



Board Retreat May 10, 2018

Wiscasset Community Center

In attendance: Deb Smith, Steve Balboni, Karyn MacNeill, Linda Brooks, Jen DeRice, Doug Beck, Deb Gendreau, Tracy Willette, Jason Hanken, Joe Crocker, Nicole Welch, Sabrina Best, Lisa Thompson

Report back from Break-out sessions:

- I. MRPA Track and Field, Hot Shot and PH & R - Sabrina reported some of the demonstrations that can be done to sell the programs; Jen encouraged that dates of Hot Shot program could be changed to summer months to increase participation in summer camps; PH&R running through MLB seems to be working well; Track and Field going well since the transition from Hershey; More discussion about changes to Hot Shots and how Red Claws fits in and what do the Red Claws provide for us; Encourage that the State Tournament could be held elsewhere and utilize Red Claws tickets – Nicole suggested that summer may be best for Red Claws as well – Deb reported that Red Claws aren't tied to it happening at the Expo – will entertain many ideas and there may be the possibility of Dunkin Donuts getting involved; at times, follow-up has been an issue; Steve suggested that we should have a plan in mind before Deb meets with Dewan – possibilities: every participant gets a basketball, a t-shirt, a Red Claws ticket ; Doug raised issue of using healthy-minded sponsorships only (raised issue of partnership with Dunkin Donuts, Krispy Kremes, Tim Hortons, etc.) Karyn feels the conversation has to include Northern Maine ; Steve suggests that 2-3 people work together to consider the change in time – open the regional competition in the summer and extend the window from July – November (or end time to be determined); Deb, Jason and Hillary to work on this; Track program thriving in Northern Maine, spotty participation in remainder of state; Deb G. suggested that the MRPA Track event should be more in-line with USATF guidelines; Deb suggested that we have other committee members joining Tim, Matt and Hillary
- II. Review of Strategic Plan – Tracy reported on Strategic Plan discussions; Tracy raised question as to whether MRPA should continue to have an objective of growing in the program business – gave example that we spend a lot of time working on two programs that have varied participation state-wide, are there different programs we should be offering?; Jen suggested the difficulty with doing this state-wide – seems like we should be looking at things regionally; Tracy suggested we should focus on the programs we are doing and not trying to expand programs; Karyn talked about their group's discussing the notion of having a presence at events such as the Beach to Beacon, and promote both the association and its offerings (i.e. Discount ticket program) and the profession; Other notes – most language on current plan seems relevant; suggested that the membership category for schools rather than individual students needs to be changed within the current strategic plan. Tracy

inquired whether current financial goal with revenue increase of 10% is unrealistic and should it be reduced to 5%; Deb suggested that once Joe is on board as treasurer and has a time to review all materials this could be reviewed – Deb G and Karyn both agreed that 5% seems more manageable. Karyn reported from her group, and addressed some supporting options that may be able to help plan – addressed issue with being sure that people understand commitments, especially when it is something that brings in money for the organization; succession planning and increasing involvement outside the Board. This group looked more at By Laws rather than the plan; Deb reminded people that the Board will look at the plan again when the new Board meets

- III. Creating a new region – Jason reported the geographic regions of SMART, which now includes 40 communities; discussed the notion of a western region from North of Sebago Lake to the mountains; Doug described the possibility of another region along the midcoast area with numerous small departments in that area; Doug discussed that there are no mandates of which organization you need to be part of; Discussed notion that an additional region may assist in recruitment of new members; Steve suggested that as a Board, we should be deciding how we wish to manage this as a Board- during Doug’s presidency, regional representation was incorporated onto the Board ; Board gave blessing of this group to reach out to the western Maine communities as a pilot program for a year – may come back in a year to reevaluate if there should be regional representation on the Board; Steve hoping in the future, the regional groups would keep the Board informed and provide information for the website – Joe to be the representative for now
- IV. Groups that MRPA should be represented at: Karyn reported the top 4 that they felt to be important – SCORP, ME Trails Advisory, ME Outdoor Coalition, and Northern New England; Steve discussed the notion of whether we should have someone on their Boards or simply being a member; Steve attended the Outdoor Coalition recently and felt that we should be involved again; Tracy reported about MRPA’s past involvement with ME Trails Advisory Committee, of which he is currently the chair; Tracy feels MRPA should have representation on that committee, since it reviews RTP grants – our current representative is Norm Poirier; Lisa suggested ME Tourism and Jen noted that she has been involved with them for senior trips; Tracy mentioned that his group did discuss whether the main objective is to have a seat on the Board or be a member of the group; Jen suggested the ME After School Network; Tracy reported other groups that were discussed included MMA, of which we are still an affiliate group (Steve attends one meeting/year); Doug mentioned that our involvement may not be about what we will get from the affiliation, but additionally, what we can provide to them – telling stories about what we do could change the tide; Tracy shared the discussion about having non-Board members become involved in the affiliate groups as a way to increase the number of individuals who are involved; A Bangor employee recently attended ME Camp Association meeting; CDC has a new initiative with a potential grant for physical activity – if so, MRPA should be involved with that on a periodic basis (similar to SCORP) – Deb has indicated she can represent the Board; ME Coast Heritage Trust, ME Island Trails; Other suggestions – ME Snowmobile Association, ME Sports Commission, Bicycle Coalition, NEPA

- V. Sponsorship Packages for Events and Programs - Lisa reported sponsorship packages provided by VT and NH; Lisa and Nicole both suggested that non-profits should be included/invited at a reduced rate; Discussed Fall Conference and opportunities for new partnerships at the new location in Lewiston; expanding notion of in-kind donations and different ways to get selected vendors to join in on events; Sharing the menu of the many options available with all of the events – allowing potential sponsors to be aware of what the options are before committing to any one event; Lisa mentioned possibility of one person being in charge of sponsorships and being the go-to person to manage all sponsorships; Another sub-group is needed to put this together – Karyn, Jen and Lisa all volunteered to be part of this group
- VI. Athletic Fields and Park Maintenance Trac – Steve shared that we don't offer enough to the Parks and Facilities employees to get them included in our membership; They need to have someone on the Board who is gathering topics that need to be addressed; Jen suggested that it should be plugged into a regional group meeting; Invasive Species, Facilities, Parks, Waterfronts, Tennis Courts should all be topics included in this; Doug talked about the need to have State Park employees be included in the association - this is a good time to recruit the new, young staff of the State – MRPA may be a good solution to providing training to state park personnel; Karyn, Jen and Doug will be working on this – Deb has two names of people from Fall Workshop who wanted to be involved; trainings may or may not be fee-based depending upon the cost of the training being offered; Steve feels this could increase membership – there should be member/non-member fees charged
- VII. Advocacy – Deb encouraging people willing to talk with senators/congressman to host something at their facilities; Yarmouth has an event at a park in June; Summer Concert Series is in Dundee Park – we would host them at the Rick Charette Concert on August 1; They did come to Opening Night of World Series in Bangor in the past; Wiscasset mentioned their Summer Lunch Program; Doug encourages the association to begin to consider that Advocacy includes the State level in addition to the Federal Level; Doug shared that Maine is behind the curveball in generating additional revenues for outdoor recreation (example- Utah, Tennessee have programs that go towards advancements in outdoor recreation- tourism taxes, real estate transfer taxes, Pot sales); if Maine got involved with ME Outdoor Brands, we should be at the table with them encouraging them to get more funding for outdoor recreation (LL Bean, Old Town Canoe, ski resorts) – we have shied away from being advocates at the state level, but with an Executive Director in place, it is easier for that person to go to the State House without any political ramifications.

Upcoming Meeting Schedule: 2nd Thursday of the month; June 14th will be the next meeting - Yarmouth; Tuesday, July 10th – Track Meeting; August 9th – Bangor; September 13th – County; (Hillary to confirm) October 11th - Auburn; November 8th – Lewiston; December 13th – Standish; January 17th - Wiscasset; February 14th – Bath; March 14th – TBA