

Status: Approved by unanimous consent at the 6/18/24 VTC board meeting.

May Board Meeting Minutes

Date: May 21, 2024 - 8-10:05pm Central

In attendance:

- **Officers**
 - **National Coordinator** Ron Miller
 - **Education Coordinator** Hazel Barton
 - **Secretary/Treasurer** Jenny Tison
- **Regional Coordinators:**
 - **Western:** Annelisa (EC) Moe
 - **Central:** Anmar Mirza
 - **South Central:** Geary Schindel
 - **North Eastern:** Jessica Van Ord
 - **Pacific Northwest:** Eddy Cartaya
 - **Eastern (outgoing):** Kurt Waldron
 - **Rocky Mountain:** Georgia Schneider
- **Other:**
 - **Eastern (incoming):** Kyle Mills
 - **NSS AVP** Emily Davis

Not in attendance:

- **South Eastern:** Philip Rykwaldar
- **Webmaster** Aaron Irons

Minutes:

1. Meeting called to order at 8:02pm Central by National Coordinator Ron Miller, with our [predetermined agenda](#).
2. **Board norms:** Jenny reviewed the previously agreed upon [board norms](#).
 - Ron will review next month. Geary will review in July.
3. **Oregon Level 1 Course Report** (Eddy)
 - Eddy reported on the first official VTC Level 1 Student course that occurred at his facility in Oregon from May 2-5, 2024.
 - i. 10 students, 5 different states
 - ii. All passed physical check-offs. One didn't pass the written exam.
 - iii. Systems used: 9 frog, 1 Mitchell, 6 bobbins, 4 microrack
 - iv. 4 VTC trainers + 2 specialists
 - v. 5 students paid for lodging
 - Eddy provided an overview of the day-by-day learnings from his feedback report, which he will send to the board [\[link\]](#).
4. **Youth Participation**
 - The board discussed if we should set a minimum age to attend a VTC course.
 - i. Action item: Geary will work on a youth policy.

- ii. Action item: Ron will ask potential insurers for input on whether teaching people less than 18 years old impacts our ability to procure insurance.
 - The board discussed if we should consider offering youth-focused VTC courses with perhaps a lower age minimum. The current VTC curriculum is set up for adult learners, and we are still rolling it out - so it is better to focus there for now. We may have a higher demand than we expect for youth-focused courses.
- 5. Personal-gear course policy - soft goods age limit?**
- From the curriculum committee: consider whether the VTC board wants to adopt a policy limiting course-participant use of personal-gear soft goods (esp. helmets and harnesses) to the respective manufacturer's stated lifespan (typically no longer than 10 years from manufacture).
 - i. See for reference new [NCRC gear guidelines](#).
 - Overall board discussion focused on having a common sense policy that asks students to follow manufacturer guidelines, with instructor-led gear inspections item-by-item to look for wear-and-tear, use patterns, taking the age of an item into consideration. Our materials tell students they are responsible for and have agency for their safety. We agreed that VTC trainers will need to role model following manufacturer guidelines.
 - Action items:
 - i. Ron to learn whether insurance will specifically require one option or another.
 - ii. Based on that, Ron will coordinate with NCRC - potentially with AVP oversight - to determine how best to synchronize or diverge policies.
- 6. Meeting minutes for 4/16/24:** Approved via unanimous consent. [\[Link\]](#)
- 7. Secretary/Treasurer's Report:**
- Jenny reviewed the [VTC financials](#).
 - i. Current bank account balance: \$4,980.
 - 1. With expected amounts, we should have \$4,035.
 - ii. We have used our full 2024-25 NSS allocation to cover our Level 1 curriculum printing (\$5,496) and supplemental printing (\$727).
 - 1. This was comprised of \$2K from the 2023-2024 NSS budget, \$4K from the 2024-2025 NSS budget, and an additional discretionary amount from the AVP budget of \$223.
 - iii. The Level 1 Student course in Oregon financials are finalized: VTC netted \$386.
 - We are moving our bank account to Chase Bank eventually.
 - Jenny is working with Berta from NCRC to design a more robust bookkeeping system.
 - Jenny has begun codifying the [Secretary-Treasurer responsibilities](#).
- 8. Education Coordinator report**
- Hazel discussed the informal Level 1 Student pilot that occurred from April 19-21, 2024 in Tuscaloosa at her home.
 - i. 6 students - 2 VTC trainers + 1 specialist
 - ii. Currently receiving feedback

- The curriculum committee is working on integrating trainer pilot input from last year into the trainer materials.
 - i. October v1 to board
 - ii. December v2 to board
- The proposed new trainer course will include an extra ½ day to cover anchor building
- We can't use Qualtrix to do an online post-test for students because it doesn't give results quickly enough.
- Note: As we get more versions of the curriculum, the standard practice is to make the prior version free.

9. Trainer pilot planning

- Location likely at Brian Krebs' facility in Sewanee. Insurance could be provided by Direct Action Vertical if NSS cannot provide insurance. Has trees, cliff, indoor facility, on-site camping. Does not have power other than a generator.
- Hazel could make hats/t-shirts for the pilot
- Discussed options to print trainer material, potentially - mail them a student book + Hazel printing supplemental trainer materials for \$300.
 - i. Another option going forward would be to see if Sheridan could print a binder version of the interleaved option
- Reviewed potential invitees

10. Convention activities planning

- We will have a table in the gym where the Vertical Section is located. If we have the supplies, we can make cowstails in return for them filling out a form.
- EC will be updating the flyers. Can put at our table and also at the Gauntlet.

11. Action item review:

- Printing
 - i. JVo needs a copy of the cover and will write a blurb. She will make sure it's there.
 - ii. JESSICA - Understand how discount codes for VTC students will work at the NSS Bookstore. – Will try to talk to Amanda/Scott
 - iii. JESSICA - Understand if it would be possible to pre-order the book via the NSS Bookstore - if so, would ideally submit for the NSS news and have to sell at convention. EC can help with an advertisement.
 - iv. JESSICA - Make sure the bookstore sets aside 100 copies for VTC course takers.
- Insurance - still working with several carriers on this. Putting together contingency plans.
- Website committee - EC will head. The curriculum committee will add a person. They'll meet in June. Georgia can help.
- Ron will get Hazel guidance for trainer pilot on how to teach official VTC classes

12. Use of VTC Courses statement

- Ensuring board is familiar with this statement:
<https://caves.org/vtc/vtc-organizations-agencies-a-note-about-credentials/>
- Georgia will meet with Ron to get help fielding questions on this statement

13. Meeting adjourns at 10:09pm Central.