

Solar Outdoors

Steering Committee Minutes

Date: 3/22/2022



Meeting called to order at: 7:37 pm *Meeting started when enough members to make a quorum were present.*

Note: Agenda is in regular font with information provided by individual steering committee members.

Italic writing is additional information at the meeting with notes taken by secretary.

Quorum members present: Laura Miller, Bob Tacy, Elaine Granch, Doreen Byrne, Karen Haroutunian, Phil Crookshank, Anandhi Chandran, Stacie Kitchen, David Warkeke

Others present: Chuck Smith

Absent: Debbie Hendrickson, Krisanne Schmidt, Leslie Cordova, Anandhi Chandran,

Minutes approved *February minutes motion by Elaine and seconded by Karen, approved by all present.*

President Debbie Hendrickson

Items to discuss:

- Bylaws changes regarding membership: *Discussed Leslie's draft and edited some changes for voting at the April SC meeting. Laura will send out the new draft 5 days before the April SC meeting.*
- Elections: *Debbie sent out the chair positions descriptions. Contact Debbie if you are running again. Bob will send out an announcement about the elections and if interested in running for a position contact Debbie. Stacie is running for webmaster, Laura is running for secretary, Phil running as equipment chair, Bob is running for Public Relations,*
- March general membership program - Paul Bates: *Bob to contact Paul to confirm the meeting presentation and information for PR for the meeting. Elaine is going to run the March general membership meeting.*
- April general membership meeting: *Need previous presidents present to tally election votes. Make n Take preview presentation by Laura. Laura to make for giveaway bear bag rock sack. Bob to bring a sample paracord bracelet.*

Vice president Doreen Byrne

- No report

Secretary Laura Miller

- Agenda created with steering member's reports and emailed morning of 3/22/2022 for steering committee meeting along with draft revisions of the bylaws, statement of activity report, February SC minutes, and update equipment list.

Treasurer Carol McCririe

- Bank balance is \$12,945.45
- Statement of activity on separate sheet.

Activities Krisanne Schmidt

Past activates:

- Day Hikes
- Quiet Adventures Symposium Online 3/1/2022

Upcoming activities:

- Day Hike at Mayberry State Park 4/23/2022
- Fight For Air Climb 5/1/2022
- Backpack Grand Island July 4th weekend

Bylaws Leslie Cordova

- Bylaws revision on separate document

Education Chair Anandhi Chandran

- No report from Anandhi

Equipment Chair Phil Crookshank

I just updated the gear list today for use - to show likely recipients of what gear we have for (SALE) or donate on separate document.

Spent 40 hours recently making a 2nd SOLAR yard sign upgraded to have a 1x2" wooden frame with an exterior heavy gage wire frame, set into a groove cut in the wooden frame, double thickness wire frame to go into the ground, 2 coats varnish. Yeah, I know - we didn't really need that - but this is what I do when I'm frustrated - go down into my workshop and create.

Late Feb, I Received a notice from Storage Sense - as I predicted - rate change from the end of 2021 of \$149+12,=\$161 - to \$183.+12 = \$195. That Phony Insurance charge really annoys me. So - anyway, there it is.

Storage Sense finally DID MAKE some good security changes - put up a GIANT screen for the 20+ cameras within the building, last time I was there, they actually electronically kept the back door open as I went in and out, so I didn't have to keep keying in our passcode each trip. Of course when I go late in the day - there still is no protection, and their "Hot Line" to call when there is a problem - still doesn't connect to even a voice recorder. But - I feel a bit safer lately - after dark.

I will accept 2 backpacks, stove, misc. equipment from former members next week. Rochester, so I will meet them in Livonia to pick it all up. Pictures indicate all good condition. Carol McCrie turned in an old backpack at last meeting.

I have been in contact with three youth/scouts groups to ask them to come shopping in our gear room next week - suggested that we would accept some \$ for donating items to them. I know 2 of the Leaders well, we should make some progress with them.

I measured our room - (10x15) put tape on the floor to indicate a 10x10 room, I cannot see that we would ever get down to that size room again - but it is an option. We need to discuss - are we EVER going to have workshops again that uses some of this equipment that takes up a lot of room, For instance:

- (1) Enjoying Michigan Winters - last taught 5? years ago.
- (2) Basic/Beginning rock climbing - we have 9 backpacks stuffed with climbing gear. Last taught 10? years ago.
- (3) Knots, large duffle of ropes for that class. And on and on.

More discussions in a few weeks with Davie W, Krisanne S, Carol C, and me, to do a mass visit to the gear room, so we can make reasonable decisions while we actually seeing what the possibilities for downsizing are.

And - I am planning on staying on as Equipment Chair for another year, to work on the changes that we come up with.

Yours for Muddy Boot Season - Phil Crookshank

Question asked about Solar liability for equipment we are selling as is.

Discussed talking about the equipment want to get rid of after the equipment committee meets and develops a list of equipment to let go of. They will let us know when they meet and the list of equipment.

Historian Karen Haroutunian

- No report

Membership Elaine Granch

March Membership Report

- One Single Annual member joined last month.
- Did not receive any notices from Meet-up about new members.

Current Membership:

Total Family memberships: 82.5

Total Single Memberships: 325

Family Annual (units): 18.5

Family Lifetime (units): 64

Single Lifetime: 237

Single Annual (inc. Meet-up): 88

Total Members (Listed): 490

Pending:

SC comments about the Google announcement (sent to SC 3/13). Then the webpage and Membership form need updating.

Question from Elaine on the membership form it still says class, can we change it to workshops? Elaine will make change and send it to Stacie for the website.

Dave has password as organizer of Solar's MeetUp and can try to run a report of Solar members who signed up in MeetUp for Elaine.

Programs Open Position

- March Paul Bates
- April Elections

Public Relations Bob Tacy

Information Table

Set up table and attended the Peabody Ice Fest.

- Thanks to Marvin Yanke, Laura L Miller, Mike Hobig, Carol Rogers and Jeff McWilliams for working the information table.

CafePress

Thanks to Stacie Kitchen for all the work she did modifying the CafePress site and adding new logos. She will also be adding our "Adventures are more Fun with Friend" slogans to some of the products.

Facebook posts

- Visit our new Solar Outdoors Cafe Press Store - Launched on March 20th.
- Two past hiking and one future hiking events
- Chris "Wolverine" Hillier presentation Peabody Ice Fest
- Land Navigation Workshop
- Beginner Friendly Ice Climbing event at Peabody Ice Climbing
- Luge event at the Muskegon Luge Adventure Sports Park

Intermediate Backpacking Workshop

- Presented Backpacking Fitness Presentation

New Business

- Custom Table Cover - Est. \$150
- Boosting CafePress Facebook post to members for 2 weeks with \$35
- Add Cafe Press info to Monthly Meeting Calendar Handout
- Create Facebook post for Paul Bates

Bob needs approval for more funds to a banner or table cover with new logo, which can be discussed at the next meeting. Stacie said she could get a banner for about \$80, she will get an actual price for a 6 foot by 3 foot banner. Actual price for banner with grommets (or without) is \$44.52 if you pick it up in Shelby Township. If it shipped to us for additional \$10. This is a 48 to 72 hours turnaround time on printing. Stacie will mock up a design for the banner to share at the next SC meeting. Stacie will donate about 1000 business cards to the club.

Communications Chair Dave Warnecke

We still have the looming issue of what to do with equipment storage.

I think a purge of current equipment to reduce the storage footprint would be advantageous for any decision we make. I believe Phil, Krisanne and Carol are all on board for this. We just have to pick a date.

I also believe the idea to have a **gear swap and equipment sale** for the **April meeting** would help with this. It may also be more of a draw than just straight "elections".

Here are my thoughts from February on this topic:

First of all, I would like to **thank and recognize the time and effort** put in by Phil, Laura and anyone else that has assisted with gear. There are many unsung positions within the club, but working with equipment and members has to be one of the most time consuming.

There has been discussion about what to do with the **storage of equipment going forward**. I wanted to break down the numbers a little.

For a basic backpacking setup, I pulled pricing from Amazon of gear comparable to what we would loan out for the beginning workshop, which is one of the club's biggest draws for new members. (For equipment, quality think Big Agnes, not Zpaks)

- Tent – 400
- Sleeping bag – 200
- Sleeping pad – 80
- Backpack – 170
- Stove – 30
- Pot – 30
- Water filter – 30
- **Total - 940**

If we compare that to the storage costs per year on Phil's report

- Storage Sense 2,220
- Budget 3,000
- Clover 2,940

We could replace/upgrade 2 full setups a year for what we pay for Storage Sense or 3 systems a year for the proposed new locations.

To avoid these costs, we would have to **store equipment at someone's home**. This, of course, brings up other concerns. It seems like there would be both benefits and drawbacks to doing this. Not having worked the position myself, I could only make assumptions.

It seems like a logical **first step** for any course of action would be to **reduce the quantity of gear**. I would advise, and assist with, a **substantial purge**.

There was a suggestion to offer items to general membership in a sale, which I think is a great idea. If marketed correctly, it could **reduce the space** needed to store our equipment, **provide an alert** to general membership about a potential change of location and maybe put a little money back into the system.

For example:

Here is your chance to own a piece of Solar Outdoor's History!!!

Due to increased costs of storage facilities, there is a need to reduce our quantity of equipment. We have a large stock of good, but older and seldom-borrowed equipment that we need to remove from our inventory.

This gear will be offered first to our amazing members of Solar Outdoors. Instead of a general meeting on ****, we will instead hold a gear swap where members can bring in their equipment to trade or sell and Solar Outdoor's will offer the gear that needs to be removed from stock.

All proceeds from Solar Outdoor's equipment go directly into keeping your club running.

Discussion of whether it is cost effective for us to continue having equipment in the storage unit for the cost of the storage unit. Is it worth us having equipment for members to rent? Should we go back to having the equipment stored in someone's home?

Webmaster Stacie Kitchen

WEBSITE ANALYTICS:

- Showed up in Search: 815
- Total Clicks to Website from Google Search: 6
- Redirection Hits to our Website: 81

WEBSITE:

- Contact Page: 3 messages or Questions
 - 1 member asked about payment on Website for Membership renewals
 - 1 non-member wanted to Donate gear (emailed to Phil)
 - 1 member asked about their event and blog on website + Cafepress
- Text Message Sign-ups on Footer:
 - 2 Members
 - 1 non-member (reached out to them with no response back)
- Calendar Page:
 - Redirects to Meet-up page to view/sign-up for all events
- Blog/News Page:
 - Still in process adding older blogs from previous/older Website Blog
- Minutes Page:
 - Still in process of adding 2020/2021 minutes, budgets, *not the agendas*
- Membership Page:
 - Waiting after Steering Committee March Meeting to add new membership costs and information
- Solar Ray:
 - Up-to-date on all Newsletters and Past Tents Articles
- Steering Committee Page:
 - Up-to-date with Bios and photos
 - Do Not have:
 - By laws
 - Education
 - Equipment
 - Programs

APPAREL WEBSITE (CAFÉ PRESS) – HELPING BOB:

- Updated what I could
 - Added 3 different Solar Outdoors artwork/Logos.
 - Added Dog Bandana to items
 - Still in process of adding “Adventures are more fun with friends” to some apparel
- Website won't let me make many changes
 - Talked to the company 3x (in 2 weeks) and mentioned the website has some bug and they are in the process of fixing it
 - 2 weeks later and it still gives me the same errors on making or adding items to the website
(includes: Safari, Firefox, Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome...and more)
 - *If it keeps going on – would recommend a different apparel store that is free and it has more options.*
- *Calendar page on solaroutdoors.org website will link right to MeetUp where the events are up to date.*
- *Karen asked about membership cost on website and how to get more photos for the website from the different workshops/events. Stacie would like to get a waiver for the photo release with photographer name and names of people in the photo with a description of the photo of where and who are in it. If you don't want your photo on the website, Stacie can fuzz out the face.*

Unfinished Business

- None

New Business

- *Phil suggested adding the website on the meeting presentation. Start the meeting off with the website view and show some of the pages as the meeting starts.*
- *Phil got a new longer VGA cable so the presenter can be off to the side during their presentation.*

Next SC meeting

- April 19, 2022 at 7:00 pm via zoom

Meeting Adjourned at:8:54 pm.

Meeting minutes notes taken by Laura Miller