

Sierra Club of Pennsylvania, Southeastern PA Group Executive Committee Meeting

January 3, 2018 Meeting City Coho, Muirwoods Room

ExCom Members Attending: Pat Beaudet, John Butler, Ken Hemphill, Mathew Himmelein, Dave Moscatello, Prasad Ramnath, Dennis Winters, Jim Wylie

Attending by Phone: Alexa Manning,

ExCom Members Absent: Gerald Brown, Margaret Nersten,

Other Members Attending: Emily Davis, Sue Edwards, Jim Kaff, Amy Kwasnicki, Karen Melton, Kevin Little

The Meeting was called to order at 6:20 by Jim Wylie. [Agenda is attached](#)

Secretary: The minutes were approved as emailed.

Treasurer:

C3 Balance (No Change)	\$6,739
C4 Beginning Balance (Nov 1):	10,904
Income	\$1,784
Expenditures	\$557
Ending Balance	\$12,241

Budget

2018 Expenditure Budget

It was moved that the following budget for expenditures be approved. The motion passed.

Conservation Work	\$6,000
Education Events, venues, speakers	\$3,000
Political Expenses	\$750
Community support	\$750
Outings - equipment, promotion, sponsorships, leader training	\$1,500
Outreach - tabling, printing	\$750
Member Support - Social events, communications	\$750
Fixed - Clubhouse rent, bank charges	\$700
TOTAL	15,000

Dennis moved that we establish a petty cash fund of \$700. The motion was seconded and passed. This fund will be used to cover expenses approved in the above budget. It will be held in PayPal. Members using this fund will still need to submit the Reimbursement form and receipts to Dennis.

Standing Committee Reports

Conservation Committee: (Jim Wylie)

Jim presented an ideas for a toolkit to assist members, or a member, in setting up a Conservation subcommittee to research and address a specific issue. [See his Kit](#)

Political Committee:

There will be a training meeting on Thursday, January 11, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at City CoHo, 2401 Walnut St, Philadelphia. The training will be led by Joanne Kilgour, PA Chapter Director and Lobbyist and Dave Hemberger, PA Chapter Political Chair. The agenda is not yet available. Jim will send it out when he gets it.

Newsletter/Communications: (Ken Hemphill)

Deadline for the next newsletter is January 15. All members are urged to write articles or blogs

Education Committee: (Karen Melton)

A summary of planned program for 2018 is:

1. Philadelphia Programs – 4, at CoHo (common area), topics – TBD
2. West Chester Programs – 6, at WCU (lecture hall), topics: Food & Climate Change (first 4), TBD (May, June)
3. Mini-Programs – 10, call-in on Tues nights (about every-other), recorded
4. RF100 Mini-Programs – 10, call-in, alternating w/ RF100 volunteer meetings, targeted at energy topics for all 3 RF100 teams
5. Bucks Programs ?
6. Phoenixville Programs – growing enthusiasm to host more at Colonial Theater working w/ Phoenixville Green Team

Nomination Committee: (Alexa Manning)

Mat Himmelein has resigned so there are 6 seats open so all candidates will serve on the SPG. Votes will be counted on January 14 and the candidate receiving the least number of votes will serve out the year remaining in Mat's term.

Executive Committee Organization: Pat moved that Jim Wylie serve as Chairman, Dave Moscatello as Vice Chairman, Dennis Winters as Treasurer and Emily Davis as Secretary. The motion passed. The following members agreed to serve as committee chairs:

Conservation: John Butler, Jim Wylie

Communications: Ken Hemphill, Mat Himmelein

Political: Dennis Winters (tentative)

Nomination: Prasad Ramnath

Education: Karen Melton, Kevin Little

Outings: Jim Kaff, Amy Kwasnicki

Member Engagement: Prasad Ramnath

Social Committee: Pat Beaudet (Winter)

Amy and Ken (Summer)

Fund Raising: (tentative)

Amy Kwasnicki, Ken Hemphill

Tabling: Emily Davis

Outings Committee: (Jim Kaff, Amy Kwasnicki)

Amy announced that there will be a training for outings and ICO leaders on February 16 and 17. The program will include a session on equity, inclusion and justice. She will out more information as it becomes available.

Old Business

Meeting Format:

As a result of the [survey](#) and discussion, this year the ExComm will meet at 2 additional venues and some meetings will be paired with education programs. Meetings will be two hours long unless paired with an educational program and then meetings will be one hour long. Members agreed the Swarthmore site used last year was a good one. Ken and Karen, especially if the meeting will be paired with an education program, will identify possible new locations. The February and March meetings will take place at Coho.

New Business

Eastwick Friends and Neighbors Coalition Banquet

Four members will be attending this event: Zakia Elliot, Sue Edwards, Emily Davis, and Amy Kwasnicki. Zakia is buying her own ticket. Jim moved that SPG cover the cost of the tickets (\$139 with processing fees). The motion passed. Funds will come from the Community support budget line. Robin Mann has offered to buy a \$500 Bronze Sponsorship for the event which comes with a half page ad in the program.

Meeting Attendance:

Jim presented a [chart of attendance](#) by excomm members in 2017. Our bylaws state that a member of the executive committee may be removed by a 2/3 vote of the executive committee members if he or she has missed three or more meetings in a calendar year. There was some discussion about this and no actions were taken.

Bylaws Presentation:

Pat Beaudet and Dennis Winters made a short presentation about Sierra Club and SPG Bylaws as requested by Jim. A copy of the document was sent out before the meeting. National provides a template for bylaws and local groups can, within limits, adapt them. Since the board of directors is the governing body at the national level, at the sub levels (chapters, then groups, the Committee Executive (exComm) is the governing group. It is the responsibility of ExComm to foster the goals of the Sierra Club and assure compliance with its rules.

Announcements:

Meeting Call-in Number:

1-866-501-6174, PIN is 1004100#.

Agenda

6:15 - Introductions

Approval of [Nov meeting minutes](#)

Treasurers Report – wrap up of 2017

Other year-end reports: [conservation](#), [addendum \(DSM\)](#), [happy new year from chair](#)

ExCom Election Results (exit polls – voting technically remains open until Jan 14)

ExCom Roster

- See 2017 attendance chart below

Election of Officers

Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer

Other Leadership Roles

Committee Chairs: Conservation, Communications, Political, Nomination, Education, Local Outings

Leaders: Tabling, Member Engagement, Social, Fundraising, Web, Social Media, Newsletter Editor

Other Leaders: Consv Cmte Startup, RF100 (3), Pipelines, Outings, County Political (5)

6:40 – **SPG History & [Bylaws](#)** – Pat & Dennis

7:00 - **Budget Framework for 2018**

– see outline [HERE](#)

- Propose that we approve framework (total spending target and percentages) in Jan, specific allocations in Feb

7:10 - **ExCom Meeting Format Changes**

– see summary of survey below

7:25 - **Education Program Proposals**

– see summary below

7:35 - **Political Planning for 2018**

- SPG strategy meeting planned for Jan 11

7:45 - **Conservation Committee Startup Kit Proposal**

– see proposal outline below

7:50 – **Communications**

– winter newsletter plans, collection of blog posts format, social media, web admins

8:00 - **Plan for Feb meeting** and make sure everyone knows what their roles are

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ExCom Meeting Format Survey Summary

Problems we are trying to solve:

1. Local member engagement – attract SC members to attend ExCom meetings so they can learn about what we do and give us feedback.
2. Nurture future ExCom nominees
3. Make ExCom meetings more interesting
4. CCP Lecture attendance is way down – not even ExCom members attend
5. ExCom meetings are very Jim-centric – other ExCom members should share “ownership” of the meetings

Comments on “the problems”:

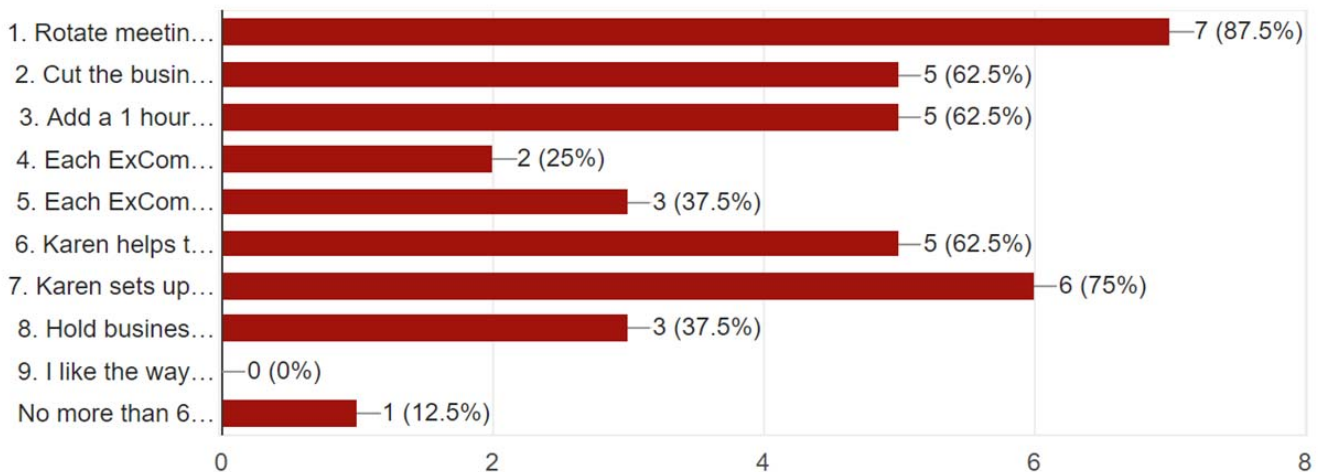
I think these problems are real

While the CCP lecture numbers are way down, attendance at SPG meetings by non board members is way up and interaction is also up in my opinion. Yes Jim you are running the show - I like it but see the importance of spreading responsibility

I like meetings in a fixed location. Otherwise, I have to make additional plans to find directions, timing of travel from work, deal with evening rush hour. If Excom meetings happen to be in the suburbs I may choose to attend via phone

Rotate meetings so as to draw different people. Keep business to one hour and get to know new folks for the remaining time.

Not sure ExCom business needs to be more "interesting", that's what Ed sessions, outings, and special events are about.



Which Options We Like

1. Rotate meetings around SPG region (have 4 to 6 not at CoHo)
2. Cut the business part of meeting to 1 hour
3. Add a 1 hour education part to the agenda – either lecture/discussion or film/discussion
4. Each ExCom member picks venue for one ExCom meeting
5. Each ExCom member sets the agenda and facilitates one ExCom meeting
6. Karen helps to setup education part of each meeting (needs to know where each meeting will be)
7. Karen sets up (say 6) education events around the region for the first Wed of the month, we adjust our ExCom location to meet before that event. These are bigger events that we promote. The ExCom would be 1 hour before the event.
8. Hold business meetings only every other month (for 2 hours each). Others are either social events or education events
9. I like the way things are - do not change.
10. No more than 6 combo Ed. session / ExCom meetings, others just ExCom. One per quarter alternate venue

Options We Really Do Not Like

1. **Rotate Venue – 1 dislike**
2. 1 hour business meetings – 0
3. Combined business/ed – 0
4. **Rotating venue picker – 2 dislikes**
5. **Rotating meeting facilitator – 1 dislike**
6. Karen helps w/ ed setup – 0
7. **Karen owns venue select – 3 dislike**
8. **Every other month business – 2 dislike**

Comments

I guess I would prefer 1 hour meetings every month, but would be OK w/ 2 hour meetings every-other-month.

I would think all Ex Coms taking place at other venues would need to be near train stations.

I could live with any of them. Would like to have to see each SPG member assigned a reporting area as part of agreeing to be a member of the board.

I like the idea of alternating business and educational meetings each month but can we put off decisions for two months at a stretch? I do not like rotating venues - conference call facilities at these alternate sites may be iffy to add to the difficulties of those who cannot make it. On the other hand, I understand the sentiment behind rotation - so if we are rotating venues, we should make sure the conference phone is available and of good quality. Also, change is good even if nothing is broken.

One hour business meetings when combined with Ed. sessions, under 2 hours otherwise. What Karen "owns" is up to her, but suggest input on venue selection for non-CoHo events from members in areas of interest (Delco, Chesco, etc.). Rather than each ExCom member setting agenda and facilitating meetings (fine for anyone who wants to step up), each member should propose and present a relevant issue of personal interest as a key agenda topic for at least one meeting each year.

Jim's Proposal After Survey

1. Ask for a volunteer(s) to scout and ID 2 new meeting locations (so 3 total w/ CoHo) that meet our criteria of:
 - a. Accessible from public trans
 - b. Room holds 15
 - c. A/V equipment for sharing computer screen (probably not a show stopper)
 - d. Conference call phone
 - e. Nearby lecture hall or larger room for ed program (at least 25?) (could be same room for both)
 - f. Free or reasonable costs (< \$25)
2. Schedule 4-6 meetings in 2018 outside of CoHo
3. Let Ed Chair decide when & where Ed Programs are.
 - a. If on a first Wed, ExCom will be 1 hour preceding the Ed Program same or near location (see #1)
4. Business meetings every month – except Dec
 - a. If combined w/ ed program the ExCom meeting is 1 hour
 - b. If stand-alone meeting, the ExCom meeting is 2 hours
5. Each ExCom member must make a significant report (15-20 min) at one ExCom meeting each year related to their leadership role.
6. Agenda setting and meeting facilitating by ExCom Chair, or Vice Chair
7. When Ed Programs are promoted, include invitation to preceding ExCom meeting

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Chart

2017 SPG ExCom meeting attendance chart												
	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Pat Beudet	2			A		A						
Gerald Brown	5					A			A	A	A	A
John Butler,	7	A	A	A	A				A		A	A
Ken Hemphill,	0											
Mathew Himmelein	6		A			A		A		A	A	A
Alexa Manning	0											
Dave Moscatello	0											
Margaret Nersten	3						A				A	A
Prasad Ramnath	1						A					
Dennis Winters	4				A	A					A	A
Jim Wylie	0											

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Conservation Committee Startup Kit

A starter kit for forming a Sierra Club conservation committee. I'm proposing a new team of 2 or 3 people put their heads together to flesh out the contents of this kit. Draft at START-HERE document and create a repository for generic tools that can be use by a someone that says – "I'd like to start/lead a new committee that addresses issue XYZ, but I don't know were to start". This new team also becomes the application review and oversight team.

Here's my brainstorm of what could be in this kit:

- A simple document that describes step-by-step how start and maintain a conservation committee
- Including a list of resources that are available from SPG volunteers:
 - Communications
 - Emails to sc members and followers
 - Page on SPG website – sc.org/pa-spg
 - Social media
 - Help w/ starting your own google group of volunteers (email list and posting forum)
 - SPG newsletter space
 - Online petitions
 - Templates for call-to-action emails or other
 - Educational platforms – CCP or WCU lecture series and/or mini-programs
 - Advice from SPG conservation leaders and chapter staff and other experts
 - Tips on how to talk to your legislators
 - \$250 for printing or other educational needs (more could be budgeted in following years)
 - List of good/free venues for meetings (we need to build this)
 - Reference to other similar committees
 - Campfire credentials to post events and meetings on SC calendar
- Form an oversight committee that reviews/approves proposals for new committees
- Draft an application for creating a new committee

Of course what makes or breaks the success and longevity of a conservation committee is the commitment of a volunteer leader. Which has historically been hard to find. I'm hoping that a program like this – a startup-kit – will embolden a few more would-be volunteer leaders who are passionate about an environmental issue, but just don't know where to start. If we could start 2 or 3 committees in 2018, I would be very happy.

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