

Minutes of the 2009 NSS Vertical Section Board E-Meetings August, 2008 to June, 2009

The NSS Vertical Section Executive Committee held a series of E-meetings on a variety of issues during the period from August 5, 2008 to June 11, 2009. All Executive Board members participated in the meetings via email.

December 4-10, 2008 - NSSVS EIN Issue and Related Bylaws Change

On December 4, 2008, Secretary/Treasurer Bill Boehle notified the EC about some recent activity affecting the VS. About a month previous we received a notice from one of our banks (GMAC Demand Notes) that the IRS had a discrepancy with our account and that the bank would start backup withholding unless we could straighten things out. Seems our federal EIN wasn't in their system. Much time was spent on the phone with the IRS trying to figure out the problem and how to fix it.

Since we were so small, we never had to do any filing, and, as a result, we dropped off the IRS system. After a period of time, the EIN gets archived with no way to resurrect it from that status. Further communication with the IRS Exempt Organizations Unit finally figured out what to do to fix our problems. We had to get a new EIN number from the IRS which we were able to do on the phone. We then completed the info needed to be registered as an exempt organization. It will take until February 2009 for the information to appear in their system. That means we can file our 990-N form (called an e-Postcard) sometime after 2/4/2009. This is something new that exempt organizations have just started filing this year. It's not a tax return, but more of an informational filing. We remain eligible as a small exempt organization as long as our gross receipts remains below \$5000 per year.

On to the bylaws change. Part of the info we needed to give the IRS was our filing year. The books are generally cut on June 30 just before convention. This is what we told the IRS. Later, looking at the bylaws revealed that in Section 8 of the bylaws, it says: "The SECTION's Fiscal Year shall run from June 1 to May 31." We don't want to go back to the IRS and change it with them, and the Treasurer prefers the standard fiscal year anyway.

Bill Boehle makes a motion to amend Section 8 of the bylaws so that the first sentence is changed to read as follows: "The SECTION's Fiscal Year shall run from July 1 to June 30." Terry Mitchell seconded the motion on December 4, 2008. By December 10, 2008 there were 8 votes in favor and 1 no-response (Brice Williams). The motion carried.

December 5-15, 2008 - NSSVS Election of New Section Chair

Beginning of December 5, 2008 the EC began a discussion of the availability of Section Chair Brice Williams to conduct section business. Various EC members have had no success contacting Brice via email and telephone. There are several pending issues/actions requiring the attention of the Section Chair and the rest of the EC. Our ability to deal with arrangements for the upcoming NSS convention/ICS are being impaired. On December 5, 2008, Bill Cuddington made a motion (as amended December 6, 2008) that "the executive committee select a new chair to serve until the next regular election". Terry Clark seconded the motion. Bill Cuddington nominated Dick

Mitchell for Section Chair. Much discussion followed. On December 7, 2008, the EC was finally contacted by Brice Williams who apologized for not keeping in better contact with the EC. He stated that he agrees that we should replace him as Section Chair since he does not have the time to fulfill the duties of the office due to personal demands. Due to the resignation, the need for the motion became moot. On December 10, 2008 Bill Cuddington made a motion to close the nominations for Section Chair. Miriam Cuddington seconded the motion. By December 11, 2008, there were 7 votes in favor and 2 no-responses (Terry Clark and Brice Williams). The motion to close the nominations carried. On December 11, 2008, Bill Boehle (acting as chair) moved that the EC select Dick Mitchell as Section Chair by acclamation. By December 15, 2008, there were 8 votes in favor, none opposed, and 1 abstained (Dick Mitchell). The motion carried and Dick Mitchell was elected Section Chair to serve until the next regular election.

August 5, 2008 to January 2, 2009 - NSSVS Awards and Related Bylaws Change

Discussion began on the need to formally recognize those who have made significant contributions to and otherwise served the Vertical Section over the years. The need for a consistent way to address this issue was emphasized. On August 26, 2008, Chair Brice Williams called an e-meeting to order for the purpose of recognition of service to the vertical section. Tim White made two motions: 1. That we present Ed Sira and John Woods with engraved plaques to honor their service to the NSS VS; and 2. The VS Board appoint a committee to establish a set of guidelines for Service Awards. The motions were seconded by Bruce Smith and by September 4, 2008 both motions were approved. Bruce Smith volunteered to take the lead to prepare the plaques for Ed and John (motion 1). Discussion continued for some time on the mandate for the committee covered by motion 2. On September 27, 2008, Chair Brice Williams established the Award Guidelines Committee with Dick Mitchell as chair and Bill Tozer, Terry Mitchell, and Bruce Smith as members. On November 7, 2008, Dick Mitchell made a motion to amend our Bylaws to establish a Vertical Section Awards Committee and define their responsibilities. The Motion was seconded by Tim White. As of November 13, 2008 there were 5 votes in favor of the bylaw change establishing the Awards Committee Chair and revising the Awards and Recognition process. The Bylaws change passed. Dick Mitchell was already appointed as chair by Brice Williams on 9/27/08. The bylaw change just formalizes the position.

The adopted Bylaws change is as follows:

5) SPECIAL COMMITTEES (Add Paragraph F)

(F) Vertical Section Awards Committee: - The Vertical Section Chairman shall appoint an Awards Committee Chairman who may, in turn, select additional Committee members to assist in carrying out the responsibilities of that Committee. The Awards Committee's responsibilities are to:

- * Review nominations and recommend approval or disapproval;
- * Determine the applicable award/recognition;
- * Obtain such an award and/or develop the recognition means; and
- * Ensure that such award/recognition is distributed.

7) AWARDS AND RECOGNITION:

The VERTICAL SECTION may present an award to, or otherwise recognize, a person, persons, or group for an outstanding contribution in promoting, supporting or advancing the sport or technical aspects of vertical caving.

(A) Any member of the VERTICAL SECTION Executive Committee may nominate a person, persons, or group for an award/recognition. Nominations must be in writing together with a brief summary of justification. Such nominations are to be provided to the VERTICAL SECTION Awards Chairman.

(B) The VERTICAL SECTION Awards Committee Chairman, within 60 days of receipt of the nomination, shall forward the results of his Committee's recommendations to the VERTICAL SECTION Executive Committee. The VERTICAL SECTION Executive Committee, by majority vote, shall approve or disapprove the Awards Committee's recommendations.

(C) Awards to the recipients will be presented in a timely and appropriate manner and, wherever possible, will be presented at a meeting attended by fellow cavers.

Following adoption of the bylaw establishing the Award Committee, discussion of and drafting of an Awards Guidelines document began and continued into December 2008. On December 27, 2008, Dick Mitchell made two motions:

1. I hereby move that the Awards Committee Guidelines (Revision 5) be approved, adopted and implemented; and
2. I hereby move that a budget be established for the Awards Committee in the amount of \$2750 for the calendar year 2009.

The motions were seconded by Bruce Smith. By January 2, 2009 there were 7 votes in favor (not counting Dick), and 1 no-response (Tim White). The motions carry.

June 5-11, 2009 - Purchase of 9mm Rope for Rebelay Course

Gary Bush notified the EC that the two 100' ropes (9mm static) the VS use for the Rebelay Course are now 9 years old. One is definitely ready to retire. The other may be serviceable for another year or two. He inquired if there is money in the budget for two ropes. He'd prefer a supple rope, like PMI EZ Bend, to make tying/untying the knots easier in the smaller rope. We received an estimated cost for 200 feet of EZ Bend to be \$114 + shipping (\$0.57/foot). On June 8, 2009 Bill Boehle made a motion to approve this purchase. Tim White and Miriam Cuddington both seconded the motion on June 8, 2009. By June 11, 2009 there were 8 votes in favor and 1 no-response (Terry Clark). The motion carried. The rope will be delivered to Gary Bush at Karst-O-Rama. There will be no shipping charge.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bill Boehle