

Maine Association For Search And Rescue

Meeting Minutes

7 December 1997

Meeting is called to order at 1304 hours by Vice President Al Martin in the absence of MASAR President John McDonough.

Present

Al Martin-Dirigo, Dwight Lanpher-Pres. MDISAR, Steve Hudson-MDI SAR Rep, Deb Palman-Warden Service K-9 Coordinator, Keith Heavrin Jr.-Pres. MESARD, Tim Peabody-W.S., David Braun-CAP Operations Officer, Robert Baribeau-Mahoosuc Mt. Rescue, André Robidoux-Mahoosuc Mt. Rescue, Pete Byrnes-Lakes Region SAR, Rick Grant-Lakes Region SAR, Loren C. Goods-Baxter Park Ranger, Chris Drew-Baxter Park Chief Ranger, Michael Sawyer-IF&W SAR Coordinator, Michael Pellerin-CAP Wing E. S. Qualifications Officer, Randy Marshall-Waterville CAP, Steve DiMarco-Tri County SAR, Peter Laveway-Wilderness Rescue Team, Jeff Stevens-UMO High Angle Rescue Team, Lt. Pat Dorian-Warden Service

Announcements

Al Martin asks for an update of callout numbers for member units, correcting numerous errors and requesting that we continue to update at regular meetings.

Al announces that Aroostook County SAR has changed to Ashland SAR. They are made up of what was Tri County SAR in Houlton and are somewhat reduced in numbers but still trying.

There is a new Aroostook County SAR out of the University of Maine at Presque Isle that has quite a few people involved. Dave Martin is planning a BASAR course at UMPI for them soon.

North Woods Saddle Expeditions is a second equestrian SAR group getting started.

Al says he will see about getting a new MASAR call out list made up and sent to all units.

Secretary's Report

The minutes for the previous meeting on 5 October 97 are considered. Steve Hudson moves to accept them as written. Rick Grant seconds the motion. Vote is delayed till Steve can complete the copies to hand out to those who want them. After copies are distributed vote is unanimous to accept.

Treasurer's Report

Report is deferred until later in the meeting when Pete Laveway arrives with copies of the bank transactions and dues status. Pete arrives during the Baxter Park discussion below. Some discussion of the report ensues with it being noted that funds held for the W.S. GPS units have been transferred; there is still \$1247.60 being held in a custodial account for the Night Sun. MASAR checking has \$917.40 and receivables balance is \$335. The treasurer's report is voted to be accepted as written, unanimously.

Baxter State Park

Al Martin opens discussion by saying we would like to review last summer's Baxter Park volunteer program and incident summaries for the two fatalities that occurred late in the season. Baxter Park Chief Warden Chris Drew states that he is very concerned about the criticism of the Park and Park personnel that he has heard occurred at the MASAR meeting on October 5th. He says he

had received a phone call that indicated the meeting minutes had been edited to exclude parts critical of the Park and the way the incidents were handled. He'd been told the meeting discussion concerning the Park got pretty hot at times. Chris Drew brought numerous copies of the incident reports in question, maps, and experienced Park Ranger Loren C. Goods, who was the Ranger in charge of the incidents, to the meeting. Chris gave a recap of the two incidents with remarks from Ranger Goods. Andy Robidoux explained there was never any intent to depart from anything but constructive interchange and he apologized to Chris for not getting information to him in a more timely way so as to avoid misunderstanding. Keith offers that, having written the original minutes, he would not characterize the interchanges at the last meeting as either hot exchanges or other than generally constructive in nature. Tim Peabody, and several other members who were at the meeting concur. It is explained that the minutes were edited in order to bring Baxter Park representatives to the discussion before the issues of the discussion, relating to Baxter Park, appeared in the minutes.

Lengthy discussion of protocols involved in wilderness situations ensues. Andy offers that generally, after 30 minutes of CPR and being more than two hours from definitive care, a subject can be moved towards getting them out. Chris offers that when the family is present, they don't hesitate to continue CPR a little longer. None of the volunteers present knew next of kin were present. Some discussion on who has the call as to what is done at a scene occurs and whether a nurse is qualified to do that as opposed to Wilderness EMTs. The nurse in this case was an ICU-experienced person. Andy offers a wilderness medicine pamphlet to the group that contains some of the information under discussion. The discussion closes with agreement that several people are going to research what the protocols are for these type situations and report back to the group. Andy states he'd like to see the group follow up on this. The objective being to see what we can all do, as a team, to do a better job.

Some discourse occurs concerning emergency response equipment caches at Baxter Park, Bob Baribeau and Andy Robidoux report they got around to each of the equipment caches to evaluate what the volunteers had to work with and to be familiar with where it was stored. They noted deficiencies, such as webbing for litters etc. and reported that to Baxter Park personnel. Chris offers that he would like for any of this sort of information that is generated to be given to Park personnel the same day, perhaps by telling the gate personnel in charge that day, so that the Park can respond to needs promptly.

Keith Heavrin asks what percentage of coverage the Park was able to achieve with the new program as compared to what they would like to see. Chris Drew responds that he figures about 50%, Rick Grant, Andy and several others had high praise for the way the Park personnel treated and assisted volunteers during the summer and fall program. It is agreed that Baxter Park and MASAR volunteers working together as a team is an excellent match. Chris states that he feels the program was a success and something good to build upon.

Committee Reports

Spring Training Exercise

After some discussion a committee is appointed to plan for the spring exercise. It is desirable to enlist the help of a southern district Warden supervisor as well as someone from one of the southern units, such as YCERRT, to work with Tim Peabody and the MASAR Education Officer, Dave Martin. The training will again be held on the first weekend in May, Al asks if there are any areas that come to mind that would be suitable sites for the training. Keith mentions that there is a large Boy Scout camp down South somewhere that was suggested to him as a likely training area

last summer.

Al relates that he'd like to get more or less permanent T cards filled out for all the units' personnel and distributes a sheet to provide information on for each units' personnel. He asks that these be mailed back to him as soon as they can be dealt with. This will save time at the training exercise if they can get this information ahead of time.

Risk Management

Mike Sawyer updates risk management sheet and adds his voice to the agreement that more needs to be made known to the membership concerning protocols mentioned in the Baxter Park discussion above.

Standards Committee

Steve asks that any units not having received copies of the BASAR test questions and the curriculum should contact him and he will see that they get them.

Some discussion occurs concerning the use of the BASAR testing and teaching of the BASAR curriculum by member units as a fund-raising activity. Al states he had a phone conversation with John McDonough during which John expressed that he felt the BASAR test and the BASAR curriculum are the property of MASAR and should not be used by units for profit. Some consideration will have to be made by those units who have been using the BASAR test and curriculum as part of courses they are teaching, to keep the BASAR part of their offerings separate from other course material offered and to charge only what is necessary to cover expenses for the BASAR course.

Ashland Search

Tim Peabody begins discussion of this search by noting that seventy year old Robert Smith is still missing and the search is not resolved. Tim gives a synopsis of the search day by day, as it evolved, and provides the group with extraordinary maps of the day by day effort. Tim relates that this has been the largest search effort in state history with some 140,000 volunteer hours expended to search more than ten thousand acres of rough wilderness area and the three drainage systems in it. Among the groups and units participating in the search were many MASAR volunteer search groups, the Maine National Guard, a large contingent of Canadians, several aircraft and a large number of local area volunteers. Warden Service also had a large number of Wardens involved in the search effort. Several units represented at this meeting related the contribution they had made to this search. Tim remarks that he felt the POD coverage for the areas that were searched was very good. It was generally agreed that the overall management and use of resources at the Ashland search was very well organized. The overhead team did a superb job of planning and conducting the effort, as well as managing the numbers of volunteers that took part. The MASAR OD's for the period of this search related that they called out every available volunteer for this search and had repeated calls, later in the effort, to many of the units involved.

Mike Sawyer relates that one of the problems they encountered at the Ashland search was that there are not that many trained search volunteers up in that part of the state. There is a flush of new interest and people asking about getting training. He remarks that the Canadians are a great and very helpful resource. Brief discussion of what arrangements are required to accomplish the border crossing and recognition that Canadians have greater resources for SAR closer at hand for northern Maine than many of the Maine volunteers that took part in this search.

Keith brings up the radio traffic problems that continue to be an issue, remarking that it would be better for search managers to tell people to get off the channel, except for essential traffic, than to ignore volunteers calling in to the CP. It could become a safety issue if deployed teams come to

believe their radios aren't working because they can't get a response.

Deb asks if blood hounds were used on this search or whether they were considered. Tim responds that he didn't think so. Deb would like to encourage the use of certified bloodhound teams, even after several days, because the training level of the available bloodhound teams is getting better and may be valuable to a search effort even in the second or third day.

Rick Grant brings up issue of it being difficult to get time out of work to participate in such a large search effort. A discussion ensues about possibly having some official approach or appeal to employers to address this issue. Mike Sawyer relates that the office of the Governor had received complaints from businesses after he activated the Guard to help in this search. Apparently some employers objected to releasing their workers, who were Guard members, for this effort.

Tim says that Warden Service is considering the use of the GIS tactical mapping system. It will be a much more accurate and comprehensive way to deal with maps and planning for search incidents. Maps and methods of showing coverage and areas is all computerized and can print out very graphic detail for any search effort. He shows the Ashland search maps and the result is very impressive indeed. Day by day effort is clearly shown for the whole search on an accurate map.

St. Albans Search

Discussion of the St. Albans Search centered around numerous problems with the effort. Radio contact with the CP was described as poor at times due to unmanned radio there. Al relates concern over deployment of a sixty person grid search line being told they must not stop the line's forward progress for any reason except by a Warden's direction. He relates that many of the people in that line were not registered as having been deployed and were not checked in on return. Some volunteers were called out at night then asked to stand by for three hours or more before being used. The victim, a Massachusetts hunter, was located by aircraft on the morning of 28 November. Volunteers and Wardens had searched through the night not far from where the hunter had died of a heart attack, later determined to have occurred the morning of the 27th.

New unit

Keith Heavrin introduces Jeff Stevens, representing the University of Maine at Orono High Angle Rescue Team. Jeff introduces his new unit. They have as many as 35 people attending trainings and 15 of them have passed the BASAR requirements. They are interested in joining MASAR and Jeff meets with Steve Hudson to get the information to do so.

The next MASAR Meeting will be held 1 February 1998 at Warden Service Headquarters in Sidney at 1300 hours. There will be a Baxter State Park workshop beginning at 1000 hours the same day and location. The workshop will further explore wilderness protocols and ways to make the Baxter Park summer volunteer program more successful for next summer. Interested units and individuals should attend to support this worthwhile program. For more information call Keith R. Heavrin, Jr., MASAR Secretary, at 326 8538.

Meeting is adjourned at 1645 hours.