ACWSA Michigan Region Annual Meeting February 21, 2015 Blue Water Sportsmans Club

Meeting called to order by Regional Commander Paul Lipka at 11:18 a.m.

Team representatives present: 1st Michigan, 1st South Carolina, 15th Virginia, 16th Michigan, 2nd Texas, 7th Wisconsin, 8th Arkansas, Richmond Purcell Battery Absent: 18th Indiana Battery

Reading of minutes to the 2014 meeting by Norm Gibson. Motion to accept by the 15th Virginia, 2nd by 1st South Carolina.

National Meeting Review

- Bob Chabalowski, National Commander, reviewed the minutes to the regional meeting held in Wisconsin February 8 and joined via conference call by officers from the Michigan Region.
- Bob proposed holding the regional meetings on the same date as the national meeting. This was thought to be a good idea but securing a meeting place on Sundays in Michigan may be an issue since we meet at gun clubs.
- Discussed the Amazon Smiles program that the ACWSA is participating in. A portion of the sales is directed to the organization at no extra cost to you but you must sign up for it.
- Reviewed rules for 2 handed revolver shooting. If it encourages participation we should allow it. Can be published in skirmish program or at the discretion of the skirmish director.
- Metal targets were discussed. Metal targets should only be considered hit if they
 are knocked off the wire and to fall to the ground.
- Bob stated that a common sense approach should be followed when establishing rules.
- Hats have been ordered. The Michigan region will purchase 15 Gray and 10 Blue
- A joint ribbon order will be placed for both regions in order to save on costs.
- Bob brought a copy of an NMLRA article concerning recruitment to share. See attached.
- Bob asked if there was any concern over Wisconsin handling national finances.
 None were expressed.

Adjutant Report

• The 2015 registration process went smoothly, with little concern. We have 24 additional members listed as inactive with a total at this time of 94 active members spread out over 9 teams. This does include a one man team. All roster data has been submitted electronically to the National Adjutant for recording.

Treasurer Report

- Cash on hand balance is currently 4325.17 in the checking account.
- A donation of 1460.00 was submitted to the Civil War Trust, the 2014 fundraiser recipient. We received a book on Chancellorsville in acknowledgement.

Motion to accept the Adjutant/Treasurer report by 15th Virginia, 2nd by 7th Wisconsin.

Inspector General Report

• Bob Hubbard -No report.

Small Arms Report

• Chris Hubbard – No report.

Artillery Report

- Norm Gibson Brian Haack Memorial Artillery shoot will be held May 9/10 at Blue Water. The Grayling shoot was cancelled in 2014 due to the military needing the range.
- Norm updated the artillery registration form for cannon and mortar.

Medical Report

• Diane Gibson – completed inventory of medical supplies, removed expired items, and forwarded information to David Mandy.

By-Laws Committee

 Dan Gibson noted that since the Michigan region split the duties of the Adjutant by creating a Treasurer position the by-laws need to be changed to reflect the two positions. After discussion, it was determined that Dan Gibson will submit the wording of the proposal to be published then brought to a vote by team commanders at the first skirmish of the season.

Old Business

- Boy Scouts will again handle the concessions this year except at the official regional picnic. The Scouts are happy to come and provide food during our skirmishes and we are grateful for them.
- Doug Reed of the 2nd Texas picked up a transit van full of cardboard last summer and dropped them off at Richmond. The cost was \$0. Doug even left his dog at home in order to make this happen. The man is committed. The region needs a supply of cardboard at Blue Water.
- We have an ample supply of pigeons, and we need some wire at Blue Water.
- Target maintenance is needed, as well as gallon jugs and water bottles.

- Dan Gibson proposed introducing a new shape for the metal target inventory.
- David Mandy is the Awards Committee chair. Criteria for special awards should be submitted to him.
- Electronic payment- no development.

Recess for lunch at 12:34 p.m.

Meeting resumed at 12:50 p.m.

New Business

- Motion from the floor to allocate \$1200.00 to develop a new shape for the metal target. Motion passed by affirmation.
- 2015 Skirmish schedule and host teams:
 - May 9/10 Brian Haack Memorial Artillery Matches 7th Wisconsin
 - June 6/7 Blue Water #1 Richmond Purcells
 - June 27/28 Richmond #1 2nd Texas
 - June 25/26 Grayling Long Range Artillery
 - August 8/9 Richmond #2 8th Arkansas (Annual Picninc)
 - August 29/30 Ashley 1st South Carolina
 - October 10 Blue Water Lakeshore HS CW Field Trip
 - October 11 Blue Water #2 7th Wisconsin
- 2015 Charity event- decided not to hold one this year. Over \$20,000 was previously raised for good causes.
- Public events Bruce Miller thanked those who participated in Birmingham last year. Jim Bone will be the contact point for Northville July 4 in 2015.
- Multiple targets falling:
 - Brace the frames so they are secure and do not wobble
 - Setting 2 rows of targets (upper and lower) is possible
 - Bend the wires so the are slightly pointing up after each event
 - Teams should police themselves (remember this is for fun, if the need to win is that great then perhaps you should re-examine why you are here)
- New team joining Michigan region: The C.S.S. Neuse, consisting of members of the Ashley Sportsman's Club. Welcome aboard!
- Commander Paul is in contact with living historians who are Civil War reenactors and are interested in shooting their firearms in the traditional style-paper cartridges, unaltered sights, service loads. It was determined as long as no paper goes down the barrel and they show they can participate safely they are welcome to join. A few of us will meet them at a gun club to run them through the basics before they are allowed on the firing line. They are known as the 15th Michigan Infantry. National Commander said they had a similar experience with a group in Wisconsin and it was very positive, so much so that their group of historians adopted some of the methods we currently use to skirmish.
- It was inquired if there is an interest in a Henry /Repeater event at skirmishes. Solicitation for interest will appear on Facebook ACWSA page.

- As previously mentioned, the Michigan region will order 25 hats from Wisconsin.
 No interest in shirts thus far. Commanders asked to poll teams again. It was also
 asked if a ladies style were available.
- National Skirmish planned for 2016.

Committee Members:

- Michigan Mike Zandarski/Chris Hubbard
- Wisconsin Gary Van Kauwenbergh/ Bob Chabalowski
- Registration Spreadsheet Paul Lipka discussed the registration and roster spreadsheet he developed using Excel. It was used last year and found to be very efficient in tallying individual skirmish fees and even determining placement of extra shooters.
- Penalty calculations were also discussed. Three methods were proposed:
 - Number of shooters on team
 - Fixed (flat) time
 - Calculation based on a full team

Option 3 was approved after discussion.

Additional items: None

Motion to adjourn by Chris Hubbard, seconded by Norm Gibson at 1:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Einowski ACWSA Michigan Region Adjutant 2nd Texas Sharpshooters eyes aren't what they used to be, they aren't going to rendezvous very often, and no longer travel to other club's shoots.

Many muzzleloading clubs are suffering from these facts of life. I have been told many times that they don't have enough members still shooting at their own shoots much less try to go to another club's shoot and make a good showing of themselves. They tell me they're having a lot of difficulty getting new members.

I'd like to share some ideas that work for our club.

First, regain your enthusiasm. What was it that "hooked" you? If you enjoyed shooting black powder firearms—then get back into it; if you can't shoot any more teach someone else to. If primitive camping or the history of the settlers is what inspired you—get back into that; bring some folks that have never been to a rendezvous with you next time you go.

Second, have your club engage in activities that interest others. People gravitate to organizations that are active. But be careful of too narrow of a focus. If your club's focus is just competitive shooting you may be limiting your club's number of new members. This was one of the phases our club went through a number of years ago.

Today we continue the competitive shooting matches and have added activities that others may enjoy. For example, we have added education days for the local schools.

We are currently restoring and building three log cabins on our grounds, one of which is with the Stone's Trace Historical Society. We allow local scout groups to do camps and other activities on our grounds. We have been invited to give living history demonstrations for schools and scout groups at their facilities. We have monthly club shoots, work days, camping weekends, and the occasional fundraiser.

Third, become involved with your local historical society. We are fortunate to have the Stone's Trace Historical Society allow our club to lease the grounds we have our shooting range, cabins, blacksmith shop, and other buildings on. They invite us to participate with them on many of their projects both for the public and

just ourselves. Both organizations benefit from the relationship.

Fourth, as a club, attend other events and rendezvous. You will maintain old friendships and meet new people. With your attendance you help that club make their event a success and they will likely come to your club's event in return.

Fifth, engage with the public. This is probably the most important thing when looking for potential new members. When you are at rendezvous, a living history event, doing living history demonstrations, helping with an historical society work day, or at a shoot, talk to the public! Answer their questions. At times let them do what you're doing. Give them their first shot with a muzzleloader. Let them get involved if possible.

Some of my most enjoyable moments have been when I had the crowd asking questions, laughing with me, and even heckling some of the other shooters with me during a shoot at our rendezvous. The crowd got a kick out of me letting an Amish gentleman shoot my flintlock because he was in "period clothing." He enjoyed it very much and since then joined the club and has been attending our event for the last several years, bringing his whole family along! There are folks I've met and made friends with that I see every year.

Sixth, invite others to participate and ultimately join your club. Always have membership applications available. It's not often people will seek you out to join your club. When you're engaging with the public and you can tell that they have an interest, ask them if they've considered getting more involved. Let them know they don't have to dive in, but can start slow and ease into it. It's neither hard nor need be expensive. Family membership should not be expensive.

Seventh, once you have new members, let them be involved. New members bring much needed energy to a club. Quite often they bring a fresh perspective and new ideas. There is nothing worse than to join an organization and feel like you're unheard. If the same few people do everything all the time they will continue to be the same few people who "have" to do everything all the time. Invite your new members to help with

work days, elect them to club offices like board of directors and eventually executive officers.

As long time club members become less active after many years of giving their time and sweat for the benefit of the club, other members need to and will step up to fill their shoes. This is the changing of the guard. The new members are essential to the success and longevity of any organization. It is a good idea to make your club and activities as family friendly as possible. Having things planned for the children and young adults to do and to be involved with will ensure the families will want to come back.

Eighth, recognize people for their efforts. It doesn't always need to be with prizes and awards, just simply making mention of someone's actions through a monthly newsletter can be sufficient. Other times something more like a member of the year award at an annual meeting or should of the year award is warranted.

A quick summary:

regain your cathering, connected with a local historical succiety, get out to events or activities, engage with the public, invite persons to join, involve your new members, engage with the pass the torch, but don't leave them after you've handed it to the same final and help them begin Them here."

I hope these throughts will give you an idea how you can regain the excitement of bear a muzzleloading club member and share that excitement with others.

My particular club, the Stone's Trace Regulars, was founded in 1977 and we're a Charter Club of the NMLRA. We see a well rooted club located on the grounds of the Stone's Trace Historical Society at the crossroads of US-33 and SR-5 near the town of Ligonier, Indiana. Currently we have one hundred thirteen members (not including their families) of which about half are life members. There have been about six new members joining each year for the past five years (not including their families). We put on a rendezvous the first weekend after Labor Day every September. We have employed the eight points listed above and have seen our club membership grow. My advice to you is to give the eight points a try. I think you will be MB happy with the results.