

2009 Annual National Surf School Instructors Association Meeting Minutes

The NSSIA annual meeting came to order at the East Coast Surfing Hall of Fame booth, at the Orlando Convention Center, on January 17th, 2009 with the following members and guests present: Kali Montaro, Lou Maresca, Lisza Meade, Bruce Gabrielson, Peter Pan, Skip Savage, Tony Silvagni, Lance Maki, Eric Williams, Scott Orend, Yancy Spenser IV, Dick Catri, and Bill Kyle. Others arrived during the meeting. The meeting began at 9:50 AM.

Chairman Bruce Gabrielson began the meeting with a review of 2008, and discussed the new yearly renewal process, payment of dues, and the current exam structure. He passed out newly designed NSSIA instructor tee shirts to those who were present.

Bruce also reviewed the budget for the past year, and noted that after purchasing some necessary items for the office, the association still has a good balance in the treasury.

He next showed members the current instructor manual and training course updates that had been recently incorporated in the new 2009 version of certification program. We are fortunate that Dr. Robert Scott, the first Director and Founder of the US Surfing Association and also inventor of the surfer's ear plug provided a review and inputs to one of the section. Finally, Bruce explained our methods for certification and how master level instructors can certify their own instructors.

Director Lou Maresca spoke to members about increasing our visibility in the media and on the beaches. He said that all of the school instructors should be given a 5 minute talk about the NSSIA, and be aware of the quality of instruction from our member schools.

Lou suggested that we make up lesson cards for each student, and a log for the student's free surfing time, similar to what is done in ski schools. Lou noted that there are many surf shops that are not even aware that we exist, and member schools should try to get the word out to as many shops as possible.

It was agreed that there should be as much exposure of the NSSIA logo on the beach as possible. Bruce stressed the importance of wearing the new tee shirts and having each school buy some for their instructors.

Director Kali Montero displayed a striking NSSIA cloth patch, which he had produced and had available for sale. Kali gave a school accreditation report providing details on where our active schools are located and how many we have. He also discussed our renewal process and fees.

There was discussion regarding the need for school insurance certificates, and Kali said that he was working on getting an umbrella policy that would cover all the schools, both in the US and internationally, at a reasonable price.

Director Peter Pan gave the media report, and thanked everyone for sending in individual updates from their schools. He asked everyone to continue to send in

any media stories, or TV coverage that they can, so it can be added to our website. He also asked that our NSSIA logo be used on all school websites, business cards, newsletters, and advertisements in the future.

Peter next pointed out that the NSSIA was mentioned in several major newspaper stories in the Boston Globe, the New York Times, and the Baltimore Sun. He also said that several of our schools are involved with the Smartbox company, a company that sells adventure trips. This could prove to be lucrative for some of our member schools this summer.

Bruce discussed our Articles of Association and requested we change the current Articles to correct a typo, increase the number of at Large Directors to two, and update our audit requirements. These changes were voted on and accepted.

There was a discussion regarding foreign organizational relationships. It was suggested that one school in each country be designated the liaison between their country and the main NSSIA headquarters in Maryland. This suggestion will be investigated by the Chairman and a report will be developed regarding specifics.

There was discussion on our relationship with Surf America, the NSSA, and the Interscholastic Surfing Federation surf school programs. Basically, we need to respect their programs and work with them when we are offered the opportunity. We have attempted to contact the ISF directly but they have not responded. At some point it would seem reasonable that each of these organizations should at least talk to us about how successful our program is becoming and how we can work closer.

There was a discussion on how we should get more product sponsorship. Skip Savage will develop a process we can use to identify sponsorship, endorsement, and endorsed resource evaluations. If anyone has suggestions they need to send them to Skip. Surf Tech Florida representative Eric Williams spoke briefly about the availability of their products for the NSSIA schools.

Finally, Bruce noted that as a non-profit organization, the NSSIA has now successfully moved from the non-profit development stage of founding, to the next phase, growth. This is now taking place with the expansion of our schools in the U.S. mainland, Baja California, Canada, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico and Hawaii.

In closing, Dick Catri gave a few comments about the need for organization such as ours, and how it fits within the ideals of the East Coast Surfing Hall of Fame.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 AM.

Peter Pan / Media Director