

NATCA Disaster Response Committee

Chicago Meeting Minutes

November 5-6, 2024

Tuesday November 5, 2024

Committee attended offsite DRC educational & fundraising event on Monday November 4, 2024 from 6:00-10:00pm which was attended by approximately 50 members from multiple local facilities. NATCA executive president Nick Daniels, executive vice president Mick Devine, NGL RVP Drew MacQueen, several regional and local leadership, and local members attended. DRC received an additional annual \$4000 in APD because of the event.

This was the only in-person committee meeting for 2024 and was held at the C90. Committee members were given a tour of the facility and allowed to meet local members.

I. Call to order

Tom Flanary called to order the annual meeting of the NATCA DRC at 10:00am CST on November 5, 2024, held at C90 and conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Madeline Bostic, Caty Galluci, Zac Ploch, Anthony Silver, Brett Steinle, and Joe LaPorte(remote). Not Present: Chris Gallant

II. Introductions

Tom Flanary welcomed new member Joe LaPorte and highlighted the committee's history and growth since 2017. Committee members introduced themselves to Joe.

III. Finance

Tom led discussion about DRC Finances.

- A. Disaster Relief Fund (DRF): The current fund balance is around \$100,000, with recent significant spending on hurricane responses. Current Automatic Payroll Deductions (APD) are \$5864/PP or approximately \$152,462 annually. Approximately 607 of 14,775 members participating, which is a participation rate of 4.1%. Also discussed DRF inflows/outflows and limitations on the funds use. The goal is to have the fund become the primary source for all expenses, reducing the need for a large committee budget. The group discussed the need for better tracking and categorization of expenses in Concur to improve transparency and budget management.
- B. Committee Budget: Committee requested \$31,000 for 2024 committee budget and was approved for \$24,000 by NEB/NFC. Committee discussed shortfalls in the budget, and possible need to request additional funding to allow for attendance at NATCA events and additional in person meeting for 2025.
- C. The group discussed the potential benefits and impacts of committee and volunteer structure, as well as the challenges of managing both the DRC and the DRF, as well as fundraising.
- D. Issues with payroll processing and the need for a more reliable system were highlighted, with suggestions for using third-party services to streamline payments. Investigate with accounting setting up an alternative online donation system, to have more control and transparency over the process and allow retired and non-members to donate.

IV. Communication and Resource Allocation in Emergency Situations

- A. Discussed communication solutions for emergency response, particularly the use of Starlink and satellite phones. Benefits of Starlink, including its cost-effectiveness and ability to provide communication in remote areas, challenges of deploying these devices in a timely manner, and the need for better logistics. The team debated the pros and cons of Starlink versus satellite phones, considering factors like mobility and subscription costs.

- B. Discussed refining response strategies for various scenarios, particularly regarding fence repairs and reimbursements. The team debated whether to offer standardized reimbursement amounts or handle each case individually, concluding that individual assessments are more effective. The team emphasized the need for consensus in decision-making and the importance of clear, organized communication. They also discussed the importance of not covering car insurance deductibles and the possible need for a cap on reimbursements. Suggested improving communication and tracking processes, possibly the use of SharePoint for better data management and creating a separate Teams channel for quick responses.
- C. Focused on improving inventory management and logistics for disaster response equipment. Key points included tracking AirTags and battery management, and the potential benefits of using dedicated trailers for storing and transporting equipment. The discussion also covered the challenges of fuel logistics, including the need for emergency fuel sources and the difficulties in coordinating with the FAA.

V. Volunteer and Member Engagement Strategies

- A. Discuss the importance of volunteer engagement and the need for better organization. Possibly creating business cards with QR codes for volunteers and donors.
- B. Emphasize the importance of PR and the success of recent videos, capturing more pictures and videos during events for future use, and potential of using member stories and testimonials for PR.
- C. Discuss the potential for larger-scale events and teaming up with other committees to generate more volunteers and funds for the DRF.

VI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made at 6:00pm CST by Brett, and second by Anthony.

Wednesday November 6, 2024

Committee members were given a tour of the facility and allowed to meet local members. Several DRC presentations were made during lunch to approximately 40 ZAU members.

I. Call to order

Tom Flanary called to order the regular meeting of the NATCA DRC at 9:00am on November 6, 2024 held at ZAU and conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Madeline Bostic(remote), Caty Galluci, Joe LaPorte(remote), Zac Ploch and Brett Steinle. Not Present: Anthony Silver, Chris Gallant.

II. Volunteer and Member Engagement Strategies (Continued from previous day)

- A. Discussion on enhancing the Disaster Response Committee's (DRC) operations and recognition efforts, including the addition of a volunteer layer in ArcGIS, updating volunteer survey response and data collection, a 30-minute training session for volunteers, and the importance of acknowledging volunteers and NATCA local donors with personalized thank-you cards or posters.
- B. The committee implemented a toll-free number of the 1-833-NATCA-DRC and associated features like voicemail, call routing, and text messaging. Also discussed the need for a dedicated website for better control and recognition.
- C. Discussed the use of hats and other merchandise for branding, with USA-made items. Debated using Telegram, WhatsApp, or Teams for volunteer communication, emphasizing the need for a unified platform, possibly creating regional channels for better organization. The idea of onboarding volunteers through training sessions was

proposed to ensure they feel part of the team. The importance of regular updates and newsletters to keep volunteers informed was highlighted, with a plan to ensure all volunteers receive these communications.

III. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made at 3:00pm by Brett, and second by Caty.

Minutes submitted by: Brett Steinle