Minutes of the NTHECC General Membership Meeting

May 4, 2013

Embassy Suites, Grapevine, TX

Those in attendance are listed on the membership sign-in sheet.

President Kelly Reich called the meeting to order at 8:01 A.M.

Announcements:

Michael Bridges gave the invocation.

President Reich addressed the floor, advising that this is a members-only meeting, and all information and discussion will be considered confidential. He further asked that all cell phones be turned off for the duration of the meeting.

Self introductions were conducted.

President Reich requested a moment of silence and prayer for those members and family members of members who have illness or have passed since the Council’s last meeting, noting in particular Jim Ward’s mother, and the deceased Ray Serafini, Ray Cody and Dick Ferretti.

Past President Bill Fisher announced that a 2013 NTHECC Roster would be passed around to the membership to be signed in memory for the family of Tony Hinson

Secretary David Holder called the roll. There were 57 voting members in attendance requiring 43 votes to meet the three-fourths requirement. Executive Director Richard Bruce announced that the attendance sheet was being passed around, and all members present were to sign the sheet in order to be counted present for this meeting.

Secretary Report: David Holder reported that the 2012 Fall Meeting Minutes and the Board of Director Minutes were on the web site for all members to review and that it was incumbent of the membership to have read these prior to the meeting. He asked if there were any changes or clarifications, there was no response. Leon Brownlee offered a motion to accept the minutes as posted on the web site with a second from Russ Hodges. There was no discussion and the motion was adopted.

Treasurer Report: Scott Conway reported on the Council’s finances, and advised that the Treasurer’s report and details of the finances are available to members upon request. Mr. Conway detailed the current financial status of the Council reminding the membership the Spring Report is only partially reflective of the annual budget and overall financial standing. Mr. Conway informed the membership that the Council’s accounts are down $60,000.00 from the previous year and that further discussion concerning this would take place during this meeting at appropriate times. There was a motion from Leon Brownlee to accept the treasurer’s report with a second from Art Cockburn. The motion carried unanimously.
Membership Report:

President Elect Betty Clayton informed the membership that there were nine applicants in attendance at this meeting of which six had qualified to be voted upon. Those eligible for vote would be:


Brand and Associates was endorsed by members Barry Copplestone, John Huot, Scott Conway, David Dosky, and Robert Watson. Ballots were passed and Brand and Associates were elected to membership.

IA candidate Brian Weringer was endorsed by members Ed Williams, Chuck Herbert, Don Gwaltney, Kelly Reich, Leon Brownlee, and Champ Coddington. Mr. Weringer was elected.

Northbridge Insurance was reported as the largest insurer in Canada and endorsed by Kelly Reich and Richard Bruce. Northbridge was elected.

Grange Insurance was endorsed by Wayne Brannon, Ed Williams and Mike Bridges. Grange was elected.

Akzo Nobel was endorsed by members Kelly Reich, Tom Everette, Jr. and Richard Bruce. Akzo Nobel was elected.

Towing Network was endorsed by members Galen Esslinger and Bob Watson. It was further reported that they had been recommended by member Doug Wiltse. Towing Network was elected.

Prior to the confirmation of the vote on Towing Network Mr. Copplestone reported further on the activity of the Membership Committee.

Mr. Copplestone reports that PPG and Westside Radiator as well as Vale Tech have applied for membership and will be processed and presented to the membership for consideration in the near future. He expressed a need for more IA applicants and the Council’s need to support IA’s who may need further training to be able to succeed in the testing process.

Discussion concerning the possibility of involving self-insured trucking companies to make application to the Council ensued as well.

Mr. Wayne Brannon notified the Board that during the vote for Towing Network an Associate Member had inadvertently cast a vote. President Reich notified the membership that a second vote would be taken. Members Mike Kinder, Chuck Johnson, Richard Bruce, Doug Cox, and Dan Harvey added to the debate among the Membership as to the proper procedure. President Reich called for a recess after a motion from Tom Fergus and seconded by Doug Cox. Members Tom Fergus and Betty Clayton researched the proper procedure consulting Robert’s Rules of Order.
Points of Order, Motions and additional debate ensued when the meeting was reconvened. Contributors included but were not limited to Wayne Brannon, Ron Speraneo, Chuck Herbert, Chuck Johnson, Mike Kinder, Tom Fergus, and Richard Bruce. A motion was made by Chuck Johnson to remove one vote per side from the original vote and accept that vote in finality. This was seconded by Mike Kinder the vote was taken and the motion passed. Towing Network was elected to the Council.

Leon Brownlee motioned that the ballots be destroyed, seconded by Art Cockburn and the motion was unanimously approved.

Tom Fergus reported that the procedure for the vote was in error and further research maybe required of the By Law committee. Ed Williams made a motion that the procedures taken in this case not be construed as a precedent. This was seconded by Bill Fisher and the motion carried unanimously.

The new members were invited to the meeting and introduced to the membership. Adam Brand represented Brand and Associates, Michael White Akzo Nobel, Tracy Gulker Grange Insurance, Jeff St. Pierre Towing Network, Mark Uyeda Northbridge Insurance and Brian Weringer himself. The newly elected members thanked the Council and pledged their support and involvement. President Reich welcomed them and advised that they were not eligible to vote during this meeting and should consult the By Laws concerning their voting rights in future meetings.

**Patriot Support Report:** Member Ron Tullgren on behalf of the East Valley Military Group thanked the membership of the Council for their continued support of this organization. He requested that the membership individually contribute to this cause in support of the Troops and their families. Leon Brownlee began to pass the hat along with other members and a collection was taken and given to Mr. Tullgren to pass along to the EVMG.

**President’s Address To Membership:**

President Reich offered thoughts to the membership concerning failure versus success and the future. He outlined his objectives:

- Adopt Uniform Procedures-Exchange Information-Change To Meet the Needs of Today and the Future.

President Reich stressed that the Membership of the Council is in charge and the destiny of the Council is wholly in the hands of the members and contingent on their participation. Reich suggested the members consider:

- Making it a policy that members mentor and reach out to other members and apprentices: Invest your time and effort to be the qualified professional representative of the NTHECC and act as such: Professionalism has no room for jealousy: Success Planning: Training your replacement: Sell one’s self and provide a reason for others to want you: Communicate: Average is not good enough: Set goals and exceed them: Be good stewards: Be leaders.
Budget: Treasurer Scott Conway addressed the membership advising that now is the time to budget and set parameters for spending. Mr. Conway explained that tying programs to revenue would be one method of controlling expense; specifically the Scholarship fund to the income from the Roster/Directory advertisements.

The base operating expense for the Council is $33,000 per year. The Scholarships awarded over the past fourteen years has amounted to $444,000.00. This year’s expenditure on scholarships is $57,500.00. Annually and at times bi-annually the Council has given $5,000.00 as a donation to Police Departments AKA the Dog Program. The membership dues were reduced from the $250.00 as stated in the By Laws to $150.00 during the recession and no registration fee was charged for the Spring meetings until recently. Revenue from advertisers and donations are substantially down from previous years. All of this needs to be considered to maintain the Council’s solvency.

A motion was made by Larry Peterson that the dues be restored to the $250.00 level as stated in the By Laws. This was seconded by Ron Speraneo. Discussion ensured among the membership. Points made by members in dissension included Tom Fergus, Chuck Herbert, Jim Leonard, and Don Gwaltney, whose suggestions included cuts in expenditures being made before taking this action and revisiting the matter in a year. Mike Kinder spoke in support of the motion encouraging the membership to consider the value of the Council or “bang for the buck.” President Reich called for a vote and the motion carried returning the dues to $250.00.

The meeting was adjourned for lunch at 12:00 PM

The meeting reconvened at 1:02 PM and called to order by President Reich.

Membership Committee Report Continued: The membership committee reported that they had no adjuster applicants to be considered for the Spring 2014 meeting. The membership was again encouraged to mentor the candidates who had not passed the test during this meeting so they would reapply.

The Apprentice program was clarified and the membership was advised that the Standing Rule did not require the apprentices to be licensed and provided for five years in the program if the apprentice had no experience and two years if they had experience.

The license requirement for admission to the Council prior to being tested varies from State to State and accordingly the sponsors are to make certain of what is required, Betty Clayton explained.

Directory Report: Richard Bruce informed the membership that the Directory/Roster had generated approximately $50,000.00 in income and had cost $23,000.00 to produce with a net contribution to the Council of $27,000.00. Mr. Bruce advised that the advertisement revenue was down and called upon each member to get at least one advertiser to purchase an ad excluding those advertisers who are presently participating. Tom Everette, Jr. stated the average ad cost $675.00 and the cutoff date for ads is 9/1/13.

Website Report: Richard Bruce reported that the web site was completed and working as intended. Therefore his budget could be reduced from the $10,000.00 allocation to $5,000.00.
Website Report Continued: Mr. Bruce reported that the links page has been enhanced. The cost of using Pay Pal versus E-commerce and other vendors had been studied and presently offers the lowest rate thus the choice to continue using them.

Meeting Committee Report: Richard Bruce reported on the upcoming meeting in Portland, Oregon as being set and arranged for the second weekend in October of 2013. The 2014 October meeting will be in Savannah, Georgia and will be held at the Hilton Desoto in downtown with a discounted room rate of $149.00 per night.

Mr. Bruce explained that the committee suggests that the 2015 and 2017 meetings be held in the Midwest and the 2016 meeting be in the East in an effort to increase attendance and lessen travel expenses. The 2018 meeting would be under consideration for the West and looked at in the future.

Cities suggested for consideration in 2015 included Memphis, TN, Minneapolis, MN, or Indianapolis, IN. Member Chuck Herbert suggested Branson MO. and discussion ensued with Mr. Bruce advising the distance from airports and other factors as making this a location unfavorable to the goal of reducing costs.

Questions from various members concerning the costs of both Spring and Fall meetings were fielded and Mr. Bruce advised that the scale of what the Membership desires for events and attractions will be reflected in the per person cost of registration. Mr. Bruce appealed to the Membership to recruit sponsorship to defray expenses.

President Reich recessed the meeting at 2:05 PM and reconvened the meeting at 2:20 PM

Scholarship Report: Scott Conway addressed the Membership on behalf of the Scholarship Committee. Mr. Conway reported that an allocation of $60,000.00 per year had passed as a Standing Rule in May of 2010. Given that as the current rate of expenditure it was suggested that a more fiscally responsible method for the amount to be allocated would be that the allocation be determined and tied directly to the net income from the Directory / Roster.

A motion to enact this practice was made by member Chuck Johnson and seconded by member Mike Kinder. The motion to tie all future allocations for the funding of Scholarships to the net income from the Directory / Roster was called for a vote by President Reich and it passed unanimously.

Bylaws Report: Secretary Holder informed the Membership that there had been no changes or activity on behalf of the By Law Committee. President Reich reminded Mr. Holder that the Committee did need to review Article IV Section 2 and be prepared to report with any needed revision prior to the time table required for the next meeting.

Sponsorship Committee Report: Past President Fisher appealed to the Membership to volunteer and get involved with his Committee to locate and contact prospective sponsors.

Education Committee Report: Director Tom Everette, Jr. addressed the membership informing them that currently they had six active apprentices and there is room and a need for more. The programs offered for education at this meeting had twenty-four attendees on Thursday and thirty
**Education Committee Report Continued:** on Friday and the programs concentrated on heavy equipment as requested during the IA meeting in Oklahoma City in the Fall of 2012.

At the next meeting apprentice classes will concentrate on the insurance side of our profession providing information on policy conditions, basic forms, personal, written and recorded statements, and file reviews among other topics to be determined.

Mr. Everette, Jr. advised that the CE classes will not be repeats of previous classes. The members were informed that a fee of $50.00 per attendee will be assessed for future classes. This was discussed among the members. Mr. Bruce warned the membership that such an assessment could result in a decline in overall attendance.

The presentations anticipated for the future meetings and being developed included:

Daimler’s Freightliner evolution and the Detroit Diesel’s engines, Prevost Bus Repairs, PPG products and development, the mechanics of engines, the understanding of the regeneration systems, the benefit of and understanding of the data from ECM’s, tracking and communication systems, State regulations and the handling of full adjustment claims assignments.

**Public Relations Report:** Michael Kinder and Paul Adams represented the Public Relations Committee. Mr. Adams reported that as of the Portland meeting in the Fall of 2013 the donation to law enforcement for dogs will end. Mr. Adams went on to say that the research they have done indicates that print advertising in magazines and other publications is not reaching the niche target audience of our specialized field.

Mr. Kinder reported that a very thorough investigation into the advantages and costs of the NTHECC becoming members of the AAMGA was conducted. This organization was the most plausible for the entirety of the membership offering exposure for IA’s, Companies, Allied and Associates members. Although the dues and membership fees are reasonable, the costs of participation at the AAMGA functions are projected to be as much as $30,000.00 or more. Realistically this may not achieve the goal of reaching and involving the niche targeted audience.

What has been proposed and requested is that each member email the Committee, specifically Mr. Kinder, a listing of all of their clients with contact information so the Committee can reach out to those not presently involved with the NTHECC and solicit their participation.

**Nominating Committee Report:** Past President Fisher reported that his Committee has two candidates selected to run for the Board position being vacated by Mr. Everette, Jr. in the Fall of 2013.

**General Announcements:** Member Jim Leonard informed the membership that member Al Quick’s wife has cancer and has returned to China for treatment and encouraged members to pray for Al’s wife and be supportive of Al during this very trying time.

President Elect Clayton thanked all of the participants and her Membership Committee for their dedication and hard work. President Reich asked that the Membership Committee continue to review and revise the IA Test and reminded the membership as a whole the responsibility of
General Announcements Continued: sponsors being fully aware of the applicants strengths and weaknesses and mentor them to be sure they are properly prepared for testing and a worthy candidate.

Old Business: There was no old business discussed.

New Business: Members Wayne Brannon and Kent Mortensen informed the membership of the increasing problem with theft and misrepresentation of fact on insurance applications and the need to notify insurers and authorities when encountering these situations.

Member Robert Watson offered a report on the activity of the towing industry and encouraged members not to succumb to questionable billing by towing services especially the ten percent unexplainable service fee.

Member Jason Fox reports that in lieu of the Newsletter he has agreed to develop a blog and asks for all members to contribute sending information and reports to him directly or through Richard Bruce so he can orchestrate and publish.

Member Tom Fergus made a motion that the IA’s, Companies, Allied and Associate members have breakout meetings during the business meetings of the NTHECC as had been tradition prior to its dissolution several years ago. Member Chuck Herbert seconded the motion. Discussion ensued with Meeting Chair Richard Bruce objecting on the basis of time constraints. President Reich called for a vote and the motion passed.

A motion to dismiss was made by Chuck Herbert at 3:40 PM with a second from Russ Hodges. The motion carried without debate.

Respectfully submitted,

David S. Holder

Secretary

These minutes will not be read in their entirety at the next Meeting. The membership must review them individually. Any corrections, additions, or changes will be entertained at the Fall Meeting.