

Maine Association of Sea Kayak Guides and Instructors

Fall 2018 Meeting Minutes

Ellsworth Public Library
Ellsworth, Maine

17 November 2018
1215 to 1515

Attendance:

In Person

John Anderson, Antonio Blasi, Michael Daugherty, Rebecca Daugherty, Sam Frankel (*President*), Carino Higgins, Maria Jenness (*Vice-President*), Rommel Olilvares (USCG), Craig Shipp (*Secretary*), Chris Strout

Remote

Zack Anchor (part-time), Suzanne Blackburn, Katie Degrasse, Viola Felker, Karen Francoeur, Kristina Garland, Joe Guglielmetti (*Treasurer*), Al Johnson, Liz Johnson, Kathy Nugent, Thornton Ring (no voice)

Introduction of Meeting Attendees

Overview of Agenda

Review of Past Activities This Year (presented by Sam Frankel)

- Winter pool sessions in Portland
- Increase individual and business memberships
- WFA in spring in Portland
- Promoted guide training courses via website
- Contact with USCG personnel, harbormasters
- Established “ProDeal” for Membership
- Initiated substantive contact with IF&W on state guide examiner request and engagement with state guide board
 - Two meetings of Guide Board and Regulation ad-hoc committee
- Spring and Fall General Meetings (Portland and Ellsworth)

Election of Officers (conducted by Sam Frankel)

- Introduction of nominees and few words by each nominee
 - Sam Frankel – president
 - Joe Guglielmetti – treasurer
 - Craig Shipp – secretary
- Nominations from the floor for vice-president – John Anderson

- Voting was held and each nominee approved by membership for 2018-2019, no contested positions

Treasury and Membership Report (presented by Joe Guglielmetti)

- Quick review of finances expenditures by month
- Present balance of the organization is \$8136.35
- There are 55 total paid members as of today
- Also, there are 18 paid business members as of today
- Total number of licensed sea kayak guides in the state will be investigated by Maria Jenness
 - Note: After the meeting we were able to answer this question.
 - Bill Swan, licensing director at IF&W. In 2017 there were 596 sea kayak guides out of a total of 5001 guides.
- Organization has been running revenue neutral programs and has modest expenses
- There is capacity to fund programs driven by membership as requested / proposed

Maine Sea-Kayak Guide Examiners (lead by Sam Frankel)

- Depart of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W) will be soliciting applications for sea-kayak guide examiners early next year. Be on the lookout for the notification
- Dave Chabot – Landowner Relations Specialist – is new contact in IF&W for guide board matters
- IF&W needs to understand that the sea-kayaking industry is in need for a fast turn-around for appointments for oral and written exams, so new guides can work the same summer that they receive certification
- Responsibilities of IF&W guide examiners:
 - Spend and occasional full day in Augusta – probably more in the summer
 - Be prepared to conduct a number of oral-guides examinations
 - Minimal reimbursement for expenses
- Some members present indicated that they would like to reach out to Dave Chabot before the letters are sent to express their interest.
- Sam F offered to help facilitate this communication.

Maine Sea-Kayak Guide Board (lead by Sam Frankel)

- There was consensus that we need an experienced sea-kayak guide on the state board
- The process for application and appointment to guide board is not clear, but needs to be understood
- Sam Frankel volunteered to coordinate effort to further interaction with guide examiners and guide board
 - Sam will continue to organize these activities under the Guide Board and Regulation committee that met twice over the summer, and will reach out to set a next meeting time.
 - Al Johnson offered to contact the Deputy Commissioner regarding Guide Board representation with Karen Francoeur, Chris Strout, Sam Frankel, and other members as interested.
 - Sam will follow up on this offer.

New Initial Application and Renewal Process (presented by Craig Shipp)

- *Renewal*
 - Make an appointment and visit one of the regional sites in the state to be fingerprinted (**\$52**)

- About a month later, you will receive a letter of notification about the status of the background check
- If successful, take that letter and submit it with your completed renewal application no more than two months before your license expires for renewal for five (5) years (**\$135**)
- You will receive your renewed license in the mail from IF&W
- *Initial application*
 - Make an appointment and visit one of the regional sites in the state to be fingerprinted several months before you take a Maine guide course in sea kayaking (**\$52**)
 - About a month later, you will receive a letter of notification about the status of the background check
 - If successful, submit an initial application as a Maine guide in sea kayaking (**\$100**)
 - Enroll and successfully complete a Maine guide-training course (**Optional but recommended, variable cost**)
 - Prospective guides may need to enroll in a guide-training course early in this process since courses often fill.
 - It's helpful to have your course booked before you submit the application, then you can make sure to list the upcoming course as experience and also make sure the examination date is scheduled *after* the course!
 - Upon successfully passing the written and oral exam for sea kayaking, pay a fee for a new Maine guide license for five (5) years (**\$135**)
- All these procedures are documented and links provided on the MASKGI website at: <http://maskgi.org/criminal-history-records-check/>
- Joe Guglielmetti volunteered to lead effort to further investigate ways to improve the process or advocate for repeal

USCG Discussion (questions answered by Rommel Olivares, USCG Southwest Harbor)

- Standoff distances from cruise ship
 - 200 yard standoff distance, when underway
 - 100 yard standoff distance when tied or moored
 - Not always practical given local conditions
 - USCG personnel and captain of the port can modify in any given situation
- MASKGI would like to know the official current enforced standoff distance for cruise ships in Bar Harbor and Portland. **Rommel will communicate with Sam Frankel on the answer.**
 - **Flyer attached**
- Rommel discussed sea-kayak vessel inspection procedures:
 - Check for basic seaworthiness of craft
 - Check for basic safety equipment onboard
 - Recommend vessel identification stickers with other information and contact
- Way to implement sharing of best practices for sea kayaking:
 - Rommel, who is the station training officer, would appreciate MASKGI input to these best practices
 - Karen Francoeur has video showing safety procedures that she would gladly share with USCG
- Question about involving Maine Warden Service, Maine Marine Patrol, and USCG on all sea-kayaking issues, since many of the issues involve all three organizations
- **Sam offered to connect Coast Guard stations with MASKGI members in their area for help as needed, using the MASKGI email address for general questions and communication.**

- MASKGI members and CG were also broadly interested in on-site visits from members to Coast Guard stations for training and outreach opportunities.
- Follow-ups to be determined by subsequent communication.

Training Opportunities (all)

- Pool Sessions
 - Joe Guglielmetti will organize pool sessions at Riverton pool in Portland again this winter
 - Goal is to organize six sessions for this winter
 - Costs for this activity will be \$1100
 - Was approximately revenue neutral last year as we collect fees and use as a recruitment opportunity (discounted fee for membership)
 - Membership voted to approve spending this amount for next year
 - Other sites are possibilities that will be investigated:
 - Kittery – John Anderson
 - Bar Harbor YMCA – Chris Strout and Michael Daugherty
- Wilderness First Aid Afloat (WFAA)
 - The course will be offered Saturday and Sunday, 27-28 April in Portland
 - The venue will be in the MITA office at the Maine Yacht Center
 - MASKGI will be co-sponsoring the course with MITA
 - The instructor will be Nancy Zane from North Star Adventures, Unity
 - Membership voted to approve spending \$300 to subsidize tuition for the 27-28 April 2019 course.
 - There are opportunities for other training and professional development, depending on membership interests.
 - We will also explore listing professional development activities on the web site.
 - A question whether wildlife and interpersonal skills are considered professional development.
 - Consensus that they are required by the curriculum of the Maine guide.
 - Cathy Nugent volunteered to investigate further personal development opportunities – Professional Development Ad-Hoc Committee

Website (lead by Sam Frankel and Liz Johnson)

- Full information about WFAA Course to be posted early this winter
- Outfitter activities:
 - We will repeat listing all Maine guide sea-kayaking training courses on the homepage of the MASKGI website
 - Other training exercise, targeting sea-kayaking guides will also be listed
- Discussion of other suggestion for the website
 - Map of outfitter locations along coast
 - More information on diversity of paddling opportunities in Maine
 - Explore Maine by kayak section

Other Topics (all)

- Promoting paddle sport in Maine – lead by Maria Jenness
 - Discussed ways for more effective marketing practices

- Carolann Ouellette – director of newly created State Office of Outdoor Recreation, may be a helpful contact
- Liz Johnson volunteered to spend time to further investigate digital opportunities for marketing practices
- Ocean debris cleanup – John Anderson
 - Sea-kayak guide should lead by example
 - Can we formalize it for 2019 with cheap, reusable bags – similar to what ACA sells, but is presently out of stock
 - John Anderson volunteered to further investigate NOAA’s existing effort for debris cleanup
- There was a question whether there was a way to have statics on the number of customers using guide service in Maine? - Maine Tourist Board did this before

Next Steps / Follow-Ups

1. Sam F offered to help facilitate communication with board about people interested in serving as sea kayak examiners
2. Sam Frankel volunteered to coordinate effort to further interaction with guide examiners and guide board, and to follow up with Al Johnson and others to talk with IF&W staff
 - a. Karen Francouer, Chris Strout interested, will put out call for others as well
3. Joe Guglielmetti volunteered to lead effort to further investigate ways to improve the background check process or advocate for repeal
4. Sam offered to connect Coast Guard stations with MASKGI members in their area for help as needed, using the MASKGI email address for general questions and communication.
 - a. Karen Francouer interested in sharing video resources
 - b. Folks in MDI, Portland / South Portland and south interested
5. Joe Guglielmetti will organize pool sessions at Riverton pool in Portland again this winter
 - a. John Anderson will look around in Kittery
 - b. Michael Dougherty and Chris Strout can connect us with the pool sessions offered by the Bar Harbor YMCA
6. Cathy Nugent volunteered to investigate further personal development opportunities – Professional Development Ad-Hoc Committee
7. Liz Johnson volunteered to spend time to further investigate digital opportunities for marketing practices
8. John Anderson volunteered to further investigate NOAA’s existing effort for debris cleanup

Please feel free to join in these follow-ups, or lead others.

Next meeting in Portland area on Saturday, 13 April 2019, with the location to be determined

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Shipp
 MASKGI Secretary
 17 November 2018
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