

Pennsylvania Hillclimb Association

Minutes of the January 27, 2024, Annual Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President Rich Rock at 1:00 PM, after which it was determined that a quorum of Regional Representatives was in attendance.

Officers: Rich Rock, President; Trevor Filipowicz, Vice President; Eli Sharp, Secretary; and Grace Huntzinger*, Treasurer.

Regional Representatives: Chuck Christ, Bill Feist*, Dale Gogel, Glenn Hoffman, Hugh Maloney, Sue Salsburg*, Rick Terrill, Joe Whiteley* and Gordon Wise.

Alternative Representatives: Don DeHart.

PHA members: George Ackerman, Bill Ascheman, Melinda Axarlis, Mike Axarlis, Gibby Bozicevich*, James Crocker, Dave Cutchins*, Joe Cyburt, Jessica Fessler, Mary Anne Fieux, Joanne Foering, Keith Gerhard*, Ed Grega, Randy Hartinger, Crystal Hoegg, Matt Hoegg, Jeff Israel*, Kristen Israel*, Patty Johnson*, Rick Johnson*, Richard (Rick) Kase, Ray Kochin, Nancy Lewis, Cory Michael, William (Bill) Norton, Jim Oswald, Carolyn Reider, Gary Reider, Donna Robinson*, Mike Robinson, Donna Sumner*, Adam Weaver, Ursula Whistler, Vince Wiecezorek, George Witman, Karen Witman.

[* participated on Zoom]

Rich R opened the meeting and mentioned that Bert Geib had passed away Tuesday, January 23, 2024.

1. Meeting Rules Recap: Rich R explained that we are going to be following the meeting process that we initiated back at the November meeting. Eli S recapped the rules and process.

2. Treasurer's Report: Grace H presented the 2023 financials. She said we had a net loss of \$320 for the year, losing about \$3,000 on the banquet, which was about normal. Right now, we have \$24,000 in our bank account, but only \$16,000 of that is actually accessible. The other \$8,000 is in the insurance reserves for the insurance deductible. The concern for next year is that we have made the decision to give up to \$2,000 for both of the Summit Point events. In the event of a \$2,000 or more loss, that will basically deplete our treasury by 25%. Grace H said that we really can't sustain that kind of a loss, so she proposed that we increase the assessment fees this year. They are currently at \$7, and she proposed to go to \$10 per entry. That's \$150 for 50 drivers per event. It will give us something to cover losses and help us replenish the Treasury over time. Other than that, there was one account receivable for \$100, which was for a full-page advert in the banquet program.

There were no questions about financial statements that she had prepared and presented. There were no questions about the proposal made that the event assessment fees go up by \$3, from \$7 per entry to \$10 per entry. A motion was made Grace H to accept the assessment fees increase proposal. This motion was seconded by Rick T and accepted unanimously.

3. Form Treasurer's Audit Committee: Grace H requested the formation of the Audit Committee be postponed to the next meeting when she will be able to attend in person.

4. 2024 Schedule and Event Updates: Rich R said that SCCA national is not raising their rates for insurance or sanction. Going forward, there will be no change in our insurance which is good news.

He said that in terms of possible new venues, nothing has presented itself. There still remains possibly some hope of something out in West Virginia which seems far away. Someone made a suggestion to Rich R about a hill down in Coatesville, PA, but that conversation seems to have dried up. He also said that some PHA members went over to the Reading Regional Airport on New Year's Day to look at a site on a road that goes around the airport. Just a very preliminary thing. They haven't gotten any kind of approval from the necessary people. So, nothing new to report. Rich R asked that if anybody else has any other suggestions, please reach out.

Sue S mentioned that South Jersey Region is having a track sprint at Millville, October 19, which is after our season is over.

Weatherly: Joe C said everything was going well. There were some changes, but they are moving right along.

Pagoda and Duryea: Rich R followed up on a mention from Jim O that there is discussion from the city of installing a fence on Skyline Drive in order to deter city occupants from dumping. There is support from the city to minimize the impact to the Hillclimbs from both this potential project and the Pagoda construction projects.

Giants: Bill F reported that everything was going well.

Spring Jefferson: Rich R said the increase for Jefferson for next year is \$3,660. Last year, our fee for two days was 13,250. This year, it's 16,910. We're still getting a discount off of the retail rate. The increase is due to the fact that any motorsport event now has to have ALS ambulance support.

Shenandoah: Rich R said the increase is \$3,025 over last year from the track fee of \$16,085 to \$19,110.

Rich R said that Jefferson lost \$2,800 last year, and Shenandoah lost \$4,200 last year. Entry fees for the Summit Point events are likely to have to increase from \$250 to \$300 for Jefferson or \$350 for Shenandoah. The track sent out the contracts which said that we had until Feb 20 to respond. BMR is listed as event organizer for both events. The deposit for Jefferson is \$650, the deposit for Shenandoah is \$870. BMR is willing to put up the deposit for Jefferson just to keep the possibility of keeping the event going, but beyond that BMR is not willing to have any financial exposure.

Nancy L suggested that we could possibly have another club rent the Shenandoah track from us for some time. She said we could sublet the track to them, having them run their small event. She suggested we could maybe rent two hours to them each day.

Bill F said that the Giants Despair Hillclimb Association is willing to throw in \$1,000 to keep the Shenandoah event going. He is also working on some other sponsors. He has already secured two other sponsors: Danko gas for \$500, Ron Morek for \$500.

Mike R said that one or two people he knows have been speaking with DC region, trying to promote this a lot heavier, especially since this is in their back door. He said that there's a huge misconception about the rules though. They were under the assumption they had to run our safety rule for the time trial. Grace H and Mike R agreed to talk about this further so this does not happen again.

Bill F suggested maybe offering a half price entry fee for a second entry (even in the same car), that would be a non-point scoring entry. That way people would get more seat time. This was discussed along with offering a discounted second entry fee. Grace also suggested offering a one-day entry. People could also have a second entry in their friend's car.

There was more discussion about when payments are required, opening registration really early and offering a refund if we cancel the event. Grace H mentioned that we could get people to put down a non-refundable deposit instead of paying the full entry fee up front. She said we should go out to the drivers now and get their commitment. Nancy L volunteered to set up MSR if we decide to go this route.

5. Proposed Changes to the Supps for 2024:

5a. Changes from SCCA National: Mike R and Grace H stated there were no changes.

5b. Street Prepared Classing: Mike R said there are several options to think about.

One option is to just adopt the current new SCCA autocross structure is. The downside is that there is a large difference between trying to climb a mountain and racing around on a flat parking lot around cones.

Another option is to try to completely restructure all of Street Prepared, which is really hard to do. Where do you draw the line for breaking up classes? Mike R said he had received a lot of horsepower-to-weight ratio, classing type ideas. Then up north, they do something completely different. They sent him their matrix, and he spent three evenings, trying to figure out how they do it and the math behind it. That would be a massive undertaking, and it really didn't seem to work well.

A lot of suggestions from people were to adopt what they are doing down south with the Appalachian Hillclimb Series matrix. While it is not perfect, it's better than other options. So, the committee started investigating that direction. There are two ways we can do it. Mike R then shared a spreadsheet showing current PHA classes, current AHS classes and where classes would be realigned,

Mike R said that we can just use the Street Prepared side, and lump Street Mod in with it too, for it to work. Using the Appalachian Hillclimb Series Sport model, it's actually adding two classes. They actually just added those just this year and they're still working out all the details. There would be a Sport Light that would pretty much cover the FSP type cars, and their Super Sport, and then their newly added Sport Max, which is kind of the catch for ESP cars and lower powered SSP cars. And then there's Sport Unlimited, which would be pretty much all the big cars, bigger SMF cars, things like that. SMF kind of gets split up depending on size, some could run Sport Max some would run in Sport Unlimited.

Another option with the Appalachian Hillclimb Series would be if we adopted the whole thing where we even include the road race classes. Then some Production cars could be running with some street cars.

Mike R Said that those are the two ways we can do it. We can adopt all the road race classes and sport classes or we can just do the sport classes, which would take care of the street prepared street mod classes, but the road race classes will stay the same.

Mike R suggested that we keep the 2022 rules set for one more year, keep track of where everybody would finish under the new classing system and post it after each event. Then we could send out a more polished proposal next year for which way to go. A motion to keep the 2022 rules set for one more year was made by Bill F and seconded by Glenn H. The motion was voted upon and passed.

6. Website and Social Media: Grace H reported she set up an official Facebook page and shared that with the group. The page will be used for announcements only. There's no discussion allowed because we need to have a place where we can put announcements on Facebook and not have it cluttered up with other things. Grace H

created all the events for the year and shared them with the PHA group and everywhere she normally shares them. As things come up; any announcements like a new meeting or whatever, she will continue doing that. She said that if people are on Facebook and they haven't followed the PHA Facebook page, please do so.

As far as the website goes, Grace H said that she really didn't change anything. She updated the schedule for this year and put a link to the official Facebook page on the bottom.

7. Timing: Nancy L said she had not done anything with timing since our last event, other than going through some of the equipment that Steve L had collected. She will be meeting with Fred (the guy that we purchased all the hardware from) sometime in March to see if she can get a refund for some of the equipment we do not use. Steve L was using it when at Pagoda and Duryea he was sitting down at the start line and needed a supplemental radio to get the signal down there. It was not as infallible as we hoped. Nancy L said that this is why she sits up at turn 2 now, and no longer needs those particular pieces of equipment. She said she also needs to make sure that all of our current equipment still works. For software, she will be getting with Pronto, especially with any new classing, as she has to load that into Pronto for that system to accept when a car comes up to the line and is in now, whatever, class.

Nancy L asked if anybody wants to do timing; they always need more help. The setup is done way before the event starts. So, those who might be drivers and have 45 minutes in the morning before the event starts, they could help to set it up. She also said if anybody wants to sit with her throughout the day, while she is on the computer, validating the times as they go, that would be great, too. They did have some good interest in at Weatherley, and the person does not have to be 18 years old to sit in a non-hotspot doing timing.

Nancy L said that the laptop probably should be updated, but she doesn't know what is required of it. She needs to get with Darren from Pronto to see what requirements his software needs, and get his recommendations, and then pursue. Grace H said that Nancy should definitely have a spare that has the software loaded, just in case the primary dies.

8. New Business / non agenda Items:

Rich R stated that there was a display down at the Oaks Expo Center (the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center) on January 19 and 20. Mike R and Donna R brought their Corvette, Rick J and Patty J brought their Mustang, and Mike A and Dillon A brought their Formula V. Nancy L did a great job in setting up an attractive looking display booth. Little kids were drawn to the Formula V. Rich R said that we also got a couple of leads on potential workers. There is another show in a couple of weeks down at the Classic Auto Mall of Morgantown on February 9 and 10. Bill N is handling both

the Morgantown show and our participation at Carlisle this year, so please contact him if interested.

Mike R stated that he is hoping he can find some volunteers to help out with novice instruction this year. He said that he and Jason have been working the buddy system, and that has worked out really well. That means that any volunteers won't be by themselves.

Rich R circled back to the Shenandoah discussion. He said that right now, we have BMR willing to put up the \$870 deposit, and the Giants Despair Hillclimb Association willing to put up \$1,000 towards it. Both Danko Gas and Ron Morek say they'll put up \$500 for the event. It is possible that Philly Region may put up \$3,000 but Rich R needs to follow up on that. Vince W offered to cover half of the deposit if we do have to bail out of the event. Mike R also offered to put up \$500 from his business.

Rich R said that BMR is willing to sign the contract and send a deposit in, but that just gets the ball rolling. Grace H pointed out that we already have a \$4,000 commitment of help. This together with an entry fee increase from \$300 to \$350 would pretty much cover the increase. Ray K asked if the organizers would honor a lower rate for a second entry. Vince W said that this would be good for people who want to drive others' cars without hurting their points or overall mileage. Bill F suggested that we sell T-shirts for the Summit Point events to raise money. He said that we could do pre-ordering of shirts so we don't end up with too many. This, along with the early entry sign ups could both be done now through MSR. Mary Anne F suggested that we could ask for donations or sponsorships through the Facebook page, but Grace H said that this would be a lot of work for probably not much benefit. It would also be for the event organizers to determine if this was needed, not PHA.

Rich R said that we need to figure out what we are going to do about Shenandoah, including who will organize the event. He said that the Shenandoah event, running only two weeks after Duryea, is too much for BMR to do back-to-back. Nancy L asked if the Giants Despair Hillclimb Association would be willing to organize the event. Bill F said that he was concerned that this would mean they would take a large loss, and as a group they are not willing to do this. Grace H asked, even if a group could not commit financially, perhaps they could help with the organization. Bill F said that this was not a commitment he could make without discussing it with the group first.

9. Election of Officers: Rick K reopened the nominations for the four offices. No new nominations were raised. The nominations were closed. The four officers were uncontested. Rick K moved that the Secretary cast a unanimous ballot for those four officers. This was duly done and the officers were accepted.

10. Meeting Wrap Up and Next Meeting: Rich R asked what people thought of the meeting room and the food, and people thought that it was good. He then tentatively, scheduled the next meeting for March 9, at this same venue.

Rich R said that he will talk to Summit Point about what the payment schedule is, and if the next meeting date needs to be changed, we will announce it on the forum. Eli S reminded everybody that there will be an online survey sent out to everyone, so we can gauge feedback on the new style of meetings.

The Annual Meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm.

Respectively submitted,

Eli Sharp
PHA Secretary