

MASKGI Spring Meeting
April 29, 2017
Merrill Memorial Library
Yarmouth, ME

Present: Andy Shiland, Joe Guglielmetti, Zack Anchors, Maria Jenness, Chris Strout, Thornton Ring, Humphrey Johnson, Liz Johnson, Dave Racicot, Brad Jordan, Robert Shaw, Chris Strout, Paul Knight, Juliane Datzenko, James Kennedy, Al Johnson, Andy Meyers - USCG, Clint Thompson - Maine Marine Patrol

viz Zoom: Craig Shipp, Sam Frankel, Karen Francoeur, Joe McBrine - Maine Warden Service and Maine Guide Advisory Board

Maria Jenness - opened the meeting at 10:05 AM

Joe McBrine - Maine Warden Service and Maine Guide Advisory Board

Looking especially for feedback/input on items below (bullet points provided by email from Joe). Decision not to discuss these issues at meeting, but invite members to share feedback via email. Joe and Jim Fahey will attend the fall meeting for further discussion.

Industry safety standards: Mandatory and Non-mandatory

- How many sea kayak guides presently guide using the 12:1 guide to client ratio?
- Does the number of single vs. tandem kayaks impact safety? For example - 12 people in singles vs 12 people in tandems.
- How strongly do you feel about mandatory wearing of PFDs while “underway”? Exemptions could be considered for certain areas(salt marshes) or when not actively navigating.
- Consideration for items a Sea Kayak could be required to carry on a guide while underway: electronic communication device, knife, whistle, day and night pocket rocket type flares
- We are also considering suggesting non-mandatory safety equipment that is recommended to be carried by all sea kayak guides.

Apprentice Guides:

The Guide’s Board has been approached by licensed guides to see if there is a possibility of creating an apprentice guide program. Requests have come from hunting and sea kayak guides.

I feel comfortable saying that we do not want to create an opportunity for illegal guiding.

- Could this displace a licensed guide?
- It has been suggested having a two year cap on an apprentice license.
- Another suggestion was to require an apprentice to be within visual and voice contact of a licensed guide.
- No suggestion has been made that this ever be a mandatory step in the process.
- A suggestion was made that they keep a log book of hours and experience.
- This could help people gain the required three years of experience to sit for an exam.
- This could help the future of the guiding industry by having experienced guides train new guides.

Changing the name of Sea Kayak License:

Some guides have requested that the name of the SEA KAYAK license be changed to TIDEWATER PADDLING license.

The advisory board has not taken a position on any of these items. As stated, we value any input from your industry. The board only has the authority to make suggestions.

Please email Joe regarding how you feel on any of the three topics:

Joe.McBrine@maine.gov

Communication channels within MASKGI were questioned. Members are encouraged to get in touch with Maria or Joe if they think they are not receiving MASKGI emails.

Joe - Treasurer's Report

Current Bank Account: \$7,538.10; yearly gain of \$1046.24.

Largest expenses: weather event and pool sessions,. Both of these paid for themselves through participation fees.

In the past, rack cards were a significant expense. We still have supply of *Store to Shore* brochures, which are available for members.

Motion to approve Treasurer's Report.

Discussion on validity of committees - Should they continue?

This past year has proven that a more effective approach is for individuals to organize events.

Membership Survey - Joe presented results.

Review of opinions re:

- Fees
- Value
- Benefits

Non-Profit status: registered with State of Maine as non-profit, not with Federal government (clarifying that MASKGI is *not* registered as a 501c3).

Weather Events

Summary of spring weather events by Paul Cousins and John Huth; discussed possibility of holding others in different parts of the coast.

Maria - Motion to fund travel for possible weather presentation by John Huth in Downeast area. *Update: John has agreed to present for MASKGI again, looking at possible dates/venues for this fall*

WERU

Karen Francouer, Mike Miller (USCG) and Maria Jenness participated in a radio show on WERU hosted by Natalie Sprinquel on April 28th, focused on cold water paddling safety. As a follow up opportunity, Karen and Mike will be recording a series of 4-5 minute PSAs that will air on WERU weekly on Saturdays at 8:30 am.

Other events

Some expressed interest in pool sessions in other parts of the coast. If any member would like to organize pool sessions or other professional development opportunities they are encouraged to do so, and can contact MASKGI leadership about funds for direct costs (pool rentals etc.).

Andy Meyers - USCG

Coast Guard outreach is focusing on:

Standard safety messages, e.g. life jackets, cold water safety.

Sharing waterway initiative.

Stressing “going to people” rather than expecting people to come to CG to receive safety messages.

May 11 - SW Harbor, 10-11 am

May 19 - Media event in Portland: helicopter, rescue swimmers, NWS, local politicians.

May 27 - Portsmouth, NH

June 10 - Walking the Working Waterfront in Portland: flares, fire fighting demo.
June - LL Bean event: paddlecraft safety booth

Paddlecraft safety messages on local weather, radio, NWS.

Topic brought up: disconnect between kayak safety and paddleboard safety.

USCG Auxiliary program: individuals can become Auxiliary member in order to educate. Auxiliary also teaches public safety courses.

Wilderness Risk Management Conference

Motion to allocate funds for 1 person to attend WRMC and report back to MASKGI as continuing education for guides. Maria to coordinate with Liz.

Scholarship idea

Brad proposed an “Ed Brakett Memorial Scholarship”, through which MASKGI would fund a prospective guide from UMaine to take a guide course and/or pay for their testing fees.

Concerns were raised around the name, and focusing on the one incident involving the death of a guide in the history of Maine’s Registered Maine Sea Kayak guide program. Other concerns were around the work of overseeing such a scholarship process, including soliciting and reviewing applications.

Topic was tabled until the fall, and Brad was asked to formalize his proposal more.

Kayaks at vacation cottage rentals & Harbormaster relations

Karen raised concerns about vacation rentals that provide kayaks with the cottages but no safety instruction. She made the suggestion to engage Harbormasters in getting the message out about kayaking safety. Maria will look into the dates for the annual Harbormasters meeting which takes place in Castine each wither; if available Karen offered to attend to represent MASKGI.

Advocacy updates

Maine Professional Guides Association approached MASKGI about the Governor’s proposed budget, which includes implementing a sales tax on guide services. They were asking MASKGI to contribute \$400/month toward a lobbyist they planned to hire.

There was agreement that this was not a priority for MASKGI, and no big concerns because these proposals have been defeated in the past.

Bob Myron had emailed MASKGI about a proposed bill (LD 1036) that would possibly deregulate the need for a guide license, among a long list of other professions. Joe McBrine updated that guide and taxidermy had since been removed from that list.

Discussion around following up on Sea Grant letter. Sam has drafted another letter regarding NOAA budget cuts, will share for MASKGI to send on behalf of the organization.

Suggestion to have a page on the website where letters could be stored. Some letters MASKGI might send on behalf of the organization, others members might write and share the template so members can send on their own behalf.

Meeting structure

There was positive feedback to using Zoom for members to participate remotely in meetings, and it could be used for conference calls in between in-person meetings. Motion approved for MASKGI to get it's own Zoom account, at \$15/month.

MASKGI will add remote meetings in between the in-person meetings, starting quarterly. Stay tuned for date/time of next web conference meeting.

Discussion of in-person meetings, and agreement to alternate between south and Downeast(ish)coast (spring in the south, fall Downeast. Karen offered to be point person for finding a venue Downeast (ideas suggested included Bangor-Ellsworth area)

Update from Marine Patrol

They are lacking in support from the DA in Southern Maine. No current incidents with registered Maine guides or reports of individuals guiding without a license.

Adjourned 12:00 PM

Fall MASKGI meeting scheduled for Saturday, November 4th at a location TBD in the Bangor/Ellsworth area. Stay tuned for remote meeting date/time between now and then.