

Arizona Falconers Association

Board of Directors Meeting

Feb. 24, 2008

Called to order at 11:36 am.

Officers Present

Tim Riordan, President

Charlie Kaiser, VP

Ron Palmer, Treas.

Jamaica Smith, Sec.

Pam Hessey, Director

Forrest Miller, Director

Erik Powell, Director

Bob Mechsner, Director

Michael Mills, Director

Matt Murray, Director

Not Present

Ian Wolf, Director

Nathan Charlton, Director

The board first attempted to determine what should be the most important issues to cover. Everyone agreed that at least getting some initial planning done on the 2009 Desert Hawking Classic (DHC) might be good, but Tim pointed out that planning the location must at least wait until late summer to see what the game situation might be. The board agreed to ask Michael Mills to handle the next DHC and he accepted.

Oscar Ruiz, our webmaster, asked the board to provide a list of the new directors, their positions, and their emails. He agreed that he could make the newsletter available on the website as a PDF.

The board spent some time discussing the new, but unratified, bylaws. There was discussion about whether they were actually ratified, but everyone came to agree that they had not been ratified by any definition. Jamaica was the only new officer who had been an officer when the new bylaws were crafted in 2004. The priorities of the officers at that time had been to update the bylaws in structure, to address the issue of allowing nonfalconers voting rights, the issue of allowing nonresident falconers voting rights. Further, the officers had felt it prudent to give the board some control over admission of a falconer who had a past revocation of a falconry permit, or a falconer who had been expelled from this or any other falconry club in the past, to general membership privileges. The new board is aware of 3 active AZ falconers who dealt with legal issues in the last decade, and realizes that there may be others with revocations about which they are not aware, therefore wanted to make it perfectly clear that this part of the bylaws should not be construed as an attack on any current AZ falconer, but only as a measure to give the board the ability to review membership applications in the future should this issue arise. It was agreed that should this provision remain in the bylaws when ratified, that the 3 falconers about which the board was aware would be grand fathered in without further discussion.

At this time it was pointed out that Bob Mechsner would not qualify for the new board of directors due to the fact that he does not have a current falconry license. Given that he was elected under the old bylaws, which does not restrict director positions to falconers, and given that he was a falconer in the past, the board agreed that he would also be grand fathered in for this two year term.

The board then agreed that they would give themselves until the end of March to review the new bylaws, compare them to the old bylaws, and meet again to make changes, if any, to the bylaws, then present them to the membership for proper ratification probably by the end of May. Jamaica had the only copy of the old bylaws, and would scan the document and make it available to the officers via email.

Regarding Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGF) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) issues, it was agreed that for now we would wait until the final version of the new federal falconry regulations come out before dealing with the state regulations. It was agreed that right now, dealing with the quail season, as discussed in the general meeting, would be our priority.

Forrest again stated that he would coordinate with Gary to the biologist info regarding the study done on falconry's impact on quail pops in extended season units.

The board discussed how to bring in new members. Ron Palmer said that at a recent meeting with AZGF he was told the state has 106 licensed falconers at this time. Jamaica said that she would mail the first newsletter to all AZ falconers, regardless of current membership status, with an invitation to join. The board also discussed other meets and agreed that a summer picnic in Flagstaff, in early July, would be a great idea. Forrest offered to host the fall meet in Payson, which was tentatively agreed to pending game situations. Forrest shared that he knows a BBQ caterer who could do three meals (lunch, dinner, and next morning breakfast) for \$25 a head. Jamaica suggested that such an idea might go over better at a fall meet than a summer picnic, which many people only attend for the day.

The board discussed the need for committees. Erik Powell stated that the Education committee was in good shape and working on getting a calendar of education events set up, and would be contacting members to attend educational functions in their area. Further, Charlie was going to be outlining guidelines for education events tailored to the setting (i.e. small classroom vs. event with 10,000 attending).

The directors discussed the issue of the dates of the DHC, and how best to coordinate with California and New Mexico so that falconers here can also attend those meets, and vice versa. It was stated that it was important not to cater to other clubs, but it makes sense to try to work out dates in advance.

The board discussed the need for a conservation committee, or at least the need for the Arizona Falconers Association (AFA) to become more involved in real conservation issues. Erik Powell agreed to look further into the Aplomado reintroduction, and the board discussed possible habitat preservation for Harris' hawks, specifically the possibility of providing water sites where cattle tanks are disappearing.

Charlie volunteered to research which pro-hunting organizations would be good for the AFA to join. It was agreed that we need to become more involved with these organizations, such as the Sportsmen's Alliance, Ducks Unlimited, etc., both for legal assistance if necessary, and for the conservation works already supported by these clubs.

The board discussed, at length, whether there was a need to revise the logo yet again. It was pointed out that it was revised only about two years ago, but that it was not necessarily a popular revision. Michelle Scripture, a falconer from TX, suggested that we have a logo contest. After more discussion, the board agreed to that, and Jamaica said she would set up and announce the contest in the first newsletter. The board agreed that the contest deadline should be June 30.

Jamaica asked what happened to the AFA Apprentice Manual she had been working on two years ago. It was stated that Michael Mills likely had the materials, or possibly Randy Hale.

The board discussed whether the club should seek nonprofit status. Jamaica shared her experience with that several years ago: she researched it thoroughly, even buying a kit to start the process, only to come to the realization the AFA could never handle the legal responsibilities required by nonprofit status. If we become nonprofit, we will be required by law to make certain reports, maintain certain records, etc., each year, or within certain time frames. In short, we are too small a group, with much too spotty a record, to take that risk. Charlie then shared that 3 years after the California hawking club (CHC) achieved nonprofit status, they were audited. Despite finding nothing wrong, the audit took 6 months of the secretary's life. At that point all the directors agreed that the gain was not worth the risk and effort. Jamaica suggested that if we could piggyback with someone else, such as the Sportsmen's Alliance, that would be a good solution.

With nothing further to discuss, and spouses begging us to quit, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:30 pm.