

Indianapolis Rally Governing Board Meeting

There was a National Director briefing at 8:00-8:30 Tuesday morning.

This was immediately followed by a workshop to discuss the main (i.e. contentious) items of the meeting tomorrow. As far as I can tell, this workshop was not on the calendar (allegedly there was a notice about it somewhere but I never found it). This workshop continued till 11:00 am, and resumed at 1:00 pm and continued till about 3:30 pm. Thus the Governing Board meeting took up most of 2 days; however it rained most of the day on the Tuesday, so we would not have done anything else and the exhibits did not open till 1:00 pm Wednesday.

I was sent a book for the Governing Board meeting that contains the Standing Rules, the agenda, the budget, most of the reports, and two sets of proposals to be voted on. These two sets of proposals both starting at number 1, which occasionally caused confusion.

The Workshop on Tuesday

The items discussed at the workshop were as follows:

Proposal 1: this says two people on the same member number cannot both hold Executive Board office at the same time. In simple terms this to prevent a husband and wife concurrently holding Executive Board office. It is not known why this was introduced (it was made apparent at the meeting on Wednesday it is because of George and Maxine Shrimp), and allegedly so far there has never been a need for it. Further, if a couple could easily circumvent this if they really wanted to by each getting their own member number (at the cost of paying two memberships per year). They presumably would still each own 1/2 of the motor home, so they would be eligible to join separately. There seemed to be at most limited support for this proposal.

Proposal 2: This extends the categories for non-discrimination for FMCA membership from "race, age, gender, national origin, religion, marital status, or disability" to "race, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, religion, color, marital or family status, nationality, disability, or political beliefs".

Some speakers said that certain parts of the new version would be unacceptable to members of their chapter (e.g. because of their religious beliefs for religion based chapters), and the chapter could end up leaving the FMCA. Further, it was suggested that including "political beliefs" could open a can of worms and be subject to lawsuits, e.g. from just one person who complains that the FMCA has not changed to match their beliefs/whatever, and because these days you can claim almost anything is part of your political beliefs. In addition, it was felt to be unnecessary political correctness and regulation - chapters should have some leeway to be for specific groups, beliefs, etc. There was almost no support for this proposal.

Proposal 3: This is to change "motor coach" to "recreational vehicle" in the Articles of Incorporation and the Constitution. I think the main motivation behind this is that membership has fallen from 129,000 to 73,000 (and the average age of FMCA members has steadily increased, and is now 72). Hopefully allowing towable into the FMCA will introduce younger

families, with kids, into the FMCA. If this change is approved at the Governing Board meeting then it would have to be put to a vote of the full membership.

The bylaws cannot be changed to match this year since no notice of the required changes has been given to the membership or board. Hence the matching bylaw changes will have to wait till next year (at Gillette). Again there was a good amount of discussion, but I think the general consensus was that this will be approved in the vote tomorrow.

Definition of Recreational Vehicle:

Proposal 3 above requires that the bylaws be amended to include a definition of "recreational vehicle". The first version proposed was:

1. It is designed for the sole purpose of recreational travel.
2. It is classified as one of the following:
 - a) "Travel trailer" or "house vehicle" which means a non self-propelled recreational vehicle that does not exceed overall length of forty feet, exclusive of bumper and tongue or coupling. "Travel trailer" does not include a tent-type fold-out camping trailer.
 - b) "MotorHome" means a self-propelled recreational vehicle that has no fifth wheel and has four or more wheels.
 - c) "Fifth wheel trailer" means a vehicle that is of such size and weight as to be movable without a special highway permit; that is constructed with a raised forward section that allows a bi-level floor plan; that is designed to be towed by a vehicle equipped with a fifth-wheel hitch ordinarily installed in the bed of a truck.
 - d) Does not include truck campers, watercraft, aircraft, or off-road vehicles.
 - e) Where all of the above Recreational Vehicles are constructed with permanently installed facilities for refrigerated food storage, cooking and consuming of food, sanitation, and sleeping.

My personal opinion is that this was too complicated - it has too much detail in the specifications, and the more detail you have, the more likely you are to run into problems or need to make changes in the future.

After considerable discussion, the second version was:

The term "Recreational vehicle," as used herein, is defined as a self-contained wheeled vehicle that contains the conveniences of a home, including cooking, sleeping, and permanent sanitary facilities.

(Does not include truck campers, watercraft, aircraft, tent-type fold-out trailers or off-road vehicles.)

It is not clear why some people object to truck campers, which these days are sophisticated campers with many amenities, all be it a little cramped. I think the same applies to fold-out (pop-up) trailers (indeed, the second pop-up we owned would meet the above requirements). Further, personally I think it is unlikely that aircraft or watercraft would be able to attend FMCA rallies, due to lack of runways or water access to rally sites 😊.

The final version became:

The term "Recreational vehicle," as used herein, is defined as a self-contained wheeled vehicle that includes permanently installed cooking, sleeping, and sanitary facilities.

If the above Proposal 3 is passed then this definition is to be the "guidance" for the FMCA when admitting new members after December 1 2017, and there is to be motion to be discussed in the Governing Board meeting tomorrow that would require the Charter and Bylaws committee to put this up, as a change to the bylaws, at Gillette in July 2018, at which point it would become FMCA "law".

Governing Board Meeting on Wednesday

There were 281 people present in the morning, 274 in the afternoon, out of a possible 380 eligible. Some items require a simple majority of vote cast, others require at least 65% majority.

- A motion was made to change standing rule 7 to increase the 2 minute limit on a speaker to 3 minutes. Motion failed.
- The standing rules were accepted.
- The agenda was accepted.
- Reading of the minutes was waived, as is permitted by the rules.

Executive director report: Verizon project - all agreed, then Verizon said it was a reseller arrangement, but as a non-profit, FMCA cannot resell a government contract. So this was abandoned. There was mention of another possible program, but no details yet.

Finance report - \$20,000 over budget so far, and apparently there \$130,000 loss on the March rally in Chandler because of higher than expected attendance (about 1000 coaches more than budgeted) and the cost of the facility. There were higher grounds costs because of higher attendance; also the attendance being higher resulted in better entertainment with higher expenses. However there has been some shifting items around in the financial statements, resulting in an apparent profit of \$120,000 😞. I do not pretend to understand this arithmetic.

The FMCA magazine is losing money because advertising sales are down. It was suggested that people could download the digital version, and not have the printed copy, thus saving the FMCA money - indeed, I am seriously considering this option.

As a side issue, I talked to two people about the down-loadable PDF version. I pointed out that the page numbers in the table of contents and the index are not "hot" links, nor are URLs in advertisements. I said that it would be more popular with an advertiser if clicking on their URL resulted in the advertiser's web page being opened. Whether anything come of this remains to be seen.

Proposal #1: (not having a husband wife on the Executive Board at the same time). It was admitted that this came about because Maxine Shrimp has been elected, and George Shrimp may also be present on the board for one year. There was more discussion rehashing yesterday's.

The proposal failed by about 70%.

Proposal #2: (change of the wording about discrimination against membership).

There was further brief discussion, all against it. In addition, it was suggested that this be reduced to just "Membership shall be open to any family unit or individual"; however such a change cannot be made now because the board and membership have not been given the appropriate notice (but it may be next year).

This proposal was rejected almost unanimously.

Proposal #3: (allow towables into the FMCA).

The rules of the meeting were suspended so as to discuss the "new business" item on definition of "Recreational vehicle" before actually discussing the proposal. Again rehashed some of yesterday's discussion - someone wanted to restore the exclusions rejected yesterday. Eventually this was withdrawn, and the final definition above was approved, together with wording requiring the Charter and Bylaws committee to put this up, as a change to the bylaws, at Gillette in July 2018

Back to the proposal: more rehash of yesterday's discussion. A motion for a written ballot was rejected. The card vote was obviously > 65%, but someone insisted on a counted vote. As agreed at our chapter meeting, I voted for this proposal. There were 226 yes votes, 45 no votes, so it passed by ~84%.

Policy and Procedure Committee

(*Note* - the proposals 1, 2 and 3 below are not the same as the three proposals detailed above)

Proposal #1 - P&P 1016: passed

Proposal #2 - P&P 1017: voted down because the bylaws are not being changed to match.

Proposal #3 - P&P 1018: voted down

Proposal #4 - P&P 2005: withdrawn because the first Proposal #1 above was rejected

Proposal #5 - P&P 3010: withdrawn because the first Proposal #2 above was rejected

Others were clerical changes, and not voted on.

Membership/Services:

There now is a second tire program with Continental, in addition to Michelin.

Members can buy cars through Tadd Jenkins Chevrolet.

Youth Committee:

They have introduced trips for kids at rallies. For suggested 200 kids at a future rally, more support (people, namely volunteers) and resources are required.

National President's Report:

He Reminisced some events and features of his tenure as President.

Actions:

Winter 2019 convention: should this be in Pomona, CA, instead of Chandler, Az (or even Tucson, AZ). There were suggestions of financial issues with Pomona, but allegedly, in the end, the FMCA lost only \$15,000 last time they went to Pomona. Chandler is a large facility, but has serious infrastructure problems (like no buildings or roads). The Indian community is trying to get the state fair there, in which case there would be new buildings, roads, etc., but it will be perhaps 5 years before this is complete. Tucson is not large enough for an FMCA international convention.

It was suggested that a (winter) convention be held in a southern central US state. However, most such states have laws that make this not viable. Allegedly in Texas and Oklahoma, law states that RV vendors must be from within 70 miles of the rally site - this kills off having all the out of state motor home vendors, which would mean a major financial hit. There a number of other states with similar restrictions. In the FMCA South Central Area, the only possible state is Arkansas.

Eventually the motion was amended and approved so it allows the Executive Board to negotiate the suitable deal at an appropriate site

Summer 2020 convention: it has been suggested the FMCA rally goes to Rock Springs, WY instead of Redmond, OR. Rock Springs is over 6000 feet elevation, which can give problems to those with breathing issues, CPAP machines, etc. This motion was struck, because there is already an agreement to hold it in Redmond.

New Business:

A motion proposed and approved to change Chapter advice to match the results of the rejection of Proposal 2, i.e. Remove some of the non-discrimination wording.

Budget:

Voted to have a budget with no dues increase (there was 1 vote against 😊).

The budget discussion included questions about marketing. The FMCA was losing about 5000 members per annum. They now employ Marketing Corporation of America since the FMCA has no in-house marketing expertise. The loss has stopped - last year the FMCA had a net gain of about 600 members, and there was about 2000 net gain in membership in the last quarter (the largest quarterly gain ever).

The budget was approved unanimously

Election:

There were only two elections, since the other two had only a single unopposed candidate. The elections were by written ballot.

President: Jon Walker was elected unopposed.

National Senior Vice President: Rett Porter was proposed by the nominating committee, Elwood (Jack) Mayberry nominated from the floor - he is the President of Rocky Mountain Area and hence is already on the Board. I voted for Rett Porter, on the grounds that the Executive Board would then contained experienced people.

Rett Porter was elected 185 to 87.

Secretary: Gaye Young was elected unopposed.

Treasurer: John Reynolds and Frank Taber were proposed by the nominating committee. There was general agreement that both candidates were very well qualified for the job. As agreed at our chapter meeting, I voted for John Reynolds.

John Reynolds was elected 139 to 135.