



Northern Virginia Firefighters' Emerald Society Pipe Band

Board of Directors Meeting

March 7, 2019

- I. Meeting called to order at 6:50 pm
- II. Members in Attendance: President Mike Lacey, Vice President Matt Lopez, Treasurer Tom Clappi, Secretary/Webmaster Jim Kraftchak, Board Member at Large/Pipe Instructor Jim Ryan, Drum Major Bill Bryce, Quartermaster Jason Allen and Luis Santano.
- III. Old Business
 - a. Quartermaster
 - i. Jason Allen will be reaching out to inactive members via email to get back their uniforms. If he doesn't get a response to his email query, he will let the Board of Directors (BOD) know so that they may decide what the next steps are.
 - ii. Jim Ryan's kilt has been sent to the POB and somebody needs to check to see if it's there or not.
 - iii. Phil Nannery was issued everything with the exception of a tunic after passing his audition this week.
 - iv. Until all inactive members uniforms are returned and inventoried, no new uniforms will be ordered in the hopes that a returned item will work for a member that needs an item. This is to save the band funds on uniforms since a kilt costs around \$400 and tunics more.
 - b. Donor Letter – Jim Kraftchak brought up the donor thank you letter that the previous Secretary Sandy Keith had created but was not finalized nor approved by the previous BOD. This letter is to be given to donors as a receipt of their donation for tax purposes. After review of the letter, Jim Ryan motioned for acceptance as written and Matt Lopez seconded that motion. A vote was called and passed unanimously.
 - c. Fundraising Letter – Bill Bryce mentioned that he had created a similar letter to give to folks to do fund raising that explained who we were and that we were a 501(c)(3) organization. After review of the

letter, Jim Ryan noted that the letter needed to be revised and that he would take that on and revise the letter to be presented at the next BOD meeting for review.

IV. New Business:

a. Fundraising

- i. Mike Lacey after discussion with Tom Clappi mentioned that the band needs to raise \$10,000 by the end of the calendar year. To assist in making that number, the BOD has established a fund raising committee and Bill Bryce will be the chair to determine how best to make that number or better.
- ii. Jason Allen mentioned that one thing that Baltimore Fire does is that Costco will give you a \$25 gift card each year if you show that you are a non-profit organization. What Baltimore does is goes around to all the Costcos in the area and gets a gift card from each one and then goes and buys something like a TV with all the gift cards and raffles the TV off.
- iii. Jason Allen mentioned that for the April fundraiser, the membership needs to be made aware that March 15 is when all donations, baskets, etc... need to be accounted for and told to Bill Bryce so that there is time to get the silent auction and raffles pulled together in time for April.
- iv. Jim Ryan mentioned that one way we could raise money is to get plaques made with the band logo on it and "Proud sponsor of the Norther Virginia Firefighters' Emerald Society Pipe Band" and then a place for a year placard. Sell that plaque and current year placard for X amount, \$500 was used as an example, to bars, restaurants and other places of business. Then the next year go back to the same locations and sell them a current year placard for a reduced price, \$300 was used as an example.

b. BOD Meeting – Jim Ryan motioned that we hold a BOD meeting monthly on the second Thursday of each month. Mike Lacey seconded that motion and after a vote it passed unanimously. Jim Kraftchak as Secretary is responsible for sending out a mass email to the band to let them where each BOD Meeting will be held and that anyone is allowed to attend and listen in. Also he will send out emails to let the membership know that they can join any of the committees they might be interested in.

c. Band Priorities – Mike Lacey asked that everyone present what they feel are the top three (3) priorities that the band should tackle this year. Following is what was presented:

- i. Matt Lopez – Fund Raising, Membership and Drummers
- ii. Tom Clappi – Updating the Bylaws, Fundraising and bringing back the fun
- iii. Jason Allen – Fundraising and recruitment

- iv. Bill Bryce – Recruitment, Fundraising and Gigs
 - v. Jim Ryan – Drummers, Fundraising and reducing set lists
 - vi. Louis Sananto – Membership, Fundraising and Marketing
 - vii. Jim Kraftchak – Social Media/Website, Recruitment and Fundraising
 - viii. Mike Lacey – Updating the Bylaws and updating the Uniform Manual
- d. Bylaws Update – A discussion was held about the current bylaws being inadequate for the band as it currently exists. Jim Ryan motioned that a formal Bylaws Review Committee be established and Jim Kraftchak seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Matt Lopez has agreed to chair that committee.
- e. Uniform Committee – A discussion was held about the fact that the Uniform Committee must be re-established and the Uniform Manual must be updated. To that end, the BOD will ask Gary Winemiller to chair that committee and produce an updated manual as quickly as possible.
- f. Membership/Recruitment
- i. Since membership/recruitment was big on many folks top 3, a discussion was held to determine if there was a need for Membership/Recruitment Committee to be established. The answer was a resounding yes. The benefit to having a committee is there will be a central place to develop ideas on how to recruit.
 - ii. Issues discussed to recruitment were:
 1. Need more representation from NOVA Fire Departments
 2. Is it possible to talk to recruit classes about NVFESPB in Fairfax and Loudoun? Both Matt Lopez (Fairfax) and Tom Clappi (Loudoun) said that yes that was possible in those departments. Need to check with other departments to see if possible there too.
 3. The band should have some form of “marketing slicks” that are available to hand out to potential recruits.
 4. Besides the Fire Department, we also need to target Police, Reserves and Military as they are also part of the band’s mission.
 5. Jason Allen brought up that one of the potential issues for recruiting outside of the Fire Department is that we have Firefighter in our band name and maybe we should consider changing to a “Public Safety” or something similar band name. He and everyone else were not really happy with doing that so a discussion evolved where we were going to press the NOVA Fire Departments for recruiting and if that doesn’t work well

then rebranding the band might be a solution to our membership issues down the road.

6. Another option might also be to re-write the band's mission statement to indicate broader support from other service organizations such as Police, Military and Reserves.
- iii. A Membership/Recruitment Committee was established with Luis Sananto as the Chair and the following members with responsibility to contact and work with the NOVA Fire Departments to recruit:
 1. Luis Sananto – Chair and Alexandria FD
 2. Matt Lopez – Fairfax FD
 3. Tom Clappi – Loudoun FD
 4. Steve Boulton – Prince William FD
 5. Jason Allen – Fauquier FD
- g. Fire Department Major Events – Mike Lacey brought up that many times NOVA Fire Departments would like us to participate in events that they hold but yet only let us know about them a short time out from the event, which makes it hard for us to schedule and get participation. For all major events, which are things that they have on their yearly schedule like: picnics, fundraisers, etc..., that they notify us as soon as a date is established so that the band can better schedule and support the event.
- h. Speaking Time – In order to ensure that everyone has equal speaking time during BOD meetings, Jim Ryan motioned that speakers be restricted to 1 minute speaking time. Matt Lopez seconded the motion and it passed 4 Yeas to 1 Nay.
- i. Music – Jim Ryan would like to establish, along with Steve Boulton, six (6) solid sets that the band can play well. He would then like to add one (1) new set as he feels that learning new music is the best way to increase our ability. Jim Ryan will work over the next 6 weeks to have all new standardized setting for all our music. Jason Allen mentioned that it would be nice to have fun bar set and that was agreed to.
- j. Scholarship
 - i. Mike Lacey brought up the option of a potential band scholarship for a band member to attend an event like KTA, Shenandoah University Piping School, etc... Maybe select 1 person to send each year.
 - ii. It was determined that a committee would need to be established to determine who gets the scholarship by using criteria, cost and decision making.
 - iii. With current funds, Tom Clappi estimates that the band could afford to spend a maximum of \$500 on a scholarship. He will look at the funding for the band over the past three (3) years and see how much was left over each year to determine what might be available on average to offer.

- iv. If it is determined that the band will establish a scholarship, there must be well determined and laid out guidelines to be followed in determining who would receive the scholarship.
 - v. Amount of the scholarship, depending on funds availability, would be up to but not to exceed 50% of the total cost of the event, including transportation, event fees and housing.
 - vi. It was determined that it would be best for the Red Sash Committee to determine if a scholarship should be offered, establish the guidelines and select the annual candidate to receive the scholarship if one is established.
- k. Department – A discussion was had about band department and uniform wear. This addresses how you wear your uniform and present yourself as this goes to how the public views the band. Responsibility for uniform/department issues is the Drum Major (D/M) per the bylaws and nobody else. Any uniform/department issues should be brought to the D/M for resolution. Should have rules on what can be done such as if/when flags should be used, relaxed uniforms, etc... Suggestion was made to rename the Uniform Committee to the Dress and Department Committee. All policies created by this committee will be approved/disapproved by the D/M and Pipe Major (P/M).
- l. TeamSnap – Jim Ryan wanted to know if there was a better way to use TeamSnap than what we currently are doing? Is there a way to separate between Priority 1 (full band) events and Priority 3 (those who can make it) events? It was recommended that Lisa Heilbraun will investigate what functions we currently have that might not be fully utilized and what other functions exist for TeamSnap and what the associated costs are for those function. Report to be provided to the BOD at the next meeting
- m. KTA Music Workshop – Jim Ryan offered to hold a workshop for folks going to KTA to learn the music that will be played there. He needs to know who all is interested and if this sounds like a good idea.
- n. Uniforms – Jim Ryan motioned that the band purchase 10 heavy duty black suspenders, Tom Clappi seconded. Vote was 2 Yea, 2 Nay and 1 abstained. It was decided that the BOD would wait until we got all the inactive uniforms back to determine if there was a real need for the suspenders or not.
- o. Committee Chairs – Committee Chairs are to provide an outline as to how each of their committees are going to meet the goals set for them at the next BOD Meeting in April either in person or in writing if they cannot be there.

V. Meeting adjourned at 09:10 pm