



minutes

Yellowknife Search and Rescue Board Meeting

Date: October 30, 2024

Time: 7:00 PM MT

Location: [MS Teams](#)

Present: Amanda Herbert | Tom Girrion | Amar Maharaj | Jurjen van der Sluijs | Andrea Lowing |
Kavitha Balaji | Danielle Wendehorst | Jacqueline Mo

1 Call to Order – 7:01 PM MT

2 Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

July 2024 minutes approved as is; September 2024 minutes approved with changes below.

- **Motion:** Amend the September 2024 minutes as follows and approve both sets of minutes.
 - Under Governance → Insurance (and RVs): clarify that the two questions within the insurance application regarding RVs were “Do you own or use RVs?” and “Does your province/territory require you by law to carry insurance for liability?” Amanda informed the Board that she answered “Yes” to both questions and noted that the second question is addressed in our existing policy.
 - Under Liaison → GNWT MNP LLP Report: change the last sentence in the first bullet so that it reads: “YKSAR currently receives some limited funding through a grant from the GNWT focused on training; the report says we should receive more funding to help cover operating expenses.”
 - Under Planning → Search Stats Database: add that Tom will take care of keeping this database updated for now. We would still like to have someone cover it in the future.
- Motion – Tom. Second – Amar and Andrea. None opposed. Motion carried.

3 Governance

Insurance Payment – Amanda

- Amanda mailed the cheque around October 10; Kavitha checked today and the cheque has not been cashed yet. Kavitha will keep an eye on it.



Dropbox (new folder for AGMs) – Amanda

- Amanda has created a new AGM folder; Jackie to drop all AGM materials in there.

Agenda Items Spreadsheet – Google Docs – Amanda/Jackie

- A few on the Board have encountered issues editing the agenda items spreadsheet on Dropbox – Jackie will move the spreadsheet to Google Docs for now.

Succession Planning – Amanda

- Amanda reiterated what was discussed at the September 2024 meeting about Amar learning the functions of the three key roles (President, Treasurer, Secretary) over the course of the year so he can provide back-up if needed. Amar is open to this; Amanda, Kavitha, and Jackie will work with him over the year to onboard him to their respective roles.
- For example, Jackie will involve Amar during the annual Corporate Registries filing (which occurs annually after the AGM).

4 Command

Succession Planning – Amanda

- Amanda reported to the Board that she has been doing a lot of tasks related to the Command function.
- To reiterate (see September 2024 minutes for reference): the Command function serves to connect everyone and ensures different functions within the ICS structure are talking to each other.
- A key example of the coordination that someone in the Command function would do: the team lead for the Information (Public Information) team is not on the Board of Directors, so in order to relay updates from the Information team to the Board, someone will have to reach out to the Information team lead.
- At the last meeting, Amanda suggested that perhaps Members at Large could think about whether they would be interested in playing a larger Command role.
 - Andrea confirmed that Volunteer Resources is her current priority, and Danielle noted that her new job may require her to be on-call a lot. Both will give this some thought.
 - In the meantime, Amanda will continue to copy Andrea and Danielle on emails related to the Command function.

5 Liaison

SARVAC Humanitarian Workforce Exercise – Tom/Danielle

- Danielle provided the Board with a recap of the recent 2-day SARVAC Humanitarian Workforce exercise. The participants were provided with a scenario outlined in a document, and at the first briefing on the Friday night, they were assigned sections/roles and section commanders. The following day, all were transported to site as the exercise played out.



Depending on what you were assigned, tasks involved setting up heaters, filling sandbags, setting up tents, providing first aid, etc.

- This exercise allowed SARVAC to see how their existing structures would perform, and where gaps might exist. It was a roleplaying exercise more than simply a tabletop exercise.
- Participants were given the opportunity to try out different types of gear/maps/technology. For example, they tested a mapping app that allows users to upload photos and flag to others on the platform valuable search information such as which houses have been searched, and where there might be damage to houses to watch out for.
- Danielle further reported that it was interesting to see what SAR searchers are used for in other provinces. For instance, Ontario gets a lot of flooding, so SAR volunteers in Ontario are often called upon for sandbagging tasks.
- Tom and Danielle also connected with Slave Lake searchers, who indicated that they were interested in coordinating with YKSAR. Tom will be reaching out to them.
- Tom further reported that Bill and Danielle have both signed up to take the Humanitarian Workforce training in November. Once they return, they should have more information about the HWF program.
- SARVAC has identified 9 areas where SAR teams could play a role in the event of a disaster, including Incident Management (up to ICS-300), GIS (mapping), Search and Rescue, and Wellness Checks.
- Tom reminded all that members who wish to be part of the HWF can submit their names directly to SARVAC, to the HWF Program. If members are interested in being on their call-out list, they can contact them directly.

6 Safety

Post-Wildfire/Dangerous Trees – Tom

- Action Item – Carried Over: Tom and Danielle will meet soon to establish a set of basic guidelines.
- Amanda noted that a risk and after-action report was recently released in the media related to the firefighter who passed; this may be helpful for us.

7 Operations

Training Report and Monthly Call-Out Drill – Tom

- We have just recently completed a GPS course and Tom is planning to put on another GPS course one more time this year – possibly end of November. The Lost Person Behaviour course will be pushed to December.
- The next monthly call-out drill will take place in November because the October call-out was pre-empted by an active search.
- The November call-out will take place next Wednesday and Tom intends to recreate portions of the recent active search, but much more scaled back, to give members a sense of what was done and to provide an after-action review as well.



Recent Searches – Tom

- A recent search took place on Sunday evening of this past week and involved rescuing an individual with a broken leg sitting just offshore on YK River. We had 10 searchers out for just under 50 hours. Our searchers did a good job of addressing the issue and getting the individual back to safety.
- Tom has submitted the invoice of costs to the RCMP. Tom will drop by Kavitha's office tomorrow to drop off the receipts.
- More information on Sunday's search can be found in Dropbox, under Operations → 2024/2025.

Equipment Suggestions (SAM Splints, Technical Vests) – All

- As it turns out, we had one SAM splint in our gear bag and it was used in Sunday's active search to stabilize the individual's broken leg. Tom has arranged to purchase 3 more SAM Splints and other miscellaneous gear that was used in the recent Sunday search. The cost of this will be covered by the RCMP as part of the search costs from Sunday.
- No updates/comments on the technical vests at this time.

8 Fund Development

GNWT Agreement Update – Amar

- Shane has joined Amar on this subcommittee to determine strategic next steps for the GNWT Report. They are drafting a Terms of Reference (drafted by Amar and currently with Shane for input) and a fund development proposal to present to the Board.
- The subcommittee has met twice thus far, with Amanda in attendance at one meeting.

Bingo Recap (Bingo Coordinator: Claire) and Next Bingo – February 23, 2025 – Amanda

- The October bingo went well. At the AGM, Claire had offered to help with Fund Development, so Amanda asked Claire to coordinate the bingos moving forward. After volunteering for the October bingo night, Claire now knows how it all works.
- Amanda has been copying Claire on all bingo-related emails. Claire has since already connected with The Elks, booked the February 2025 date, and will seek and onboard volunteers. She will be the liaison between The Elks' staff and our volunteers.

Grants (DeBeers' Ambassadors for Good, YK Community Foundation, City of YK) – Amanda

- DeBeers' Ambassadors for Good update: CAF reached out to us 2 weeks ago to let us know they will send us a wire transfer. Kavitha confirms that we have received the \$8,500 in our account, which is great news and means Jurjen can proceed with spending.
- Amanda noted that at the end of the year, we will have to report on this project, but that not all of it necessarily needs to be spent this year.
- Kavitha confirmed that she will track this spending in a separate tab for reporting purposes.



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- More good news: with Amar on fund development and Claire on bingos, Amanda also shared that Tori has stepped up to work on grants. She will start working on grant-writing for us and has already looked into 3 grants. She has determined that we are not eligible for the MACA grant, but we are eligible for the YKCF and City of YK grants.
 - Tori is in discussions with the YKCF for the Garry Robinson grant. When Amanda last spoke with the YKCF, they confirmed that they do want to provide YKSAR with funding – they just need to do some work internally to be able to do so. They confirmed that they no longer need YKSAR to be a charity; they will do the paperwork to allow them to give funding to nonprofits without needing us to be a charitable organization.

In-Kind Donation (Microsoft Office 365) – Amanda

- Some additional good news: Amanda reported that YKSAR has received an in-kind donation from TechSoup, who connected us with Microsoft. We needed 3 licences to Microsoft Access for our Volunteer Resources team, who were struggling to get the VR function done without the software. Microsoft gave us 10 free Business Pro licences to Microsoft Office 365 (valued at \$30/month per licence), which equates to a \$3,600 donation from Microsoft!
- 3 of those licences have already been distributed to Amanda, Andrea, and Jackie on the VR team, but Andrea confirmed that her laptop is equipped, so Amanda will redistribute the licence to someone else in need. Tom, Aingeal, and Andrea all have their own licences; Amanda will try to transfer Andrea's licence to Amar to work on the fund development function. Instructions can be found on Dropbox, in the Fund Development and IT folders.
- These licences shouldn't expire and are supposed to auto-renew every year unless we hear otherwise, which is good news. (Perhaps as long as we're a member in good standing with TechSoup.)
- Amanda will stay on as the administrator of these licences as it is tied to her credit card at the moment.
- Action Item: the Board will think about how to properly distribute the remainder of the licences. Perhaps the Information team will need a few.

Donation from Tom – Amanda

- Amanda reported that we have received a \$900 e-transfer from Elaine and Tom – a huge donation, thank you very much for this. Tom donated back his expenses from the R. Beaulieu search over the summer.

9 Logistics

Equipment Director's Report – Jurjen

- Once we receive those 3 SAM Splints and other consumables and gear (mentioned by Tom in the Equipment Suggestions section above), they will repack the gear bag so that we are good to go once more.



Starlink/InReach and Subscription Payment Method (credit card) – Jurjen/Amanda

- Monthly subscription costs for Starlink and InReach: Jurjen has confirmed that prepaid credit cards are not accepted. Does YKSAR have a bank card? Otherwise, these subscriptions will have to be tied to Jurjen's credit card for the next 3 years.
- Kavitha and Amanda talked about getting a credit card – BMO is not easy to deal with, but Kavitha hopes to get more information in the next few weeks.
- Jurjen does not foresee setting up the subscription before Christmas anyway, and reiterated that it may be best if these recurring costs come straight out of the organization's account.
- Amanda worked with petty cash systems in previous organizations and wondered what we would need to have something like that set up. If we were able to get a credit card, what kind of protections do we have in place to ensure the credit card is not misused? Kavitha: in order to pay for the credit card, we would need to write cheques anyway, which requires two signatories, so perhaps that could be one such protection.
 - Action Item: Kavitha will look into what's possible.
- Action Item: Jurjen will budget and update the numbers in advance of the Starlink/InReach purchases. He will get the numbers reviewed by Tom and will start purchasing the hardware.
- Action Item: Jurjen will also figure out what the subscription fees are and will bring that to the Board for review.

Volunteer Resources Update – Amanda

- The VR team is in progress. Aingeal has been working to keep the database updated; all the new Basic Searchers should be in the database now.
- Andrea and Jackie have been keeping track of emails, and Jackie has updated the Current Members list in the YKSAR Yahoo inbox.
- Kavitha will take care of membership receipting.
- Once we have the database fully updated, we will figure out other pieces such as tracking the training hours.
- The VR team will hopefully meet with Bill this coming weekend, for a refresher on the VR process.

10 Finance

Ordering Cheques – Kavitha

- Kavitha reported that we are getting low on cheques and should order more ASAP. Kavitha presented the Board with the cost and quantity options.
- Motion: The Board agrees that Kavitha will order 200 cheques at \$81.99.
 - Motion – Tom. Second – Jurjen. None opposed. Motion carried.

Membership Receipts – Amanda/Kavitha

- Kavitha has started down this path and reported that we are close to \$2,000-2,100 in membership dues; good job to whoever is doing the recruiting!



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- Aingeal needs to know who has paid to update the database. Andrea will pass Aingeal her list and Jackie will also pass Kavitha the receipt for the cheques deposited at BMO.

Budget – Kavitha/Amanda

- Our balance is now at approximately \$28,498.
- With the in-kind donations from Microsoft and Tom, as well as the SARTopo subscription gift, we may no longer be in a deficit.

11 Information (formerly Public Information)

New Lead Needed – Amanda

- Eva is stepping down as Information team lead and Emma must step away as well; Amanda is thinking of reaching out to Dane and Aurora to see if they're interested. No concerns from the Board.

Website – Amanda

- Amanda estimates that owning our own website may cost us \$200-300 in fees over the next 2-3 years, and then \$50/year after that.
- If the Board approves this, Amanda would like to proceed so that we can sign up for Google for Nonprofits. (Refer to September 2024 minutes for background on this.)
- No concerns from the Board; Amanda will proceed with getting this done.

12 Next Meeting and Away Dates – Wednesday, November 20; and pencil in December 18 and January 15. (Aiming for the third Wednesday of the month for the next few meetings.)

13 Adjournment – 8:57 PM MT
