

# NYS Federation of Search and Rescue Teams

## Federation Minutes

Date: 1/21/06 Location: NAVAC

### Teams Represented:

Amigo SAR Dogs	NEMSAR	Wilderness SAR
CASAR	NJ initial response	Team 5-1
Cayuga County Highland SAR	New Jersey SAR	Lewis County
LASAR	Oswego Co. Pioneer SAR	
Livingston County	Pathfinders	
Massasauga SAR	Ramapo	
	Western NY Search Dogs	

### Teams Absent:

Berkshire	NYC Urban Park Service
Hamburg STAR Team	Single Trackers
New York SAR	

### Officers Present:

Roger Fox, Chairman	Amanda Scarpato, Secretary
Larry Gorden, Vice Chairman	Ann MacBride, Treasurer

Minutes from last meeting accepted as posted.

There was a homeland security survey passed out and taken by those present at the meeting about the need of weapons of mass destruction training for first responders in relation to SAR workers. It was noted that SAR was not included as a category of first responders on the list.

### Treasures report

\$3,000 was put into savings

Teams owe \$4,307.30 for team insurance. Bills will be sent out for insurance and teams that haven't paid dues next week

Current Balance \$8,816.04.

**Communications:** The federation currently doesn't own any FCC licenses. To pursue getting federation level licenses there would be a one time cost of \$700. (\$210 per frequency) This cost would enable every team to use the frequencies, so the individual teams don't have to get their own FCC licenses. The only licenses that are available are for narrow band. Individual teams would have to be re-licensing anyway as narrow band requirements start going into effect. However, older radio equipment can't be used and will have to be replaced. The frequencies can be used state wide. There would be a 10 watt power limitation for the radios, but repeaters can be utilized. Without getting the licenses, we can't pursue moving forward with looking into narrow band. Motion passed to spend up to \$700 to pursue getting Federation licenses.

Jeff will be sending out a survey to find out what narrow band equipment teams have and need. Once he learns how many radios will be needed he will try and solicit a grant to pay for radio upgrades.

There was some discussion about wireless internet being available in command posts. It came out that lots of teams have a wireless router on board and what SSID and encryption techniques to use can be a concern. If you have any ideas about what would be good things to use please email Jeff. Also, let Jeff know what your team is currently using. Ideas of things to use that were discussed at the meeting were DEC region number, team number, and team names.

There was discussion about an alternate radio for callouts and searches. Amir has been working on a database of equipment and call signs for federation HAMS. There was discussion of possibly having a federation net once every 3-4 months to see how far Federation HAMS can talk to each other. Amir will look ask some repeater owners if we can do a short net before the net is organized.

**Medical Officer:** Not present

**Safety Officer:** Not present, but indicated he will be willing to run again for the position.

**Logistics:** Because all the hurricanes and disasters this year, we need to know what resources the federation has should the state call us. We need to develop a standard checklist since we don't have one at this time.

**Vice Chair:** For those teams that attended the Clifton Park search there is a thank you note from the rangers.

**Chairmen:**

***Debrief of Norway search that was at the beginning of December:***

There was a 68 male missing in Norway. The State police didn't find out about it until Sunday morning because the family delayed the call out. Rangers have acknowledged that they can have management issues and that not all rangers make good search managers. The DEC would have searched differently had they known what the terrain looked like. The swamp was not evaluated for searchability until Wednesday afternoon when the helicopter flew over the area and could see into the land. The rangers needed a better communications plan. This search helps point out the need for federation and K-9 liaison for DEC on a multiple team search. The SAR committee needs to have a simplistic scale for rating K-9 indications to help make what a K-9 finds an easy to understand clue for the search manager. (Possibly something along the lines of K-9 interest, K-9 alert, and K-9 strong alert) Rangers feel they need K-9 person attached to planning so they can identify and better plan and interpret k9 tasks. All K-9 alerts need to be recorded with wind speed and direction. If a state police dog is brought in, the DEC can't say they can't use their dogs, however, the area can be quietly re-searched after by a federation dog.

K-9's and trackers responding to search need to know that they may not be utilized as that type of specialized resource. Crew bosses wishing to work as crew bosses should sign up under a separate sign in sheet to make them easier to identify. Same thing should happen for K-9, K-9 backers and man trackers. There should always be a separate specialty in sheet so resources don't get crossed.

### **SAR Committee Meeting**

DEC wants to be notified so they can participate in K-9 testing and evaluations. They want to get a better idea of how the dogs work. They feel it makes sense to follow up on areas searched by state police dogs with federation K-9. DEC will be including SAR as part of regular in service training to help make sure every ranger knows what we are and how we can be used. It is felt that the Rangers need to call earlier for notification and keep giving updates as to what resources they need.

As far as training, the DEC has redone the basic wild land search course and has put it on CD-Rom. They would like to do the same with crew boss class. They recognize the Crew Boss class does not meet needs of advanced searcher. DEC also realizes the need for intermediate level. In the future they are hoping to have 3 levels of DEC certification. They also hope to move away from a just NY standard and on towards a national standard. In this vision they hope to move their intermediate and crew boss classes to comply with NASAR standards. (Soon to be ASTM standards) However, going with the NASAR standards has the potential to cost money. Roger envisions this type of classes as being sit in and take NY class for free. People would have option to pay to take national standard test after taking free class. For the DEC this could be difficult because they always want the rangers to teach all their classes.

Fall conference will be at Belleayre. DEC will be participating. Dates will follow later in email. Currently favored is weekend of Sept 15, 16,17th 2006. The process to obtain Belleayre will be started.

### **K9 Standards Committee**

Cheryl Runyan is now a K-9 tester. There was a brief K9 committee meeting prior to federation meeting. It was requested a K9 Director position become established since responsibilities have grown. The position would entail assisting member teams in training, testing and act as liaison with teams. The director needs to be an operational tester or past tester and be able to appoint an assistant. The position will be an advisory board position and the K-9 director will be chairmen of the K-9 committee. This position will mean a by laws change. Since any bylaws change has to be written, passed out, and voted on at next meeting, a K-9 director can be appointed in the mean time.

No date has yet been set in Oct for Bill Dotson to come and give the K-9 Disaster First Responder Class. Other people have also been trying to book him for the fall conference as well.

## **ID Card Committee**

Before we can pursue grant for ID Card machine, we need to re-file our tax status with the IRS.

## **Insurance Committee**

Committee has been formed. The final premium was \$6,419. Specific questions should be addressed by the committee. The committee will check and see if they have a summary document for what the policy covers that they can get to the individual teams as needed. If a certificate of insurance is needed, the agency can fax the certificate to the person requesting it so they have a current copy. The committee can get one for each team to have on file, however they will expire after a time. Email [mpellizzari@wsar.org](mailto:mpellizzari@wsar.org) if teams need insurance certificates.

## **Old business**

Ramapo's one year probationary time was up at last meeting. There was a motion to accept as full and complete voting member. The motion was accepted and Ramapo is now a full voting member.

NASAR training licensing: There are two types of instructors: direct instruction and a process where as an agency can apply for a licensed instructor program. The second program is what we would be looking at. As long as all the students are members of that organization (can't teach anyone else) there would be reduced cost on textbooks, and a certain number of proven instructors that don't have to go through everything. NASAR will come teach the instructors how to teach.

There is also a new FUNSAR program book that comes with cd, and instructor resource kit for the course. Since this seems to be the path we are heading towards it makes sense to take NASAR's materials, have our own instructors, and get a cost savings. The cost would be \$1,000. There is no limit on the number of instructors that they will train. Believe licenses last for 3 years but this will be double checked. Instructors can take any class NASAR offers for instructors. It's the teaching agencies decision to choose what classes to get instructed on. ASTM (which is what the new national standard will be) does not teach anything. They are a standard making organization only.

There was a motion made to pursue expending the funds to become a NASAR training center. Motion was amended to have the Federation work with DEC and Wilderness team to become a licensed NSAR training center by next meeting. Motion passed.

## **Legislative update**

Meeting with FASNY. They reviewed legislative bill. They won't back it, but they won't disagree with it either. The bill deals with amending municipal so SAR is included in

specialized rescue teams. There is also talk about making us the standards organization for SAR, since OFP doesn't have any SAR standards and they are the standards organization.

Spring ComFed will be April 22 at Letchworth state park. Some cabins have been reserved for Friday night. As Massasauga gets more feedback on who is coming they can reserve more cabins as necessary. There are not lots of facilities and dogs are NOT allowed in the cabins. They can set up a canopy for dog crating. They plan to have bagels and muffins in the morning, and pizza for federation meeting. Other meals will be the responsibility of the attendees. Teams need to let Massasauga know about their expected attendance.

### **Snowmobile Committee**

If anyone is interested in having training (possibly with the DEC) let team 5-1 know.  
Email: [deckersgoldens@frontiernet.net](mailto:deckersgoldens@frontiernet.net)

### **New business**

Waterford emergency team is interested in rejoining. They were previously a member for years. They currently have 21 active members. 5 members have been through a search course. They average 10 people to a search. They have already paid dues and insurance. Motion made and accepted to accept as probationary member.

Hamburg is withdrawing from the federation due to financial constraints.  
Berkshire Mountain SAR is also in a similar position.

A motion was made and passed to cancel Sportsmen's insurance

In all the team packets there is a draft executive summary of all of last years searches. All the searches aren't on there; however this can be a useful tool when talking to outside agencies.

Disaster dogs needs to be changed to first response disaster trained dog.

SAR dogs were requested for the first time for a rubble search.

Dec had listing book for region 7. Contact you local rangers see if you can get one for your region. .

We need to get a listing of specialized searches by type of resource to help get the right people at a search when we need them.

For the Lake George Fire Chiefs show we have 4 teams willing to go. If we can get enough people to volunteer we would still like to have a federation booth there.

Possibility was brought up of having a booth at the state fair. It hasn't been thought about yet, but will be looked into.

Thanks to Chris Buff for making sure K-9 testing got done and thanks to John Girton for setting up the testing. There is great frustration with only having 1 tester for track\trail. One handler commented that it took a year to get certified the first time and now they have to get retested. Keith is also a tester now. The possibility was accepted of having a willing law enforcement handler do the test and having an air scent person on hand to verify.

George is the liaison between NJ and NY federations. May 4-7 will be the PSARC Spring Conference.

Massasauga is looking to host a 4 day course on managing land search with Bob Castor coming up from VA. This will discuss search planning and lost person behavior analysis. They are trying to find a long weekend but not sure yet about dates. They would like to do it Columbus Day weekend so people don't have to take as much time off to attend. They will also pursue grants to help sponsor the event. It will be held in the Rochester area. Let Massasauga know if you're interested. They are looking for a class of about 20-30 people. Once it's scheduled, more information will be available from the Federation web site. Massasauga will try to also send information via the email group that Roger sends to. The class will be mostly classroom will have some field work. Cost could vary from \$50-\$150. There are also some text books involved that will cost about \$35.

### **Advisory Board Elections**

**Medical Advisor:** Sue Fox no longer wants to hold position. Kathy Barton (a paramedic) was interested and was elected.

**Medical Advisor:** Jeff Sikora

**Safety Officer:** John Griffiths

**Field director** hasn't been used much since agency running the search over rides this position. It was suggested that this position fall back to training and assisting new teams with their training needs. It would also assist with whatever comes out of education and standard committee. The suggestion was considered and it was decided to hold off on electing to this position until the next meeting when we have more idea about the movement towards educational program. Motion was made and accepted to postpone this position election and write up a new job description for both Field director and the Assistant Field Director.

**Logistics:** This position needs to identify, catalog, and standardize identification of federation resources. It also has to communicate that capability to external organization so they know what to offer. Amanda Scarpato was elected.

**K-9 Director:** Chris Buff