



**ESAA Board of Directors
Videoconference
May 13, 2020**

In attendance: Colleen Bell, Julie Brimble, Lynda Chase, Kathy Cunningham-Roy, Jane Danek, Tony DiSiena, John Fabelo, Jane Flynn, Judi Hunter, Susie Kerwin-Bush, Sandy Miller, Mary Nowak, BJ Parsons, Anna Quigley, Julie Quirk, Coleen Raber, Lori Whorff.

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 PM EDT, using the GoToMeeting video conference program courtesy of John Fabelo.

Kathy expressed the hope that we would hold a discussion on the options of our National moving forward, but not take a vote until we have a day or two to think about the issues brought up during the discussion.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss what options ESAA has going forward for the location of the ESAA National over the next three years. Regional Vice Presidents have asked their members to provide input as to their preferences and suggestions regarding Futurity and Maturity, the Top 20, as well as the National, and Sandy Miller got input from our Canadian members.

Susie Kerwin-Bush expressed the strong feeling of the members on the west coast that they want the 2021 National to remain in Seattle. The available dates for Seattle in 2022 will be a poor selection for travel. Obedience and field events are important to many members on the west coast and we need to try to take their concerns into consideration.

Jane Danek reminded everyone of the timeline of events leading up to this point: we were supposed to be at Pheasant Run for 2020 because the Gold Country was not able to get a contract on the west coast for 2020. We did the best we could at finding a location when Pheasant Run closed. There was no intention to ignore any certain portion of the country. As Board members we need to think about a balance between fiscal responsibility to the organization and our responsibility to our west coast members.

Susie also mentioned that several other parent clubs with whom she had contact were released from their contracts from other sites without a penalty due to the circumstances of the pandemic. However, those clubs were much closer to the date of the event than was ours.

Kathy reminded the Board members that, while we would love to be able to negotiate the penalty, as of now we have a contract that includes a penalty.

BJ Parsons reminded everyone that all of September remains too hot and humid for any field events in the areas south of the Mason/Dixon line, as several future dates were investigated.

It was expressed that there are still too many scenarios that are up in the air to be able to make any decision tonight regarding the future of the National sites and dates over the next few years.

Sandy Miller reminded everyone that each of the facilities were willing to move to the next year. However, that is not the preference of the Puget Sound club. She asked the question about available dates at each of the facilities. Susie

reviewed the dates that would be available at Founders Inn in 2021. BJ Parsons indicated the November date would be ideal for field events; however, Julie Brimble pointed out this would be a very difficult time for West Coast members to be traveling through the Rocky Mountains to attend an East Coast event.

Lynda Chase suggested that we move forward with a vote to put each site off a year down the road, and give Judi a chance to get back to Founders Inn to see if they would allow us to move to 2022 without a penalty.

Several Board members gave feedback from their constituents that encouraged ESAA to go back to Founders Inn with an attorney to try to eliminate the penalty; otherwise we are impacting 3 other sites and clubs. The feeling is that Founders Inn needs to be able to guarantee ESAA that our events would be able to go on as intended by the organization. This was mentioned numerous times throughout the meeting.

Julie Brimble mentioned that she is not on the Puget Sound Board but is aware that their Board has had feedback from their constituents really wanting to hold the ESAA National in Seattle in 2021. The West Coast members are feeling disenfranchised as part of ESAA.

Julie Quirk mentioned that the contract penalties from Founders Inn are not unique to them but are included in every hotel event contract. The only way ESAA can get out from under the cancellation penalties is through the Force Majeure clause of the contract which applies if it is impossible or illegal for our event to take place. Right now, ESAA would not be able to prove that it is impossible or illegal for our event to take place in September. Many of us had misinterpreted this to think, erroneously, that we could wait until a later date to cancel without penalty. She also mentioned that we really need to vote initially to push the dates for each site forward a year. We cannot afford to absorb the penalties.

Lori Whorff's South Central constituents who took the time to respond felt that we needed to stay with the Seattle site for 2021.

Founders Inn is getting a "bad rap" regarding the stated penalties. It was stressed that ESAA needs to get back to Founders Inn for options. Their contract language, as previously mentioned, is standard for large event facilities.

The comments in Article III of the By-Laws was reviewed for the Board:

"General management of the Association's affairs shall be entrusted to the Board of Directors. "

This means that the board must evaluate, with no emotional factors involved, what is best for ESAA. They must evaluate ALL of the consequences of their actions both intended and potentially unintended.

A Quirk/Danek motion was made to bump each contract ahead by one year for each facility. In the interim, Founders Inn will be contacted by Judi Hunter and Julie Quirk to see if any arrangement can be made to negotiate a contract for 2022. The motion passed on a 12-4 vote.

One message will be distributed to the Board members to share with the constituents in their region, so each member is getting the same information. Board members were asked to avoid posting information independently on social media. We need to be viewed as having a united front and heard as one voice.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 EDT on a Fabelo/Chase motion.

Addendum 5/16/2020

We have negotiated an agreement with Founders Inn to move our 2020 contract and event to 2022 with a reduced penalty of \$5,000. Julie Quirk and Colleen Bell recommend the week of October 31 because it provides an opportunity for field events in the vicinity and the room rates are less than our 2020 contract. Central Carolina would like to hold a Regional ESAA specialty with the 2022 National.

Dates available for 2022:

September 25-30, 2022 rate would be \$135 single \$155 double

October 3-7, 2022 rate would be \$145 single \$165 double

October 31-November 4, 2022 rates would be \$125/\$145

****Our 2020 contract has rates of \$134 single and \$154 double****

Procedure

The motion passed at the Board of Directors meeting on May 13th reads "Bump each contract ahead by one year for each facility". The resulting change in schedule being Virginia Beach 2021, Seattle 2022, Asheville 2023 (hosted by CCESC) and Roberts Center 2024

Julie Quirk has made a motion, seconded by Colleen Bell, to amend the previous decision of the Board in light of the new information that Founders Inn will move us to 2022. The motion to amend reads "Motion to change the location of the 2021 National Specialty back to Seattle with their original dates and change the 2022 location to Virginia Beach for the week of October 31st. Asheville remains as the National Specialty location for 2023 and Roberts Center for 2024". The motion was passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Coleen M. Raber

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ESAA Secretary