



Solar Outdoors

Steering Committee Minutes

Date: 11/19/2024

Meeting called to order at. 7:05 pm.

Note: Agenda is in regular font

Italic writing is additional information at the meeting

Quorum members present: Mary Winkler, Karen Haroutunian, Dana Buxton, Leslie Cordova, Stacie Kitchen, Mary Donahue-Wold, Laura Miller, Tim Davis, Jeff McWilliams, Krisanne Schmidt, Beverly Wozniak, Carol McCririe, Jim Kadlubowski

Others present:

Minutes approved August, September, and October minutes were approved by all present.

President Mary Winkler

- Keeping in touch with the Anniversary Committee, Bike packing plans, and Solar's online payment system. *Laura asked who is planning bike packing plans. Mary will send Laura the information she has.*
- A total of \$261 has been collected for a memorial for Phil as of October's meeting. We're not taking more. *Mary W talked about purchasing a stone at Greenmead for Phil. Mary will take a few pictures of ideas to share.*

Vice President Tim Davis

- I reached out to 4 different venues to inquire about prices and availability for a recurring monthly meeting. Three of the venues have not responded and I will follow up with them this week. The fourth location (ironically the old Colony Hall the Solar used to meet at), said that they did not host monthly events. I will follow up with them for more details as well since their text only reply was not clear.
- *Tim did not get answers from all the contacts. He has gotten 2 ½ answers. Colony Hall is not an option. Two different Elks Lodges, one in Royal Oak and Ferndale. Ferndale (9 mile and Woodward) would host a monthly meeting with a banquet room on the second level. Maybe meet*

at their bar after, need to check on if you have to be a member. He is not sure of the rental cost, the information states rentals start at \$250. Tim needs to check on the price and the parking.

- *Troy community center has a large meeting room or ½ the activity room is \$70 an hour, non profit 25% discount. Clean facility and easy to access. No potlucks at their facility, they allow catered food for the holiday party.*
- *Krisanne had a few questions: Church gives a \$30 hour for workshops, not sure if they would continue to give that a discount. Our equipment storage is in Livonia. What would the cost be to find a new equipment storage unit? Church charges \$90 for the evening (4 hour block rental), even when we add time for other meetings or extra time for holiday party.*
- *Discussion about a new location for the meeting to see if we can be more centrally located and a setting more attractive to younger people. Concern about the church not being a location ideal to attract younger people.*
- *Suggestion of Tim starting a spreadsheet for us to compare information. We may not get a cheaper price but may get a more central location and more attractive to young people.*
- *Other ideas are Southfield Civic Center or Farmington Hills Rec Center.*
- *Do they have AV equipment we can use and is there a cost for the projection screen, projector, and microphone?*
- *A community center may give us more visibility in the community.*

Secretary Laura Miller

- Sent out a call for reports. The agenda, corrected minutes for August and September, minutes for October meeting sent out on Monday evening.

Treasurer Mary Donahue-Wold

- I met with Carol a week or so ago. She helped me reconcile the accounts and get the accounts up to date. She sent me the statement of activity (attached).
- The current balance as of 11/16/24 is \$11,290.81.
- *Trend is slightly down. Generally get a spike at the beginning of the year with membership renewals and then spend down as we have expenses during the year. We may not see an increase as much at the beginning of the year because we now collect dues all year long.*
- *Carol said there has been expenditure that reimbursement has not been logged yet which is coming in at the next meeting.*
- *Carol contacted Jon to bring the treasurer all the materials to Mary W-D to the next general meeting.*

Activities Krisanne Schmidt

Past activities:

- Day hikes

Upcoming activities:

- Huckleberry Railroad & Crossroads Village activity - December
- Lantern Hike - December
- Lake Ann annual trip – January
- Mid-winter get together – possibly February
- Day hikes

Education Carol McCririe

- Wilderness First Aid
 - Mary Winkler received an email from Kalamazoo College regarding a Wilderness 1 st aid course. I reached out to them and it turns out that they have a new department for Outdoor

programs called the Outdoor Leadership Training Center. Included are First Aid, Wilderness Medicine, and Workshops. Within the Wilderness Medicine, they have classes in Wilderness First Aid, Advanced Wilderness First Aid, and Wilderness First Responder. The cost of the Wilderness First Aid is \$250. I spoke with the head of the department and here is what they are able to do for us.

- Hi Carol,
Thank you for reaching out earlier today about Wilderness First Aid (WFA) training for your employees and trip leaders. Below you will find some answers to your questions you had on the phone.

To help make this training as accessible as possible, we offer group discounts based on the number of registrants:

6-9 people —> 10% off

10-14 people —> 15% off

15-19 people —> 25% off

20-24 people —> 30% off

Additionally, if you have a group of 15 or more, we can look into scheduling a private course at a date that works best for you and our instructors.

Scheduled dates are January 11-12, March 8-9, and May 2-4. I'd like to get an idea from members at the general meeting of how many people would be interested. To get the discount, Solar would have to collect the money (\$250) and if we have at least 6 people, then Solar would make a few dollars. Otherwise, it would just be an opportunity to promote the class to members with no net profit.

Jeff suggested looking at a VRBO to save cost on lodging, if there are enough people interested.

- Sewing workshop: Laura Miller is working on plans for a sewing workshop for outdoor projects. Depending on interest, this could be expanded to a make and take fleece or similar project.
- Cross Country skiing Weather dependent, Eric Braun is interested in leading a workshop. I have yet to discuss details with him.
- Other workshop ideas
I am going to start looking for people willing to lead other workshops –
 - Equipment Care and Repair, Kayak cart build (this is something Mike Hobig expressed interest in last year),
 - Lightweight backpacking (it's been over 10 years since we offered this),
 - Women in the Woods (it's been a long time since we offered this also.)

I will be pursuing these in the next month or so.

Equipment Chair Jeff McWilliams

- I have a small pile of donated equipment that would be eligible for the swap meet but due to a prior commitment I will be unable to attend the Holiday Party.
- Some of it (tents, backpacks) also need cleaning and inspection which I've been unable to find the time to perform. *Mary offered to help with cleaning backpacks, so Jeff will bring them to the meeting.*
- I will be bringing several bags of donated guidebooks and maps to give away at the next meeting. Anything not taken will be put in the recycle bin.

Historian Leslie Cordova

- No Report
- *Mary W asked if there was information in the historian files for the anniversary party or at a meeting to encourage people to plan scheduling them again.*
- *Laura asked Leslie for any information she has on the previous St. John trips.*

Membership Dana Buxton

- 3 renewals since last meeting
- 3 new members since last meeting
- 123 members with dues up to date
- 4 non-renewals (sent a reminder email)
- New business: Plans to turn off dues collection via Meetup on Dec. 31, 2024 with membership available on our website where the information will go directly to the membership chair with the funds going to square which the treasure will have to retrieve the funds from square. We will use which Stacie will develop for our website to collect dues and membership info directly on Solar website. *Dana explained that on Meetup people become a member but on Meetup, they did not have to provide information like an email or phone number, so the club did not know who these people were. This will help with not having a two week membership, then pay for the membership which causes them getting booted off the Meetup event.*
- Discussion about this change and about the square payments. *Dana plans to check the square for payments on a regular basis.*
- Jotform.com is a free tool until you have 200 people join, then they will charge. Stacie asked if someone else could look at Jotform.com to confirm she is reading this information correctly.

Programs Bev Wozniak

- November-Dr. John Hartig speaking on the Huron Water Way and will also be selling books.
- Friday, December 6th, Holiday Party-potluck/gear sale/swap
 - I will be bringing boxes from storage. Solar will provide the plates, silverware and napkins.
 - -5pm set up=Any volunteers? Bev will ask for the volunteers at the November meeting.
 - -6pm start
 - -8:45 end and clean up
- January-Photo Contest
 - -need ballots - *Laura will send last year's ballot for Bev to edit and print ballots.*
 - -need ballot box - *Mary W has and will bring in January.*
 - -request approval of prizes: 6x\$15 REI gift card plus free annual membership (\$15 value)!
 - ★ Bring-A-Device-and-Learn event: *Laura is organizing and asked for volunteers to help with this.*
- February-Stacie and Vince Sadowski will speak about North Manitou Island

Public Relations Jim Kadlubowski

- *Nothing to report.*
- *Quiet Adventure Symposium - Laura shared registration is open for a booth.*
- *Store in Brighton called Town to Trail Outfitters.*

Webmaster Stacie Kitchen

- No Changes were made to the Website for month of November 2024
- Are keeping PayPal on the website or updating it to Square payment option? Email Thread was confusing to me. *See notes in membership section of minutes.*
- Will need wording and New Fee changes that needs to change on the website.
- Missing some Minutes to add to the website
 - July 2023 -*They were sent with the next month's agenda and approved. Laura will resend.*
 - June 2024-*They were sent with the next month's agenda and approved. Laura will*

- resend.*
 - July 2024-*They were sent with the next month's agenda and approved. Laura will resend.*
 - August 2024- *Corrected and approved and in email with agenda on 11/18/2024*
 - September 2024- *Corrected and approved and in email with agenda on 11/18/2024*
 - October 2024 - *Approved and in email with agenda on 11/18/2024*
 - November 2024 (Current month)
- Last Conversation was with Dana about using a form (similar to link below) from Jotform that Skiwi Club is using. Replied back but no answer was given on some questions that I had about the forms. Are we using it as a Joining form or an Annual Membership Payment form?
 - Free version for 100 uses we can use and then after that it is a paid version. At least this is how I had interpreted it on the website of Jotform.com.

Unfinished Business

- *Topic: Fees. No decision yet on whether to raise membership fees.*
- *Discussion in depth regarding raising membership fees and gear rental fees*
- *Tim to get quotes for 3 locations to use for general membership meetings*
- *Jeff to get quotes for 3 locations for gear rental fees*
- *Group vote was approved to raise the general membership fee to \$15 per year (effective Jan 1, 2025). Inform members during January general membership meeting (photo contest).*
- *Discussions on lack of activities and how to encourage members to lead trips and offer workshops.*

New Business

- *Raising gear rental fees to cover cost of storage – Jeff to report findings on other organizations fees for gear rental. Jeff shared his screen with the spreadsheet.*
- *Jeff asked should we raise the equipment fee? Should we have a late return fee? Discussion about this. Only twenty equipment fees collected to date this year which is not enough to cover the costs for the rental unit. Even split who borrow gear for the beginning backpacking workshop and other's who check out items regularly. Should we have a fee for each time they borrow equipment vs an annual fee? People who borrow for their own trips tend to have more late returns than with the workshops. Discussion about how a late fee would work and what the fee would be.*
- *Should we just keep equipment for the workshops only? Our history is a unique club and some of the equipment we store is club equipment: for parties, tent, AV equipment and walkie talkies.*
- *Discussion about raising the fee and what should it be? This needs to have more thought put into it.*
- *The gear rental fee is a column which is tracked on the membership spreadsheet which has been useful.*
- *Jeff was asked what his thoughts were about this. The idea of \$40-50 per event for a month rental. Mixed about a discount for workshop participants.*
- *Motion to continue this discussion for the next meeting on Jan. 21, 2025 and voted to table the discussion.*
- *Lifetime membership discussion in an email chain. Add to new business on Jan. 21, 2025.*

Next meeting January 21, 2025 at 7 pm. No Steering Committee meeting in December.

Meeting Adjourned 8:57 pm

Meeting minutes notes taken by Laura Miller.

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