

SWRAL Minutes
August 23, 2022

Attending: David Moody, Gary Carter, Allen Gilchrist, Anne Adkins, Ed Flaspoebler

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm by Chair David Moody

Appreciation was provided to Gary Carter for his gentle prod to move forward.

It was noted that SWRAL is in a different position with TSP than it was in the past. Previously, it has been used as a checking account to distribute funds to participating member clubs. There was no encouragement or action to do things for AL as a regional group. There is a desire at this point to serve a more substantive purpose.

TSP recently created a Youth Outreach Committee and programs in conjunction with member clubs.

- Junior TSP
- Other award programs
- Other developmental programs

It is becoming obvious that it will take an active Southwest Region to help with this endeavor.

TSP has been the singular event for SWRAL. It is time to take SWRAL back to its original purpose and what it might and should be doing for its member clubs.

As a southwest region, we need to identify the number of AL-associated clubs.

Ed reported on research of Midstates Region which has the most organized base. In the past, a host club puts on the AL annual convention in which there are talks and a business meeting as well as awards for the region. A registrant pays a fee for the convention. Whatever money is left over after the event goes half to host club and half to the region. It is this money that provides their funding for the year. AL operates in such a way that it moves the annual convention around the country to serve this same purpose. If the convention is a failure, there is shared loss.

SWRAL has zero visibility. As the SW region, it is not our duty or responsibility to take money from TSP. However, TSP has used our name and our checking account so perhaps some of this money has been well deserved. If we are to continue accepting monies from TSP, a SWRAL contract with TSP becomes incumbent.

Creating a SWRAL website entails an expense. We will need some seed funding every year. TSP has traditionally hosted the SWRAL meeting in the past.

Currently, the only active regions in AL are the Southwest, Midstates, and North Central.

We need to examine the bank account and find out who is personally listed on that account.

Ed and others provided a summary of this year's ALCON: what happened; what was important; and what awareness of SWRAL we might develop going forward.

Ed next reported on the AL business meeting. He had only recently learned that he had been elected as the SW Region representative.

Our priority goal is to raise awareness of who we are. Once bylaws are initiated [Jan 1?] then we can deal with a TSP contract. Our own bylaws should be consistent with the new AL Bylaws. Our goal is to have member clubs approve and take ownership of this document.

In southwest region, our responsibility is bifurcated—responsibility is partially to AL and partially to member clubs.

Objectives of SWRAL:

- Youth programs

- What SWRAL can do to support member clubs

- We link what AL can provide -- \$, prizes, etc. – to support

- Clubs are the SWRAL function

Questions:

- What value is SWRAL going to bring to TSP that isn't already there?

- How do we get volunteers to do things outside of normal TSP events

- How does SWRAL get more engaged in volunteer coordination so they can extend to other events?

- How do we allocate where profits get distributed.

- We need to be active in sending national award nominations .from SWRAL

- We should avoid duplicating efforts of League with Texas Youth Outreach (observation and outreach focus)

Club Communications

- Establish a good set of contacts at every club

- Tout observing programs

- Explore what makes healthy Astro club, specifically an AL club?

- What are qualifying markers for all the units

- Examine eight pillars of quality (if scout group, way to assess if healthy or weak; if the latter, possibly at risk and will disappear).

- Membership development

- Programs

Additional SWRAL Goals & Priorities:

- Elect a set of officers annually
- Get clubs participating in AL observing programs
- Engaging communication with all our SWRAL clubs, at least 2 events per year
- Meet regularly
- Provide guest speakers
- Report percent of members getting new observing club annually

The above serves to justify our existence and demonstrate the value of League to clubs

Some actions steps:

- contact Mitch Glaze—request all info pertinent to Southwest Region
- create website and create awareness
- go to TSP website for list of all clubs (28 on mailing list)

TSP Facebook group is only viable communication to clubs at this time.

Create Facebook group for SWRAL; Ed has posted minutes on his Facebook to begin process of communication.

We need to SPEAK with all the clubs; one to one communication; emails, two-way; add website and social media; engender 2-way communication. NOT, oh, by the way, here are the bylaws; rather, What's happening in your clubs, how can we help with your initiatives?

Website is swral.org

One function of website: if XYZ Astro Society, what does SWRAL and AL do for us? Publish events occurring in the Region.

We should do because it is the right thing to do, not to generate \$.

1. SWRAL GENERAL MEETING [zoom] with short agenda. Use this as vehicle to appoint a committee to review and create bylaws – ask for participation and this will create ownership. Probably set meeting for January
2. Contact Mitch Glaze for all the club contact information; research club websites and find out ALCORS and Presidents, and contact info
3. Bylaws
4. Prioritize SWRAL contract with TSP –already expecting something from SWRAL

On a typical year, TSP has surplus but currently in a period where dealing with deferred expenses, drawing down on available savings. We don't expect contribution in 2022.

Gary to prepare a bullet list for contract with David's help, youth outreach as an element; a major purpose is coordination of regional clubs.

Action Steps:

1. Contract bullets
2. Communication path
3. Allen—verify bank account, sigs, ask for tax number
4. SWRAL General Meeting in January
5. David—get addresses for clubs from Mitch Glaze and from website research/calls
6. ALL--Reach out to those we know; tell them what's going on, and tell them David will make personal contact,