

DECEMBER 4, 2021 MBA BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Live and Zoom Call

December 4, 2021

ROLL CALL

Stephen LePage,
Ken Schultz
TJ Smith,
Jess Wagner,
Cliff Garness
Rick Miller,
Al Kelly,
Marlon Clapham,
Kevin Robertson,
Mark Schwomeyer,
Liberty Brown,
Nick Seabrass,

Meeting was called to order by Stephen LePage.

MOTION

Motion by Rick Miller -Move the previous meeting minutes be approved.

Seconded by Ken Schultz.

Vote: Passed unanimously.

Steve passed out a rooster for committee assignments for all attendees to volunteer. (get listing from Steve)

TREASURERS REPORT

Claudia

As of November 30

\$42,175.30 in the checking account.

\$17,225.79 in regular savings,

\$31,613.81 Life Membership fund with

(\$20,110.30 in a CD and \$11,503.51 in Money Market fund).

Total Checking/Savings \$91,206.61.

Restricted Net Assets

Contributions Fund \$3,600

Life Member Fund \$31,500

Life Member Fund Interest \$113.15

Teen Camp Temporary Restricted Fund \$3,676.28

Legislative Fund \$10,528.15. \$2,060 will be used from this fund for legislative software that Liberty obtained for MBA

21/22 Income \$2,805.63

21/22 Expenses \$10,302.47

21/22 Net Income \$-7,495.65

The depreciation shown on the sheets is for the trailer and probably the new computer.

Taxes have been sent off to our accountant in Glasgow

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Claudia needs more mags for new members. Lewistown is getting 2 boxes, so Steve will talk to Julie about getting Claudia some additional mags for new members. Seeing several lapsed members and even though WA is sending out notices it may be that the notices are going into the promotions or spam folders. Nick verified that has happened to some members he talked to that didn't know they were lapsed. That is why Claudia is sending out lapsed member lists to board so they can check on members they know to make sure lapsed members are notified that their membership is lapsed.

Rick asked about those members that don't have an email address. Claudia suggested that a region rep send out a post card letting them know the importance of having an email. We however do send a post card reminder to renew.

Claudia has asked that Steve update the new member letter.

New members get letter from president, a newsletter, a sticker, a patch, and membership card

Renewals get a letter from Claudia with a thank you and a sticker.

Claudia said that total membership is 516 when doing a Wild Apricot search but when the search is per region membership is 533.

OLD BUSINESS

Early Archery Season Draft Tentative

There was discussion about how the FWP Tentatives process works. Rick discussed mule deer tentatives that would raise the quality of mule deer hunting in Region 7.

Steve said that they submitted a proposal to have an early archery season for Moose and Goats to align with the early archery season for Sheep for the sake of simplification.

Old Action Item: Closed

Mark with help from Jess and Stephen to draft a proposal for early Archery Moose and Goat season for successful drawers of these permits.

New MBA Banners

There has been no action yet on this as of December 4th.

Old Action Item: Stephanie

Stephanie will research the cost of getting banners made as well as some potential designs and report back to the board.

Letter to the Governor

No letter has yet been written. There was discussion as to the need for this letter so late after the elections.

MOTION

Motion made by Rick Miller that he and Mark with possible help from Nick draft a letter to Governor letting him know we exist and that we are looking forward to his support of bowhunting in Montana, etc. This draft will be submitted to the board for approval before it is sent.

Seconded by Nick

Passed unanimously

Old Action Item: Rick and Mark Revised

Rick and Mark with possible help from Nick will draft a letter to the Governor letting him know we in MBA are looking forward to his support of bowhunting in Montana, etc. This draft will be submitted to the board for approval before it is sent.

Treasurer/Bookkeeper Bylaw change

Bylaws need to be changed to make the bookkeeper a paid contractor separate from the Treasurer. The Treasures duties include being the chairman of the Finance Committee to whom the contracted bookkeeper reports to.

The MBA board is a volunteer board and should not be paying members to sit on the board.

MBA needs to find someone for the Treasurer position.

Steve made a proposal for him or someone on the board to send out a request for membership to become board members and in particular to become our Treasurer especially if they have experience as a Treasurer. No vote needed.

Claudia suggested that the Board of Directors Handbook needs to be reviewed and updated. Claudia had a 2006 copy last review was 2017.

MOTION

Motion by Jerry Davis that a new committee be created called Governance Committee with the purpose of reviewing and updating the Board of Directors handbook.

Seconded by Ken Shultz

Unsure if changes will be required to be approved by the general membership. Probably only the bylaws that would need to get membership approval. Committee should contact Joelle to obtain the latest copy. Set up a OneDrive folder to share documents during draft phase.

Vote: Passed unanimously.

Committee will be TJ, Al, Terri, and Jerry. TJ will chair the committee.

New Action Item: TJ, Jerry, Al, Teri

Governance Committee to update Board of Directors Handbook including By Laws. TJ will chair and other members will be Jerry, Al, and Teri.

Old Action Item: TJ, Jerry, Al, Teri, Revised

By-Laws and Board Handbook will be revised to make our paid bookkeeper, who is now our Treasurer, a paid contractor only. A Treasurer will be appointed by the Board to whom the paid bookkeeper will report to.

Bowhunter Coalition

Coalition formed during crossbow legislation and were considering proposing legislation to address disabled bowhunter use of crossbows.

Since then, there was a lawsuit brought against the FWP this fall to allow 4 self-proclaimed disabled hunters to use a crossbow during archery only season. The judge ruled against that lawsuit and because of the Judge's explanation of that ruling Steve believes MBA should not support any legislation that would support any use of crossbows during the archery-only season. Dane with TBM agreed and Steve has not talked with John Sullivan with BHA or Marcus Strange with MWF yet. But essentially the Bowhunter Coalition is dissolved until the next legislative session.

Discussed that at the FW Commission hearing in November where a tentative to allow those same 4 individuals to use a crossbow during archery only season was not approved. At that hearing Commissioner Tabor said there was a distinct possibility that a tentative will be coming that would allow the use of a crossbow by all disabled hunters during archery only season.

Old Action Item: Closed

The BOWHUNTING WITH DISABILITIES IN MONTANA COALITION exploratory committee made up of Steve, Al, and Liberty will report back to the board after the first exploratory meeting. This coalition will discontinue until the next legislative session.

Disabled Vets Needing PTMAEs

Old Action Item: Jerry

Jerry will contact Ryan about possible vets who may want to take part in the PTME that are part of the VA and FWP program to teach archery to PTSD and other disabled vets.

Jerry has not had any success on getting interested disabled vets through the Legion of VFW but he will continue pursue. He did get a lead from a fellow Region 3 CAC member on finding other potential individuals that may be interested in a PTMAE. He will continue to pursue.

Special Archery Permit Survey

There was discussion about the how the archery permit structure may change including the elimination of the limited archery permits and going back to pre-2005 structure. Concerns that could lead to more crowding. Questions if limited permits have actually lead to increased crowding because of popularity. Concern that eliminating limited permits will increase the number of nonresidents due to the elimination of the 10% nonresident ceiling for these permits. Nothing we can do right now because FWP has not yet. Discussed that it would be better for FWP to wait until the new elk plan is published before FWP starts making major changes to the season structure. Concern that the Commission is not concerned with following recommendations that may come from a new elk management plan but instead are concerned with following the new Administration's desires. Since Mark's appointment to the Elk Working Group that group has been disbanded because of the new administration after 800 hours of work.

We will have 30 days to respond once tentatives are out. Sounds like tentative may be released on Monday December 6th. We will have a Zoom meeting after tentatives have been released to decide what to do and what questions to ask our membership.

Old Action Item: Closed

Steve and board will meet via Zoom after Tentatives are released to discuss how to proceed with a membership survey of how MBA should respond to Tentative proposals.

Membership was surveyed in early January.

PLPW Nominations

The PLPW members have selected so the time for individuals to request they be considered by the Governor to set on this council has passed. Next meeting for PLPW is December 17th.

Old Action Item: Closed

Rick was to notify the board when the request for members to set on the Governor's PLPW board are open, but that time has passed.

Over the Counter Private Land Deer License

- 1. Action Item: Rick will develop a survey monkey question on limiting over-the-counter deer licenses to private land only.***

Crow Tribe Settlement

The Crow Tribe is suing the US Government to allow them to hunt on unoccupied federal lands that were part of the 1851 treaty. Rick reiterated that Montana is allowing tribal members to hunt on associated public lands that are unoccupied, but Wyoming has issued an injunction to prevent the Crow Tribe from hunting on public lands without a state issued license until the courts have ruled on this treaty claim. The question is why has Montana allowed hunting Kevin has not pursued this yet.

Old Action Item: Kevin

Kevin will bring up the issue of the Crow Tribe settlement and the definition of occupied versus unoccupied lands to the MBHA board.

NEW BUSINESS

Ray Gross Resignation

Discussion about Ray Gross's resignation from the board because MBA did not sign on to an editorial that talks to concerns with the future of public hunting and fishing in Montana.

Discussed that it was the boards decision not to sign on to the letter and though there were members that thought we should sign on it was a board decision.

New Action Item: Steve

Steve will reach out to Ray and find out what he wants.

Conservation Conversation invitation

Steve has been invited to a meeting on December 11th of various sporting organization organized by Andrew Posewitz to discuss what is the present condition of hunting and conservation in Montana given the present Administration. If one wants to attend need to let Steve know. Jerry and Rick expressed interest. Steve will be attending. No agenda for this meeting, it is just going to be an open meeting.

New Action Item: Steve

Steve will report on results of the Conservation Conversation meeting

Crossbow Lawsuit

FWP was sued by 4 self-proclaimed disabled individuals that wanted to use crossbows during the archery only season. FWP secretly tried to settle with the plaintiffs to allow them to use a crossbow, but MBA caught wind of that settlement and expressed grave concerns with such a settlement. Subsequent to MBA's protest FWP let the plaintiffs know they could not use a crossbow and the case went to Federal court. The Federal judge ruled that the plaintiffs had no grounds on which to sue the FWP for special privileges.

There was a question if there will be a Tentative to allow crossbow use for all disabled hunters during archery season. Unknown.

Group Email Lists

Board members are advised to make sure that if they use Group Contacts for bulk emails to the Board to make sure those contact lists are up to date and do not include old Board members and is updated with new Board members.

FW Commission Oct. 28, 2021, Crossbow Hearing

Commission voted not to allow the 4 "disabled" hunters to use a crossbow during the archery only season. The commission voiced a desire to have a working group put together to study crossbow use and PTMAE for disabled hunters. After the hearing Steve sent a letter to the Director and the Commission thanking them for their vote and asked that MBA be included in any working groups put together to study crossbow use.

Convention April 1st and 2nd, 2022

Convention will be in Fairmont. Brian is the committee chair for this year's convention. Claudia requested that she be a part of the committee so she can arrange the money and registration aspects. Liberty said that he, Paul, and Brian have not met on the convention yet. Steve said he just signed a contract with Fairmont for the next two years. Claudia said because she did not get OJT from Jenn last year because the convention was canceled, she will need some help and guidance in arranging her responsibilities.

New Action Item: Brian

Convention committee to include Claudia in communications and necessary meetings during planning.

Steve said he just signed a contract with Fairmont for this year and next year. Understanding that the Great Falls venue is very successful and that Region 4 is scheduled to sponsor the 2023 Convention Steve asked Cliff if Region 4 would be willing to switch with Region 2 for the 2023 Convention. Cliff said he would be ok with that.

New Action Item: Closed

Region 2 will sponsor the convention in 2023 at Fairmont and Region 4 will sponsor the convention in 2024 in Great Falls.

Carp Safari tentative for June 11th

Steve said he has applied with FWP for the Carp Safari on June 11th. He has not heard anything back yet as the application has to go through the MEPA process before the application can be approved.

Camp site needs to be reserved. Kevin will get that done as soon as campsite reservation for Hell Creek campground become available. Kevin would like to do a better job of getting the word out per advertisements and posters. Kevin will keep Jerry and Claudia informed.

New Action Item: Kevin

Kevin to reserve the group site at Hell Creek Campground on Canyon Ferry Reservoir for the June 11th Carp Safari.

Elections

Brian is chair of the elections committee. Region Reps for 2, 4, and 6, even year DALs, the President, and the 2nd Vice President will be on the ballot this year. Michael Prater from Region 4 will not be running again. Steve terms out so there will be a new President and a new 2nd Vice President.

PTMAE Video

Marlon sent video to Steve for distribution. The FW Commission viewed the video prior to the Hearing in October. Marlon met with three FWP staff, via Zoom, Rebecca Dockter, another FWP attorney, and an FWP individual specifically assigned to PTMAE, to explain the actual adaptive equipment. Marlon made clear to them that though the equipment is costly MBA has along with Marlon has provided the adaptive equipment free of charge to those that have asked for it. Marlon pointed out to them Molnar's statement about having an inexpensive 150# compound bow was incorrect. (Note from Davis, I think that Molnar may have meant to say crossbow.) Marlon used the video to show the safety features built into the adaptive equipment and explained that keeping an arrow or bolt nocked or loaded in bow or crossbow is not advisable per Montana Bowhunter and Hunter Safety. He also let them know that Hickory Creek is a bonded supplier and have never had a prerelease from their draw lock. Marlon uses qualified equipment and simply builds aids to allow a disabled hunter to use the draw lock.

Attorney

Discussed that former State Senator Nate McConnell who is an attorney is willing to help us out if we need attorney advice or help. Kevin said he is an advocate for bowhunting.

Use of Survey Monkey for Board Votes

Liberty requested and all Board members agreed that use Survey Monkey to poll our Board on issues that require an online vote.

Teller Wildlife Refuge Youth Camp

Marlon says that we have been asked if MBA is going to commit to making a \$1000 donation to the Teller Camp this year. He will need help from Region 2 members this summer. There has not been a camp for the last 2 years because of Covid. There are about 200 kids that attend the camp from across the state. MBA was instrumental in getting the camp started. Also Teller pays for at least two kids to attend the MBA Teen Bowhunters Camp every year. The Teller camp promotes youth bowhunting

Motion

Marlon made a motion to make a \$1000 donation to the Teller Wildlife Refuge Youth Camp for this years event.

Jerry Seconded.

Passed unanimously.

New Action Item: Claudia

Claudia will work with Marlon to make a \$1000 donation to the Teller Wildlife Youth Camp.

Event Business Credit Cards

Claudia drafted a credit card policy, but it has not been approved yet. Claudia is asking if we can set up a bank and business credit card instead of using a debit card, which poses security issues, or having members pay from their personnel funds for reimbursement.

Individual bank business credit card would be issued to individuals needing them with their individual name on the card. Receipts would then be turned in to Claudia so she can reconcile credit card statements. Limits can be put on the card and they can be turned on and off or canceled at any time and it does not cost us additional moneys, depends on the policy we choose.

Motion

Ken made a motion that we get a business credit card for special events and activities and one to replace the bank debit card.

Nick seconded.

Vote passed unanimously

New Action Item: Claudia

Claudia will send out the credit card policy to all board members and work toward getting a business card for event and to replace the debit card.

Teen Camp

Marlon said that he will not be much of a part of the Teen Camp this year because of haying season coinciding with the planned date of event. Becky and Jerry said if Libby was still interested in hosting the Teen Camp they would help. Al said he would be willing to be the Chair for the 2022 Camp but he needs help with funding as the Libby community is economically depressed. There is about \$3600 in the account and Marlon said he would go back to previous donors to get additional funds but may need much more than the \$3600 we already have. Hats are purchased, need some tee shirts, head lamps etc for possibles bag for each kid.

New Action Item: Al

Al to work with Becky and Jerry on arranging the 2022 MBA Teen Bowhunting Camp in Libby. Al will work with Marlon on funding.

REGION REPORTS

Region 1

Al said there are concerns that they now have CWD zones and have been inundated by nonresident hunters because FWP is allowing up to 7 deer to be taken within the CWD zones.

Many of those hunters have been demonstrating poor behavior, simply rude. Predators are also an issue.

Region 2

Marlon went to a CAC meeting and after a long meeting FWP said that it appears that no change would be the best alternative, though they will be splitting HD 260 to allow restricted weapons on private property throughout the entire season to help ranchers eliminate elk. They will also eliminate all 2nd buck tags. All B tags will be for does and cows. There was no biological reason for allowing harvest of two bucks.

Region 3

Nothing to Report

Region 4

Nothing to report

Region 5

Ken said a lot of young members that want us to get the message out of who MBA is and what we are about. Ken said TJ will have a MBA booth at the Rocky Show. How do we get involvement from the new bowhunters? There has been a 10% increase in bowhunters but we are not seeing increases in membership. Ron Asheim has made contacted Jerry to help with a MBA recruitment program. Ron is the retired PR chief with FWP and he is an important contact. Ron is an MBA member also. Discussed having Life Members reach out to someone who is bowhunter but not a member to join. Could result in a 20% increase. Discussed having an evening at a brewery or such and give out merchandise.

Region 6

Nick has CWD concerns because of CWD

Region 7

Rick sent out letter to Region 7 members concerning new FWP direction and he never received any response from the 20 members in Region 7 he sent the letter to. Concerned about apathy.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be at Fairmont Hot Springs on April 1st at 10:00 AM. There will be a General Membership meeting on April 2nd.

Motion

Jerry made motion to adjourn.

Seconded by Cliff.

Vote Passed unanimously