

Minutes of the 2008 NSS Vertical Section Board Meetings

The Executive Committee of the Section held two separate Board Meetings prior to the General Meeting. The Minutes of those meetings are included below.

Board Meeting of 8/10/2008

The NSS Vertical Section Executive Committee held a meeting on Sunday, August 10, 2008 at the 2008 NSS Convention Campground in Lake City, Florida. Executive Board members present were Chair Brice Williams, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Boehle, At-Large Executive Members John Woods, and Bill Boehle (proxy for Miriam Cuddington), Nylon Highway Editor Tim White, Vertical Techniques Workshop Coordinator Terry Clark, Education/Training Coordinator Bruce Smith, and Terry Clark (proxy for Contest Coordinator Bill Cuddington). At-Large Executive Member Ed Sira was unable to attend the Convention. Approximately 9 additional Vertical Section members were also in attendance.

Meeting opened at 7:10 PM by Chair Brice Williams.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and deal with various issues that needed to be addressed before the annual business meeting on Wednesday.

1. The status of the rigging for the vertical contest and workshop was gone over. It was agreed that it would be best if we could have someone "pre-check" the facilities and rigging points before convention in order to avoid last minute problems.
2. The status of the Vertical Workshop was discussed. Six (6) persons are pre-registered, so far. To avoid problems getting paid by the convention for workshop registrations, we need to get a list of the participants to the convention Treasurer on Thursday so they can get a check to us on Friday.
3. Membership. It was brought up for discussion as to whether we need to charge dues anymore. Most of our income comes from the Vertical Workshop registration fees and from sales of various Section items. Since the Nylon Highway is now an electronic publication, most of the costs for printing and mailing no longer exist. The discussion also centered on how the Vertical Section should serve the caving public. To get our message out to the largest audience by increasing our membership, it was agreed that we would no longer charge dues to be a member of the Section. The Bylaws need to be amended to make this change. Gary Bush stated that any bylaws action regarding a dues change must be approved by the membership. It was agreed that the bylaws change would be drafted and acted upon by the Executive Committee before the business meeting, so that it could be brought before the section at the business meeting.
4. Bruce Smith has spent a lot of time thinking about where vertical caving is today. Vertical caving is much more mature than long ago when the techniques commonly used today were first being testing and developed. The techniques are not changing as rapidly as in the past. However, a review of vertical caving accidents seems to

indicate that the average person is not very skilled in applying the various vertical techniques under difficult circumstances. In this context...what is our mission? The Vertical Contest is for fun. The Vertical Workshop and the equipment tuning sessions are for education. Training is the key to ensuring that there are more competent vertical cavers. We need to position the Vertical Section as a mentor, or maybe a "mentor of mentors". It was agreed that there should be more discussion of this topic. Perhaps a roundtable at the Vertical Session?

5. Bruce Smith reported on the status of the Intermediate Vertical Training Course. We have a curriculum. Samples of the course material were distributed and examined by the Executive Committee. What we now need to do is some beta testing to figure out "how" the course material should be taught. A motion was made and seconded to accept the form of the curriculum developed. The motion PASSED.
6. Bruce Smith reported on some revisions being developed for the Basic Vertical Training Course. The main thing needed is a "cheat sheet" for instructors to get students to work through dealing with problems (i.e., blowouts). It was agreed to revise the course as suggested. More last minute suggestions can be made and incorporated this week.
7. Gary Bush (webmaster) discussed the section website. It was agreed that we need more content, more training and education, and some articles on vertical caving for the NSS News.

Adjournment - Motion to adjourn was made and carried. Time of adjournment was approximately 8:49 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bill Boehle

Board Meeting of 8/13/2008

The NSS Vertical Section Executive Committee held a short meeting on Wednesday, August 13, 2008 prior to the section business meeting at the 2008 NSS Convention to act on the bylaws revision (drafted by Bill Boehle) concerning membership dues that was discussed at the Executive Committee meeting on August 10, 2008. Executive Board members present were Chair Brice Williams, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Boehle, At-Large Executive Members John Woods, and Miriam Cuddington, Bruce Smith (proxy for Nylon Highway Editor Tim White), Vertical Techniques Workshop Coordinator Terry Clark, Education/Training Coordinator Bruce Smith, and Contest Coordinator Bill Cuddington. At-Large Executive Member Ed Sira was unable to attend the Convention.

Meeting opened at 12:55 PM by Chair Brice Williams.

1. A motion was made by Bruce Smith and seconded by Bill Boehle to replace Section 2)(B) of the Bylaws with the following:

"(B) Membership Qualifications:

- i. The Membership consists of those who attend an annual General Meeting and/or other official Vertical Section function at the Annual NSS Convention and who sign the roster with their name and email (or regular) address. The duration of membership shall be 5 years from the last meeting (function) attended, if the member's dues are not in arrears.
- ii. Applications for membership shall be in writing, as specified above, and shall be accompanied by dues as specified herein. Online registration shall also be available to those who cannot attend an annual meeting (function) in a form provided by the Executive Committee.
- iii. Membership Classifications:

FULL REGULAR MEMBER: Full membership is limited to members of the NSS, who have paid current dues to both the SECTION and the NSS. Full regular members will receive all rights and benefits of SECTION membership. Regular members can vote and hold office.

SUBSCRIBER: Non-NSS members, or groups, who have paid Subscriber's dues are entitled only to receive a electronic subscription to SECTION publications."

Motion was voted on and PASSED.

2. A following motion was made by Bill Boehle and seconded by Bruce Smith:

The Executive Committee sets the Vertical Section dues for all membership classes to \$0.00 (zero).

Motion was voted on and PASSED.

Adjournment - Motion to adjourn was made and carried. Time of adjournment was approximately 12:59 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bill Boehle