website Upgrade	-\$500.00	-\$500.00	
	Total		-\$28,700.00
Year-end Balance			\$723.31

Chairman Argow announced that the 2016 Board Meeting will be held January 16, 2016 (MLK weekend), potentially in Alabama, with plans for again utilizing the conference call format.

Chairman Argow called for other old business and new business; other than the items reported on earlier, no additional items were brought up.

The 2015 Board meeting adjourned at 1022.

Following the meeting, Cleveland Forest Supervisor Will Metz and FMO Brian Rhodes discussed the evolution of the FFLA San Diego-Riverside Chapter and the value the forest sees in the efforts of the group. Statistics for the lookouts staffed by the chapter volunteers were presented, as well as for Los Pinos Lookout, staffed by CNF personnel. Chapter leader Curt Waite and his chapter officers also discussed the past season's activity and their future plans. Metz presented a plaque recognizing the service provided by the FFLA, followed by Argow presenting a Chairman's Award to the Chapter.

FFLA board members then accepted the invitation to attend the San Diego-Riverside Chapter's End of Season Recognition Lunch.