

UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS ©  
DISTRICT 9

Spring Council Meeting  
28 February 2009  
Port Huron, Michigan

**Minutes**

**Call to order**

D/C Denise Brooks, AP

**Invocation**

Rocho delivered the invocation.

D/Lt Douglas Rocho, P D/Lt

**Pledge of Allegiance**

P/R/C Johnston led the Pledge of Allegiance.

P/R/C Patricia Johnston, SN

**Welcome & Comments**

D/C Brooks gave special thanks to Port Huron Power Squadron for their kindness, energy and enthusiasm as well as the ideal location for this meeting; Great Lakes Maritime Center at Vantage Point.

D/C Denise Brooks, AP

Remark- Please keep Scott and Robyn Levene in your prayers as Scott is in the hospital. Reminder to complete cards, red cards for voting members of the council, and white cards for guests that are in attendance.

**Order of Business**

To expite business, D/C Brooks reserved the right to change the order of the agenda.

D/C Denise Brooks, AP

**Introduction of National Officers & PDC's**

D/Lt/C Bartlett made introductions of the National Officers present, Past District Commanders present, and PDEOs present. They were:

D/Lt/C Bryan Bartlett, JN

**Past District Commanders**

- 1984 P/C/C/P/D/C Theodore H. Smith, SN
- 1987 P/N/F/Lt Dick Jarmon, SN
- 1993 P/STF/C Ed Schwenk, SN
- 2001 STF/C & P/D/C John Bennett, SN
- 2004 P/D/C Mike Ruchuk, SN
- 2005 P/D/C Jack N. Knaggs, SN
- 2006 Stf/C & P/D/C Denise Samu, AP

**Past District Educational Officers**

- 2003-2006 P/D/Lt/C Tom Hyatt, N

### National Officers

- P/RC Patricia Johnston, SN
- P/Stf/C Diane Dawes, AP
- Stf/C Donald Fiander, SN

### Review of Voting and Floor Privileges

D/Lt Laddie Hudson, SN

D/Lt Hudson reviewed the voting privileges for this meeting.

Reading of Article 3 Section 3.1 regarding of district counsel voting members. Reading of Article 2 Section 2.91 regarding nominating, rules and the audit committee.

### Determination of a Quorum

D/Lt/C Robyn Levene, AP

D/C Brooks verified with Assistant Secretary D/1<sup>st</sup>/Lt Rudy Sloop, AP a quorum is present.

### Approval of Minutes – 2008 Fall Council

D/C Denise Brooks, AP

D/C Brooks announced that the Minutes were in each seat packet and posted on the D/9 website. A motion was made and seconded to except the minutes as published. The motion past.

### District Calendar

D/Lt/C Bryan Bartlett, JN

D/Lt/C informed everyone that a copy of the current district calendar as of this date is in each seat packet. Please notify him as soon as possible with any other up-coming events. He will then post it to the website over the weekend.

### Report of the Planning Committee

D/Lt David Brooks, AP

District Planning Committee Report is provided in each seat packet. D/Lt Brooks stated that PlanCom has two open items. They are:

**Item #14** which is a review of the SOP 7 Secretaries Department to assure it reflects current operating procedures. After a lengthy review and a lot of work these SOP's are at a point where a draft copy is provided for your review. D/Lt Brooks made a motion that the SOP be forwarded to the Spring Conference Meeting for discussion and approval as published. The motion was seconded and past.

**Item #19** is a lengthy process. To this point benchmarking information is back from districts of similar size in number of members and scope of the district itself. This information is regarding how these districts operate their meeting schedule and what that means in by-laws changing either District 9's or USPS or a waiver process that goes through USPS Operating Committee in the event that we want to change our conference schedule. Please review this information so there can be further discussion at the Spring Conference. Please send any feedback to D/Lt Brooks, whose contact information is part of the packet.

**Report of the Audit Committee**

D/Lt Laddie Hudson, SN

D/Lt Hudson announced the interim report for the first seven months has been examined. There are no problems and everything is in great shape and the final report will be at the conference.

**Report of the Budget Committee**

D/Lt Chet Dunbar, AP

D/Lt Dunbar presented the new budget for 2009-2010. He thanked the budget committee for a lot of hard work and a great effort in preparing it. He also, pointed out that Line item 151 (Newsletters and Mailing Labels) have been moved to the Secretaries department and has become line item 513. A budget surplus was reported in the amount of \$3,890. There was a motion and a second to approve. Discussion: Lattie Hudson requested a clarification. He wanted to make sure this motion was made subject to approval by the conference and by department. Answer, yes this is true. Voted on and motion approved.

**Report of the Nominating Committee**

P/D/C Denise Samu, AP

P/D/C Denise Samu presented the slate of District 9 Officers for 2009-2010. They are:

District Commander	D/Lt/C Bryan Bartlett, AP	Detroit
Executive Officer	D/Lt/C James Draper, AP	Flint
DEO	D/1 <sup>st</sup> /Lt Donald Fiander, SN	Birmingham
Administrative Officer	D/Lt/C Mary Ann Jenson, JN	Lansing
Treasurer	P/C William Stano, AP	Grosse Pointe
Secretary	D/Lt/C Robyn Levene, AP	Kalamazoo
Assistant Secretary	P/C H. Jay Stevens, JN	South Bend
Assistant DEO	D/Lt Duane Carlson, JN	Mt Clemens

Nominating Committee

3 year term	D/C Denise Brooks, AP	Port Huron
3 year term	P/C David Rayburn, AP	Dearborn

Rules Committee

3 year term	P/C Joel Lockwood, AP	Grand Traverse Bay
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Audit Committee

3 year term	P/C David Brinks, AP	Grand Rapids
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**Report of the Conference Coordinator**

P/D/C Mike Rachuk, SN

P/D/C Rachuk gave his conference report. He emphasized that District 9 is not immune to the economic impact that is going on now. Attendance at District Conferences has been declining for some time now. Members of the Kalamazoo Sail and Power Squadron did an outstanding job at the Fall Conference. Due to 20 room night cancellations and room bookings under alternate means such as AARP, we could not get the hotel to give us credit for those rooms so the District suffered a penalty because we did not meet our room night commitment. Due to efforts of squadron members the

penalty was reduced to about \$400, thanks to those members that helped minimize that penalty.

District 9 is struggling to get District Conference numbers up for the South Bend Conference. Thanks to members; the room night commitment was reduced from 80% down to 70%. Right now we are just over the room night commitment. The deadline for the Fall Conference hotel rooms was a week ago but it was extended to next Monday.

Cdr Mike Osborne from South Bend reported that room commitments are at 73.8%. He asked that nobody cancels out. One of the primary goals for the Fall Conference, no matter what happens, is to have really good food. The Education Officer meeting will be on Friday at 5 pm. Cdr Osbourne will be meeting with the other Commanders to make sure he has the hospitality list as current as possible and is scheduled to go to press either Monday or Tuesday.

P/D/C Mike Rachuk says maybe it is time to reevaluate the way we do things. We may want to change the Fall Conference format. With the current economy the way it is, the cost of \$400 to \$500 for the conference weekend is hard. Please contact him with any recommendations.

Additional booked conferences are: Mount Clemens for Fall 2009, the 23<sup>rd</sup> thru 25<sup>th</sup> of October. Flint Power Squadron for Spring 2010 Conference to be held at the South Flint Marriott March 18<sup>th</sup> thru 20<sup>th</sup>. The only other conference firmly committed is Spring Conference 2013 hosted by the Birmingham Squadron for their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

P/D/C Rachuk reminded everyone that conference and all district meetings including counsel meetings are free to members. There is no obligation to buy meal tickets and there is no obligation to spend the night in the hotel. Costs of meals are up and you should know \$20 for a meal is cheap but with sales tax and tip it is closer to \$25. The room you are in is "free" but nothing in life is free. They roll the cost of the room rental which is normally \$500 for a room that size, into the cost of the meal so now the cost is up to \$30. Hopefully this helps you understand why the costs are so high.

## **D9 DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

### **Treasurer's Department**

D/Lt C Mary Ann Jensen, AP

D/C Brooks announced that the Treasurer's Report is in the seat packets. D/Lt/C Jensen is still gone enjoying the California sun.

### **Secretary's Department**

D/Lt/C Robyn Levene, AP

D/C Brooks also announced that the Secretary's Report is in each seat packet.

### **Administrative Department**

D/Lt/C James Draper, JN

D/Lt/C Draper stated he has 13 different sub-committees within his current position. He is contented to announce that everything is just fine with the exception of membership..

Current membership information looks terrible. All the information shared can be found on the National website. Ten years ago USPS National Membership was at 62,000 and in 2008 it was down to about 47,000. Squadron's growth last year was 7.4% lost by District 9. All the Districts nationally together have lost about 6.2%. District 28 grew 12% and there were only a couple other districts on the positive growth side.

District 9's membership loss was at 7.4%. Tip of the Mitt had a 14.9% gain and St. Clair Shores had a 6.9% gain. Grand Traverse Bay increased half a percent and Port Huron broke even. In 1998 District 9 had 3,700 members. In 2008 District 9 had approximately 2,600 with 2009 looking at about 2,400 members. CPS/ECP the Canadian Power Squadron integrated automatic first year membership costs with a first year boating class. The total success of this cannot be determined until renewals in April of 2009 but snap shot of July 2007 to July 2008 shows a Membership increased of 28%. Membership increased from 27,464 up to 35,462. The Canadian Power Squadron is very close to eclipsing the size of the United States Power Squadron. Even though they will lose some renewals they will continue to grow with new members. Past and present members now know that to learn more about boating the Power Squadron is their main resource for education. A one year automatic membership including the cost of the boating class (supported and recommended by the National Bridge) D/Lt/C Draper and the Administrative Office is offering the first three squadrons, who will try automatic membership with their basic boating class, a \$250 incentive award. It is totally up to the Squadron how they handle the cost of integrating this program into their budget. What's important is when someone takes a course or seminar they leave with a one year membership to that Squadron. This provides squadrons the opportunity to introduce that member and have that member get to know their squadron better, know what they have to offer and the advantages offered compared to others places individuals can go and get the training.

"How do I apply for the \$250?" Send D/Lt/C Draper an email with the details. If your squadron is one of the first three to combine basic boating class fees with automatic membership, send Jim an email with the details of your program, members, class dates, etc. For person's to qualify, they must join by signing-up and paying to combined class and membership at the same time. A Squadron may want to invest in a credit card machine. A Pitney Bose machine is \$450. A percentage cost of 1.6% per transaction is charged. Keep in mind that the Coast Guard is still attempting to pass legislation to make boating classes mandatory. Discussion was lively but needed to be closed.

### **Education Department**

D/Lt/C William Stewart, SN

DEO D/Lt/C Stewart announced that the new boating course has arrived. It is called ABC 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition and replaces the current ABC. It comes with 3 CD's. Students need to read the back cover before loading the CD. The student version comes with 2 CD's. The ABC home study and Map Tec runs on Windows Vista. If you do not have Vista, read the back cover. D/Lt/C Stewart stated that the course was held Monday night and the student enthusiasm with the book was fantastic. It is great material for teaching the boating course. The 2004 Boating Course with addendum has been approved through 2010. USPS offers it for \$15 but no returns. There is a change in the examination

procedures, students cannot be retested with the same examination. Advanced courses are updated and vastly improved. Elective courses will be completely redone by the end of the year. USPS has a very hard-working national department who has created the best boating educational material in the United States, if not, the world. Individuals have 18 months to complete N99. The instructor development course and the recertification course are not in development. Reminder, if someone takes a recertification; make sure they were certified to begin with. Download DB2000 to make sure they are certified. National is asking us to put emphasis on the Boating Seminar series. National is going from a dues driven organization to a marketing driven organization. This new marketing person is very dynamic. Go to national's website to the marketing section to check out the new marketing materials and ideas.

### **Executive Department**

D/Lt/C Bryan Bartlett, JN

D/Lt/C Bartlett asked Squadrons to please send in their Deceased Member List as soon as possible. Only 13 squadrons have so far.

D/Lt Dawn has the District 9 billboard poster in her trunk. Anyone interested in taking it, please see her. Change of Watch dates have been sent in by everyone. If anything changes let him know.

Squadron commanders can communicate, verbalize, and solve problems as well as, share ideas with other squadron commanders on-line at [cdrscorner.blogspot.com](http://cdrscorner.blogspot.com). This is for Squadron Commanders only.

Each seat packet has D/Lt/C Bartlett's complete report.

### **District Commander's Report**

D/C Denise Brooks, AP

D/C Brooks attended the National Meeting in Anaheim. USPS national planning committee has formed a group to work on "squadron simplification". D/C Brooks is helping this group and would like your input. Send ideas via her email. ([d2brooks@comcast.net](mailto:d2brooks@comcast.net)).

There are two ways people can join USPS without going through the squadrons. First is the internet and secondly, through Boat Shows. Any contacts that squadrons receive at these two avenues need to follow-up, contact and welcomes those people who join in this way. It provides an excellent opportunity for you to let these people partner with your squadron. The internet provides a lot of great information but in the end the purpose of the squadron is about people. It's not the project or the task; it is the relationship and utilizing the opportunity that is provided.

Put yourself in the new members place. What would you need? What would your expectations be? Keep looking for those new things, new opportunities, keep looking for new ways to tweak what you do to attract and retain membership.

When e-mailing D/C Brooks be sure to use her [d2brooks@comcast.net](mailto:d2brooks@comcast.net) email address.

## **Unfinished Business**

D/C Denise Brooks, AP

- By-laws revisions- just waiting for the final blessing to come back and then they will be posted on the District website.
- St. Joseph has finished all the paperwork for final their dissolution. It should be appearing on the agenda at National in Kansas City. A request item sent in from the Fall D-9 meeting regarding moving the Commander-Executive Officers meeting from Saturday morning to Friday will be discussed in South Bend at the Commanders Meeting.
- District 9 Directory came up. There are two elements of the directory on the website. One is the total District roster and the other is the quick list which is the officers, members of the different departments and the Squadron Commanders. That has been our interim tool until this point. A couple of other resources that are available that would allow the directory to be electronic rather than paper. The Information Center at National has where you can go to each of the Squadrons where they have listed the basic OD-2 forms and the ownership of keeping that current is up to the squadron. National enters the OD-2 Form information as they are received, so that is real time information. Denise encourages you to use that as the most current and up to date information. Responsibilities for OD-2's vary from squadron to squadron.
- To make the best of meetings, learning best practices from other squadrons is better than re-inventing the wheel. Keep looking for better ways. Share ideas.

## **New Business and Resolutions**

D/C Denise Brooks, AP

- Problems exist with the publication of "Interlaker." Specifically when it went from a paper version to a website posting. Initially, the goal was to send members a postcard to alert them about the posting of the "Interlaker." This showed not to be effective because of inaccuracies. Not all members, especially new members were notified. Request from those who would still like a hard copy was low, as well. It is recommended that District revisit the process of moving from a paper publication to an electronic publication and what means will be used to let every member know when "The Interlaker" is available and posted.
- Another communication concern is the new member Welcome Letter from the District Commander. New members would get a letter, a sheet of photos of the squadron bridge members and made aware of the newsletter. D/C Brooks request the District Administrative Officer, District Secretary and District Assistant Secretary review the process and responsibilities and provide a report with their recommendations.
- D/Lt Chet Dunbar requested photos and information from the squadrons be sent to him on a regular basis so he can get them and it posted on the web.
- Additional information will be at the conference regarding terminating membership after 2 weeks of non-payment of dues. Looking to some changes to that process.
- Dawn Flynn, District PRO, reminded PR Officers to get their co-operative advertising stuff to her in the next week or so. Also squadron commander's emails need to be updated; she got a lot of returns on those she sent out.

- Frank has not seen district introduction letter and would appreciate a copy of it so he can include it in his orientation packet.

**For the Good of the District**

D/C Denise Brooks, AP

- Judy, commander of Port Huron shared information about local attractions and events going on at the museum and surrounding areas. Lunch is scheduled for noon.
- Assistant Secretary Rudy Sloop reminded everyone to fill out the red and white cards and leave them on the tables. Someone will pick them up. These cards are used for attendance, so be sure to fill them out correctly.
- Dick Jarmon asked everyone to take note of the flyer regarding CPS Western Ontario District Conference in the seat packets.
- Two boating classes are being organized in the St. Joseph area by South Bend Sail and Power Squadron. Two different marinas have been contacted. All the details are taken care of to successfully hold the classes.

**Benediction**

D/Lt Douglas Rocho, P

D/Lt Rocho spoke to the point that in Detroit, their members were family. He suggested that squadrons not only attempt to sale and market USPS to new members but also, in these hard times, that looking at retaining current members is adventurous. Why not spent a little of that money spent on new family members and spend it on keeping family members form going away. Maybe it's better to spend the money to hold on to "family-members" than it is to attract new ones. D/Lt Rocho delivered the benediction.

**Adjournment**

D/C Denise Brooks, AP

Meeting was adjourned.

**Commander's Challenge**

D/Lt/C James Draper, JN

D/Lt/C Draper asked everyone to stay for a quick Commanders Challenge.

Meeting adjourned 1135

Respectfully Submitted,

D/Lt/C Robyn D.M. Levene, AP  
Secretary  
District 9