

Pennsylvania Hillclimb Association

Minutes of the January 10, 2026, 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: Dave Arron, Todd Burkey, Jason Fraley*, Glenn Hoffman*, Hugh Maloney, Don McLaughlin, Sue Salsburg, Jim Swift, Rick Terrell*, Joe Whiteley.

Alternative Representatives: Mike Daley, Don DeHart, Nancy Lewis.

PHA members: George Ackerman, Bill Ascheman, Melinda Axarlis*, Mike Axarlis, Gibby Bozicevich*, Frank Callhoun*, Dave Cutchins*, John Dunbar*, Kathy Fisher, Randy Hartinger, Crystal Hoegg, Matt Hoegg, Jeffery Israel*, Kristen Israel*, Patty Johnson*, Rick Johnson*, Rick Kase*, Don Kennedy, Tim Lewis*, Cory Michael, Bob Oswald Jr., Jim Rathman, Kris Reid*, Gary Rieder, Donna Robinson, Mike Robinson, Brian Serfass, Ursula Whisler, Vincent Wiczorek, George Witman.

[* participated on Zoom]

1. Meeting Rules Recap: Eli S recapped the meeting rules and process.

2. Treasurer's Report: Grace H presented the 2025 financials. The banquet had a significant loss due to more workers (who receive free admission), lower donations compared to prior years, and increased costs for the program and trophies. However, hillclimb assessment fees and merchandise sales resulted in an overall small net profit for the year. PHA also paid Giants Despair Hill Climb Association for two insurance deductible claims. The insurance reserve remains healthy, and the checking account balance is strong. Grace noted she hasn't determined 2026 assessment fees yet pending decisions about possibly using the insurance reserve to help support track events. There were no questions about the finances.

3. Form Treasurer's Audit Committee: Nancy L, Mike R and Rich R agreed to participate in the audit after the meeting.

4. 2026 Schedule and Event Updates:

Carlisle and Other Shows: Carlisle Import Nationals are scheduled for May 15-16. PHA has been invited to the Motor Sports Expo in Oaks at no charge with load-in January 22nd and the show running January 23-24. PHA will have 40 feet of display space. Discussion included the Motorama show in Harrisburg February 21-22 and the VW show in Pottstown on Labor Day weekend.

Jefferson and Shenandoah: Rich R reported on contracts from Summit Point showing rental fee increases and the addition of West Virginia sales tax that was never charged previously. Both events had significant losses in 2025 with lower entry numbers than needed to break even (approximately 70 entries required). Rich will attempt to negotiate the costs down and will suggest BMR make deposits to secure the dates. These events are tentative based on minimizing losses over the next few months. Grace plans to promote the events at the Philadelphia Region banquet to auto crossers, and Susquehanna Region expressed interest in helping promote Shenandoah.

Pagoda and Duryea: Rich R reported dates have been provided to Reading's Traffic Enforcement Office. The Pagoda building should open in late April or early May, though it will have limited capacity. Duryea Drive will not be fully repaved this year. Outreach to vendors and sponsors continues.

Weatherly: Matt H stated the Weatherly Hill Climb Association hasn't had their first meeting yet. It's scheduled for the first Monday of February, and more information will be available at the March PHA meeting.

Giants Despair and Pocono: No representatives from the Giants Despair Hillclimb Association were present. Regarding Pocono, Rich R said that Mike Frohman had indicated a meeting was scheduled for the following week but had no other updates at this time.

Possible New Venues: Rich R introduced a potential venue in Emporium, PA on Whittimore Road (State Route 3001). The hill is approximately 3.4 miles with significant elevation change. A spectator who attended Giants Despair this year thought hillclimbing would benefit his hometown, which has lost industry. Glenn H researched the location and may visit in March or April. Jason F offered to scout the location the following weekend. The group examined Google Street View and discussed logistics. Rich R noted that finding new venues requires geographic expansion, and this contact mentioned potentially ten more roads in the area to consider.

Banquet: Grace H reported extra 2025 programs were available. The 2026 banquet date cannot be scheduled until Pocono dates are confirmed. If Pocono is as late as

October, the banquet may need to be the weekend before Thanksgiving again. There were no objections to this approach.

5. Proposed Changes to the Supps for 2026:

Mike R reported that a subcommittee has been formed with Matt H, Matt Green, and Hunter Huffman. They've had one meeting and plan more now that the holidays are over. There are no real changes, only cleaning up language. The helmet 2025 expiration will likely be extended one year to match SCCA, though New Jersey Motorsports Park and initially Mount Washington indicated they won't accept 2015 helmets.

Grace H confirmed the Supps document is ready for committee input and offered to host a Zoom meeting for updates. Rich R shared the SCCA National supplemental regulations template for 2026 which includes a required Welcome Statement addressing SCCA's commitment to a welcoming environment and appropriate conduct.

Discussion of Hans device recertification determined that while manufacturers recommend 10-year recertification, the January 2026 GCR states devices don't time out but must be maintained in acceptable condition through visual inspection. The committee will reference the GCR language. There appear to be no SCCA class changes affecting hillclimb for 2026, and no time trial rule changes that would impact PHA.

6. Changes to Website and Social Media: Grace H reported the website remains current with the compressed banquet program now posted. Jason F reported that Instagram now has over 240 followers and is growing organically. Grace H will add Jason F as admin to Facebook for additional management capabilities.

7. Share Any Updates on Timing: Nancy L reported timing equipment is in good condition with only a tripod needing replacement. Equipment was tested in extreme cold conditions during a BMR rallycross and functioned properly. Nancy L emphasized the need for more people to learn timing operations, both hardware setup and software operation. She's looking for volunteers to commit to specific events to spread the workload. Jim S's daughter may help with two events. Nancy L noted timing volunteers are the first to know competitive results, making it an engaging role.

8. New Business / Non-Agenda Items:

Coolant and Tow Hook Requirements: Rich R raised two important safety and operational issues. First, certain coolants (particularly glycol-based types like Evans waterless coolant and Honda Blue Type) create extremely difficult cleanup situations when spilled, requiring pressure washing rather than standard oil dry. This occurred at

both Giants Despair and Polish Mountain in past years. The group discussed banning problematic coolants while acknowledging concerns from those who drive cars to events. Propylene glycol-based coolants with Water Wetter were suggested as better alternatives. The committee will work to identify specific compounds that cause cleanup problems.

Second, proper tow hooks are essential. The GCR specifies minimum 2-inch diameter openings. Inadequate tow hooks delay operations and can be dangerous - one incident this year resulted in a hook pulling open and damaging the tow vehicle. Proper tow hooks are particularly important for closed cars as crews need quick, safe attachment points.

9. Election of Officers:

Rick K conducted the election. Nominations from November included two candidates for President (Rich R and Jason F), with single nominees for Vice President and Treasurer. Grace H nominated Todd B for Secretary. No additional nominations were made, and nominations were closed for all positions.

The three uncontested positions were approved by unanimous vote: Trevor Filipowicz, Vice President; Grace Huntzinger, Treasurer; and Todd Burkey, Secretary.

A private ballot was conducted for the contested President position. The final tally was Rich R with 20 votes and Jason F with 21 votes. Jason Fraley was elected President. New officers will officially take over at the March meeting.

10. Meeting Wrap-Up and Next Meeting: Rich R stated the next meeting is scheduled for March 7, 2026, subject to confirmation by the new president. The meeting should remain in early March to finalize supps and allow permit applications for Reading events. Rich R reminded attendees about available calendars and programs, and Eli S reminded everyone to sign the attendance sheet.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Eli Sharp
PHA Secretary