

1 AMERICAN MOUNTAIN GUIDES ASSOCIATION

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4 ANNUAL MEETING ROUND TABLE - BOARD LISTENING SESSION

5 October 24, 2014

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9 The annual meeting of was taken at 2115 13th
Street, Columbine Room, Boulder, Colorado, on October
10 24, 2014 at 6:29 p.m. before Shauna T. Dietel,
Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public
11 within Colorado.

1 MS. WINTER: So to get started, I would
2 like to invite the current 2014 board of directors up
3 to the front of the room, please.
4 (Applause)
5 MS. WINTER: We're taking a moment to
6 introduce each of these individuals, but before we do
7 that, I want to take a moment to introduce the
8 incoming board members who will be seated at the
9 board meeting on Sunday.
10 So if you can stand. And, Sarah, I know
11 you're there elevating your leg, but Sarah Carpenter,

12 Eric Larson, Geoff Unger, and Kurt Hicks. These are
13 going to be our new board members, as well as Rob
14 Hess, who was also reelected to the board.

15 So I'm going to pass the mic to each board
16 member to just do quick introduction of their name
17 tenure with the board.

18 MR. DELAP: Karsten Delap, and this is my
19 second year on the board, first session.

20 MR. GOLDMAN: Charles Goldman, third year
21 -- second year?

22 MS. WINTER: Second year.

23 MR. GOLDMAN: Second year on the board.

24 MS. WINTER: Okay. Don't give your tenure.

25 MR. MARTIN: I have been told by Dan not to

1 stand up.

2 Jason Martin, and this is my -- just

3 starting my second year on the board.

4 MR. NORDSTROM: I'm Dan Nordstrom. I'm not

5 standing. It's the end of my first year, and what a

6 first year it's been.

7 MR. ROSSI: Silas Rossi. End of the

8 first year as well. Excited for a couple more.

9 MS. BURHARDT: Majka Burhardt. This is

10 the end of my sixth year on the board.

11 MR. HESS: Rob Hess. I did some terms in

12 the two thousands and was technical director, and

13 then came back around to the board my second term.

14 MR. REMSBERG: Hi, everyone. I'm Dale

15 Remsberg. Technical director. I was through my --

16 halfway through my second term and then became

17 technical director and serve on the board as that

18 position.

19 Thanks for being here.

20 MR. DISSER: I'll second that, Dale.

21 Thanks for everyone being here.

22 I'm Nate Dissler. It's my third year on the

23 board, but outgoing.

24 MR. POBORSKY: Hi. I'm Mike Poborsky.

25 This is my -- the start of my second year on the

1 board.

2 And thanks everyone for coming.

3 MR. MOLITORIS: Hi. I'm Marty Molitoris.

4 This is my fifth year on the board.

5 Thanks for coming.

6 MR. GRANT: Hi. King Grant, and the start

7 of my fourth year on the board.

8 MR. FARMER: Hi. My name is Matt Farmer,

9 but my wife is listening, Margaret Wheeler

10 who's in that little silver cylinder.

11 She wanted to get all the good feedback. So she

12 can't talk back, so take advantage.

13 MS. WINTER: She's very pregnant, for those

14 of you who don't know.

15 I think you guys deserve to understand a

16 little bit of the structure of our board. I'm not

17 going to spend too much time on it.

18 But for those who don't know, one-third of

19 your board is appointed by current board members, and

20 oftentimes those are people from outside of the
21 guiding industry who can bring in professional
22 expertise to help guide the organization. So
23 anywhere from legal counsel to financial background
24 to marketing background to CEOs of corporations. But
25 people who can really help us continue to learn from
1 the outside.

2 Which is -- for those of you who were in
3 Grant's presentation yesterday, he's spoke to the
4 importance of that. So it is a critical piece of our
5 organization.

6 And then the remaining two-thirds, a

7 majority of the board, is member-elected board

8 members. Those are predominantly the guide-elected

9 members who sit on our board.

10 There are two employee director seats. So

11 Dale, as technical director, does have a seat on the

12 board. And I, as executive director, have a seat on

13 the board as well.

14 We have voting rights. But there are

15 many things from which we abstain, just given the

16 nature of potential conflict and not necessarily

17 within our purview.

18 So hopefully that provides a little context

19 to the representation we have here this evening.

20 It's really important for you guys to

21 understand that this is -- these are the people who

22 govern our organization, and they're a really

23 critical piece of the puzzle.

24 While you guys are the voice and also

25 extremely critical piece of the puzzle, this is how

1 things get done. And that's why we wanted to make

2 sure you guys had the opportunity tonight to speak to

3 the board directly.

4 Because in our organizational structure,

5 the membership sits above the board of directors, and

6 so we take the input from all of our stakeholders,

7 which are very diverse, and try our best to execute

8 on it in a way that advances guiding in this country.

9 And that's really our -- our goal.

10 So tonight it's really important -- this is

11 the opportunity for you guys to speak to the board,

12 to ask questions.

13 This is positioned primarily as a listening

14 session, because there are a lot of questions that I

15 am fairly confident we will not be able to answer

16 tonight.

17 And that doesn't mean those questions

18 aren't important. It just means that there is a

19 better time and place for us to respond to those

20 questions.

21 And one of my favorite things going on here

22 is we actually have a court reporter who is

23 documenting everything that comes out of this meeting

24 to ensure our ability to respond appropriately to you

25 guys' concerns and questions.

1 So we will do our best to answer

2 straightforward questions that are fact based, but I

3 want to remind you there will be questions that we

4 won't be able to answer tonight. But we will do what

5 we can.

6 So I just encourage you to please come up

7 here. The primary function is to listen. We want to

8 hear what you have to say, and there will be lots of

9 other opportunities for us to respond to a lot of it.

10 So Scott Massey, current advocacy director,

11 is going to go through the ground rules for tonight.

12 MR. MASSEY: Howdy, you all.

13 Just in order to enjoy -- enjoy a little

14 bit of smooth flow, make sure that everyone has the

15 chance to speak, if they want to, we just wanted to

16 put a few grounds rules out there.

17 Hopefully you're not considering them rules

18 of engagement, but just things to ensure

19 that we're being professional and moving this session

20 along and giving the board the best feedback, if we

21 can.

22 So we're going to start off -- I was hoping

23 for a lot more people to sign up, but we've got five.

24 So we're going to start off with the -- with the

25 first five going through and being able to speak for

1 a minute, address the board.

2 And then if there are other folks that

3 would like to speak, we can moderate that. And just

4 raise your hand, and we will select people to speak.

5 Obviously, please limit comments to your

6 turn. Please don't interrupt anyone who's speaking.

7 Keep your comments professional.

8 We're trying not to make this into a

9 debate tonight. Just a chance to -- just really a

10 chance to express your thoughts and views to the

11 board.

12 So when it is your turn to speak, because
13 we do have someone recording this, if you could state
14 your name clearly for the record, that would be
15 great.

16 And, also, if you can, when you're
17 speaking, try and speak not too rapidly, not to
18 horrendously fast, so we can actually get all of your
19 thoughts recorded, that would be great.

20 So that looks like about it.

21 MS. WINTER: So to start, do we want to
22 start with the list?

23 Okay.

24 Mark Puleio, first to the podium.

25 There is actually -- okay. So if we can --

1 the members can use this microphone, so I can pass

2 this one to the board.

3 MR. PULEIO: Okay. Folks, really

4 appreciate your time in graciously welcoming our

5 voice here tonight. I know it's a really big deal,

6 and I'll try to keep it brief.

7 Just recognizing the fact that we seem to

8 be at the largest we have been as an association, and

9 I just recognize the fact that -- I'd like to tip my

10 hat to Mark Chauvin for working really hard

11 this past year as president, and the fact that he had

12 to follow all the shoes of a couple of people that

13 were able to do so much service for us.

14 And, you know, you just -- you've got to

15 recognize how hard the presidents work and how many

16 years that some are able to give. And that I don't

17 want it to be a marginalized position where people

18 feel like they have to do so much work and not have

19 any support or backing.

20 So I just want to bring to the table that I

21 do recognize that most co-ops -- or sorry --

22 non-profits work as -- don't pay their presidents,

23 but, perhaps, we are at a time that we could

24 reevaluate that.

25 And at the same time, I was thinking about

1 funds. Maybe, perhaps, it's a time where it's a

2 clear delineation between the co-op moving forward

3 with reciprocity.

4 Because I just don't want our association

5 to forget that we promised all of our colleagues and

6 the rest of the world that we would gain reciprocity

7 in that, and as association we've failed to do that.

8 And that with the new mission statement

9 that you all have accepted, it's moving forward with

10 education, which is great. That's what we need. But

11 maybe at this point it's a time that we recognize

12 that the co-op is there to maybe be the vehicle to

13 provide foreign guides. So maybe there's money to

14 help out, because it's so grassroots.

15 So just maybe bring that to the table, talk

16 about it, see what you think.

17 And thanks for your time.

18 MS. WINTER: Thanks, Mark.

19 Steve Banks.

20 Actually, can I add something? As you come
21 to the podium, if you would like, add what level of
22 certification you hold and if you're affiliated with
23 the AMGA in any way.

24 MR. BANKS: I'm Steve Banks, and I am an
25 American Mountain Guide and a member of the
1 instructor team as well.

2 First off, I think it's a little bit
3 unfortunate that it seems a lot of people in the room
4 weren't aware of the format of how this was going to
5 go down, and that maybe weren't prepared with
6 comments.

7 But I think you should all take the next
8 few minutes to think about things that are important
9 to you and where you want the AMGA to go. And look
10 at this as an opportunity to talk to the people who
11 can make these things happen, and let them know what
12 you think.

13 A couple of things I've been thinking about
14 mirrors a lot of what Mark said. I think that our
15 president, as well as our technical director, both
16 have a direct link to the guiding industry, to the
17 guides, the training, the certification process, as

18 well as a client perspective, and know what the

19 market is looking for.

20 And I think that's very important and

21 should be respected more within the AMGA and on the

22 board, and that they should have more of a voice.

23 And that their voice should be weighted as

24 heavy or heavier than many of the other voices,

25 because they do know the industry inside and out.

1 I think the AMGA has done a great job of

2 growing our training and certification process. But

3 what happens next with somebody who's gone through

4 the full process? And what we're seeing is there's a

5 mass exodus of these people.

6 Our best trained guides in the country hit

7 the road, and they're out of here, because it's hard

8 to be a guide in the U.S.

9 And we really need to consider, what do we

10 do once we've been through the process and we're

11 ready for that next step. And how does our

12 organization support us there.

13 Obviously, the most -- the most obvious

14 answer there is access, which the AMGA has been

15 working at. And we need to continue working in that

16 direction towards access, as well as other things.

17 Support network for guides, whether it's through

18 insurance or accidents or just helping people grow

19 business. A very important thing that the AMGA can

20 help us with, if we direct them that way.

21 I think our membership needs to be much

22 more active and know what's going on in our industry

23 and within the AMGA.

24 I consider myself to be a little bit of an

25 insider, and yet constantly surprised by the avenues

1 for which I get information. We have a great Guides

2 Bulletin that sends us a lot of really good

3 information, but might not tell us what's going on

4 inside the board.

5 I would like there to be a better avenue

6 for you guys to give us information, and I would

7 encourage everybody here, and encourage all the other

8 guides that aren't here, to be more active.

9 Write these guys. Call them up. Talk to

10 them. Seek them out. Buy them a beer. Pick their

11 brains, and find out what they're all about.

12 A lot of us in this room, I'm sure, voted

13 for a lot of these people that are sitting up here,

14 and a lot of us probably read their bios, a couple of

15 paragraphs that says what they were about.

16 And we said, Sure. Sounds great. We'll

17 put these people up here.

18 But then we need to reinforce that with

19 what are they actually doing, and how does that jibe

20 with what we want them to do. And it's really

21 important that we have that follow-up. We're still a

22 small enough organization that we can have that

23 direct communication.

24 MS. WINTER: Jeremiah Meizis.

25 MR. MEIZIS: Meizis (pronouncing).

1 MS. WINTER: Meizis. Sorry.

2 MR. MEIZIS: I'm Jeremiah, certified rock

3 guide from Colorado Springs.

4 A little less altruistically-oriented

5 question, but I signed up for a guide course and

6 got wait-listed. It's the second course I've been

7 wait-listed for. And as I progress in this program,

8 I am starting to wonder if one of the cruxes of

9 finishing it will actually be the cost and actually

10 the -- the logistics of getting into the classes and

11 -- and getting through the program.

12 And I'm -- I'm wondering how you guys plan

13 to address increased demand for some of these

14 courses, especially the more popular entry-level

15 courses. And how you're going to help some guides

16 who are already guiding and trying to expand their

17 operation to different terrain and -- and meet their

18 educational needs.

19 So that's pretty much it.

20 MS. WINTER: I can respond to one part of

21 it.

22 I know this is a topic of discussion at the
23 upcoming board meeting, and it's something that is
24 top of mind for the administrative and the technical
25 branches of the organization.

1 We realize the -- the struggles in which
2 our members have sometimes in getting in our
3 programs, and it is something that we are working on
4 and we're very well aware of.

5 And the board is going to be given a
6 thorough report about our carrying capacity and some
7 other issues at this upcoming board meeting.

8 Anyone want to add anything else?

9 MR. MEIZIS: I'll ask you questions later.

10 MS. WINTER: Thank you.

11 Mark Smiley.

12 MR. SMILEY: Mark Smiley, American Mountain

13 Guide, just current. Just this spring.

14 So this process, for me, was an eight-year

15 process, and the whole time, much like going through

16 college, I created a lot of expectations for myself.

17 Like, when I was in college, Oh, I'm going

18 to graduate and get all these job offers and, you

19 know, it's going to be smooth sailing from here.

20 Similar to once you get your pin. You
21 know, I had this dream of just being handed a sheet
22 of paper with 1,000 people's rich -- you know, rich
23 people's name on it that want to go climbing with me.
24 That hasn't happened just yet. Still
25 waiting for that.

1 But, seriously, though, the -- the question
2 I have is, does the AMGA, as an organization, see
3 marketing their members, specifically their certified
4 members, whether it's SPI, or American Mountain
5 Guide, to the public?

6 You know, is that part of what -- you know,

7 what you are tasked with?

8 And, if so, how is that being implemented

9 in a way that when I write my, you know, membership

10 check, I can say, This is what I'm getting, this is

11 where I'm getting it, and this is what I'm getting.

12 And, Man, I will definitely not skip writing my

13 membership check now that I'm done with the

14 educational part of things.

15 And -- and if it's not part of the -- the

16 mission of the AMGA directly -- and that -- I think

17 that that's a fine thing. Like, I think that you

18 should -- whatever you do, do it well. And if it's

19 -- as opposed to doing a lot of things poorly.

20 If it's not part of what you're tasked with

21 doing, could there be ways -- that as the groups out

22 here get together, could there -- could the AMGA be a

23 catalyst for people to get together to help promote

24 their micro LLCs?

25 Because, you know, we all know the big

1 companies that -- I myself started one of those, but

2 now that I have my pin, I want to be my own little

3 LLC. And I can only imagine that this -- ten years

4 from now there's going to be ten times the number of
5 people that want to, you know, go out and do their
6 own thing.

7 And if there was some support for that,
8 primarily from a marketing with standpoint, so you
9 actually have clients, is that in the pipes at all?

10 MS. WINTER: I can address part of that
11 question.

12 Yes, the AMGA absolutely believes in
13 marketing and promotion of our membership and of our
14 credentialed guides and accredited businesses.

15 And the things that were doing right now

16 are -- are very tactical. You'll look any rock and

17 ice or climbing magazine, typically, and there is an

18 ad that says, Is your -- or hire guides, become a

19 guide.

20 We used to have ads that ran that said, Is

21 your guide certified?

22 But we are running ads. We ran an ad in

23 the U.S.A. Today publication that was, Hire a guide,

24 become a guide, directing them to our website.

25 We are currently developing a new database

- 1 that is going to have a much more robust, "Hire a
- 2 guide" section where you guys -- when this launches
- 3 at the first of the year, you're going to be able to
- 4 complete your full profile with photo. And it will
- 5 show up on our website, and there's going to be
- 6 different search functions for the general public.
- 7 They can search for guides by areas lived.
- 8 So there will be a state map. So it will be very
- 9 interactive. They can click on Colorado, and it pull

10 up any guides that work there or live there. You can

11 search by discipline. You'll be able to search by

12 name as well.

13 So those are a couple of the things --

14 immediate things that we are doing to continue to

15 promote our membership.

16 But I think it's important to mention that

17 membership with the AMGA -- we are a certifying body,

18 and in any other certifying body, people maintain

19 their member dues to keep their license.

20 And part of your dues -- a good part of

21 them go towards -- well, for those that are American

22 Mountain Guides, goes directly back to the IFMGA,

23 which is part of our responsibility.

24 And then, additionally, to being able to

25 use AMGA trademark and AMGA name in your own

1 marketing, and that is standard practicing for other

2 listening entities.

3 And we are looking to expand member

4 benefits. But there is certainly a certain amount of

5 things that we can do, and there's other things,

6 given our tax structure and organizational structure,

7 that we simply cannot do.

8 But that doesn't mean we don't want to hear
9 from you, or, absolutely, use -- we should
10 definitely all be working together to better market
11 ourselves.

12 So I would love to talk more with you about
13 that, Mark, because I think there's a lot of
14 potential.

15 And that's why it's so important for you
16 guys to give us feedback. And that's why with our
17 last brand audit we went through, we really are
18 focusing on for guides by guides. Guides should be
19 the face of the AMGA.

20 And that's what's important to me, and
21 that's what's important to the administration and to
22 the board. And we believe in that. But we need your
23 involvement to be able to really execute on that to
24 the level we need to. And we're just starting to,
25 with our new blog, our new print publication.

1 But, absolutely, it's a collective process
2 and our ears are open.

3 MR. ROSSI: Betsy, can I speak to that.

4 MS. BETSY: Sure.

5 MR. ROSSI: Yeah, it's a great question,

6 Mark. I appreciate it.

7 I'm not -- I can't speak for the whole

8 board, I guess -- which is what I'm doing here, I

9 guess.

10 I think -- I don't know if it's

11 -- if it's even something that's prudent that we have

12 a board directly market our guides individually. I

13 think a bigger part of that, perhaps, is the indirect

14 marketing we're doing with the recent brand re-audit.

15 We can kind of restructured our whole

16 market campaign. We're striving for guides to work

17 within the training guidelines, doing accreditation

18 standards, and guides to work within their scope of

19 practice, like we heard yesterday.

20 So to me, that's -- that's a bigger piece

21 of the equation that lets the public then choose what

22 they want to choose. If that makes any sense.

23 MS. WINTER: Great point. Thank you,

24 Silas.

25 All right. Joey Thompson. Another recent

1 pin earner.

2 MR. THOMPSON: Good evening everybody. My

3 name is Joseph Thompson, and I'm American Mountain

4 Guide.

5 And, you know, I've been involved in AMGA

6 since 2000, and it's, like, going on '15, 2015, and

7 we're doing this. Right? So I feel like it's really

8 important for us to work together as -- as a whole.

9 So as being a mountain guide, I found out

10 that a lot -- a lot of what I do is providing
11 security, right, not only to my fellow peers, my
12 clients, my office folks, if I go climbing with them
13 and you don't use somebody to finish and things like
14 that, right?
15 Collaboration as mountain guides, right?
16 As guides, together, we all need to collaborate and
17 rise together, and we're in this thing together,
18 right? And then providing mentorship or being
19 mentored, right? We all grow to together.
20 So I ask that the American Mountain Guides
21 Association, the board of directors, and mountain

22 guides, and guides -- certified guides, guides in

23 training, apprentices, aspirants we all

24 work together. All right.

25 And that one of the reasons why, from

1 seeing Grant's talk the other evening -- yesterday, I

2 said to myself, Wow, an accident had to happen for --

3 not only for the federal government to get involved,

4 the guiding services to collaborate, mountain guides

5 to collaborate, the US -- or the Canadian government.

6 I'm sure there's other people, schoolteachers, et

7 cetera, right? Now everybody got involved, right?

8 We don't want that to happen to our

9 association, right?

10 Okay. So do we want to have the federal

11 government step in, or OSHA, or any outsiders, third

12 parties to regulate our association?

13 So that's something that I'm concerned

14 about. I hope that folks here are concerned about

15 that as well, so that we provide not only a high

16 standard to our clients, to the board of directors,

17 to our -- to each other, right, so that we don't have

18 other people get involved in what we do.

19 And so what my question is to the board,

20 What are we doing that -- like, how are we working

21 together?

22 MR. NORDSTROM: Thanks, Joe.

23 She wants me to say this is a good idea. I

24 do not know what it is.

25 MS. WINTER: We're -- we're collaborating.

1 We're collaborating.

2 So that -- that was a great point, and I

3 think, let me say is this: The -- the board is

4 intensely focused. We spent two hours -- hard hours

5 at the Corner Bar today to govern this committee.

6 And -- and we really are. We acknowledge
7 that there's a lot of issues. There's a lot of
8 different perspectives on a lot of different issues,
9 and we really do have to come together as -- as a
10 community.
11 I think the other point that maybe is worth
12 making here is that -- which is why Betsy handed me
13 the mic, maybe -- I've been working with the larger
14 access group. It turns out the AMGA is but one of an
15 enormous range of organizations that -- that bring
16 groups of people onto public lands, and have to get
17 permits to do that.

18 And over the last year it's been really
19 interesting. Just as I joined this board -- and I
20 was on the access hunt before that -- different
21 things started coming up. And some of you may have
22 heard, the Wilderness Society, at the behest of a guy in
23 Seattle, Doug Walker, who's sort of big time
24 environmental philanthropist, who supports the Y,
25 they tried to get an exemption for 501-C-3s so they

1 didn't have to get permits.

2 And -- but, you know, the Mountaineers and

3 NOLS, they all thought it was a great idea.

4 And then the for-profit guys kind of pushed

5 back, and at the same time we started pushing our own

6 access ideas. And there started to be this sort of

7 complexity going on, and the acknowledgment that the

8 system is pretty broken and that there's a lot of

9 things that need to be fixed.

10 But if any single entity goes up and tries

11 to just fix its thing, we're not going to get very

12 far.

13 And the -- the feds, who -- you know, the

14 head of the parks, the head of the BLM, the head of

15 the Forest Service, they actually appreciate that

16 it's screwed up too.

17 But it's complicated, and it's so -- just

18 the fact that there's three organizations, right,

19 they can't -- we can't help them if -- if we're

20 coming in from all different perspectives from all

21 different angles.

22 So we formed this umbrella group,

23 basically, just in the last couple months called the

24 Outdoor Access Working Group, and includes the AMGA;

25 it includes the Wilderness Society; it includes Outward

1 Bound; it includes NOLS; it includes the Access

2 Fund. It's basically trying to represent the voice

3 of everybody from the outdoor industry.

4 And now we are going to come to the feds

5 and engage them in a sophisticated way, in a -- in a

6 -- in a durable way -- so we're do it over a long

7 period of time as opposed to just showing up and

8 complaining and leaving. And -- and -- which is kind

9 of what's happened.

10 So -- and what we've already had -- we've

11 already been invited to this -- there's a meeting of

12 the head of the Park Service and Forest Service, and

13 BLM called FICOR (*Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation –
added for clarification*), and in just two weeks we're going

14 to present to them. It's just beginning.

15 We're just -- we're basically just saying

16 we're here; we want to work with you. And there's a

17 lot things that need to get fixed, and we want to

18 work together.

19 We're not going to -- you know, people are

20 very afraid that we'll sort of threaten them, and

21 they'll push back and permits will get lost. And so

22 we don't want to do that.

23 But the good news is there is a lot of

24 energy and a lot of momentum. And there's also a lot

25 of reformers inside the -- inside the land management

1 system.

2 So you've got the woman running the Mt.

3 Baker National Forest that's doing a new forest

4 management plan with a much different perspective on

5 access and on guide access. So I think it's a really

6 interesting time.

7 And the reformer -- basically, the

8 reformers on the inside are coming out saying, We've

9 got to fix it. And now we've got this large group,

10 which the AMGA is a part of, to come in and say,

11 What's a -- what's a long -- what's a durable,

12 broad-based way to solve the issues of the outdoor --

13 the -- the university clubs, the non-profits, the

14 guides, the river guides and the whole universe. And

15 I think we'll be a much bigger political footprint,

16 which is to key to that.

17 MS. WINTER: Thanks, Dan.

18 All right. Patrick Ormond.

19 MR. ORMOND: My name is Patrick Ormond.

20 I'm an American Mountain Guide, and I'm here to be a

21 voice of moderation and humility.

22 The last thing our industry needs is to be

23 fractionalized by opposing stances. And I think the

24 first step in avoiding this is trans -- transparency

25 by and for all members.

1 So the first step is transparency by the

2 AMGA by making a concerted effort to educate all

3 members on the purpose and the structure of the board

4 so that we can work the most effectively within that
5 structure. And if that structure needs changed, then
6 we need to seriously look at that.

7 The second is complete divulgence of the
8 intent and purpose of this new Mountain Guide Service
9 Association.

10 Not everyone knows about this, but those
11 that do feel that their actions so far have been
12 divisive and damaging to the guide service and
13 guides' relationship, because guides don't have all
14 the info that we need, and we can only make

15 conjecture as to their intent. So it comes off as us

16 versus them.

17 I felt the most important take-away from

18 Grant's talk yesterday was to be humble and to listen

19 to all involved. We all need to come to the table

20 and work together as members of the American Mountain

21 Guides Association.

22 Thanks.

23 MS. WINTER: Thank you.

24 Okay. Nobody else is on this list, but --

25 great. You got it. Tim.

1 MR. BROWN: Tim Brown, American Mountain

2 Guide. You guys have been doing a really good job

3 focusing on a whole lot of things, in my opinion.

4 I would like to offer you up a job. Not

5 only am I an American Mountain Guide, but I'm Josie's

6 dad as of a couple years ago, and I'm having a hard

7 time getting life insurance.

8 At one point I remember that there was a

9 life insurance policy that the AMGA had organized.

10 Back then I was working on the certification, all my
11 money and time was going to that, and nowadays I need
12 some life insurance.

13 Any chance the board can put a little
14 effort into seeing if they could get, like, a group
15 policy in terms of membership benefits?

16 I think this is an easy job where maybe you
17 guys can knock it out of the park right away without,
18 you know, working for months and months and having
19 this durable approach that you follow up on and
20 follow up on.

21 Like Silas, I can't speak for the entire

22 membership. So I'm just real curious, would anybody

23 else be interested in this?

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Here, here. Yeah.

25 MR. BROWN: Please.

1 Thank you.

2 MS. WINTER: Anyone else? Don't be shy.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: This is your chance.

4 MS. WINTER: It is your chance.

5 Use that mic, if you don't mind.

6 If I don't know your name, I apologize.

7 MR. DUBRONYI: Hey, guys. My name is Jeff

8 Dubronyi. I'm SPI certified, and I've taken my ski

9 guide course.

10 I'm 23, and I'm new to this. I'm new to

11 the organization. I'm new to the community, and it's

12 been awesome so far.

13 But it also means that I haven't really

14 formed an opinion on all these issues that people are

15 talking about. Which, you know, I hope to do and I

16 will and, you know, I'm -- I'm growing at this.

17 And I think, you know, just as many

18 American Mountain Guides who are in this

19 organization, there are probably more guys like me

20 and girls like me, like young, trying to figure out,

21 trying to get into it.

22 And, you know, you guys are our role

23 models. Certainly getting through the program,

24 getting certified, getting my pin is something I

25 would like to do one day.

1 But, also, in the meantime, I still need to

2 pay the bills and still have money to take these

3 courses and grow as a guide and have some fun.

4 So I'm not sure that I have any specific

5 questions, but just from talking with other young

6 members like myself, I would appreciate if you guys

7 -- maybe you are doing this, but, you know, at least

8 let us know -- let us know how you're doing it,

9 representing kind of spectrum of opinions and ages

10 and levels of the certification of the process.

11 Because we're all members, and all in this

12 together and, ultimately, it's -- it's my future that

13 I'm hearing about today.

14 And that, you know, I don't want -- I don't

15 want to pay dues to an organize that's going to only

16 be working towards the benefits of people who have

17 already gone through the process, which -- which I

18 aspire to do one day. It's definitely in my -- in my

19 dreams.

20 And -- but I would also, you know, urge you

21 to -- whenever you make a step towards, you know,

22 access or something, try to figure out a way to

23 ensure that it's a sustainable process. Make sure

24 there's a way for young guides to move through --

25 move through getting access and getting jobs. Maybe

1 -- you know, maybe not as a lead guide or whatever.

2 Just consider the young -- the young members of this

3 organization.

4 And some -- you know, that's kind of from

5 what I've -- my discussions with other members like

6 myself.

7 And kind of on a broader level: I don't

8 really know a whole lot about what you guys are doing

9 in this regard, but just from what I've -- you know,

10 college economics courses or whatever, seems like the

11 long-term sustainability of an industry relies on

12 demand for that industry.

13 And so you mentioned, We don't know if it's

14 our job to -- to market guides as the AMGA. Maybe

15 it's the guides' responsibility themselves. I'm not

16 sure either.

17 And -- but it seems like, you know, for our

18 long-term survival, that we need to grow the

19 industry. That we need more guides working, and

20 that's going to ultimately provide the higher wage,

21 in addition to these other projects that we're

22 working on.

23 So maybe it is a discussion that we need to

24 have: Is the AMGA's role to increase demand for this

25 industry and to grow the industry. I'm not sure.

1 Thanks.

2 MS. WINTER: Thank you.

3 MR. SHANNON: Good evening. My name is

4 Austin Shannon. AMGA certified rock and alpine

5 guide.

6 Thank you for being here tonight. I think

7 the board's doing a great job.

8 With the hot topic of the accreditation

9 standards and everything, I just want to say that I

10 support that.

11 But I also -- you know, I think we're all

12 here because we care about mountain guiding in the

13 United States, and we care about professionalizing

14 our craft. It's super important.

15 We don't want to keep shooting holes in the

16 boat, right? Like, we're here to make a livable

17 wage, and we want to see that continue with the

18 future of mountain guiding in the United States.

19 So I would say to the board, like, keep

20 pushing those accreditation standards. It's super

21 important.

22 But with that, I work on the -- for the

23 guide service that, you know, stands to have a lot of

24 change in 2017. And so I want to kind of know, like,

25 how does the AMGA have my back when I stick my neck

1 out for becoming a certified guide and trying to

2 continue to work for this said guide service?

3 Or -- and, you know, it's kind of a very

4 hot topic amongst a lot of my coworkers that don't

5 support certification, and, you know, it's like I

6 kind of feel alone out there sometimes.

7 So just moving forward as the board, you

8 know, there's a lot of guides out there working
9 internationally in countries that are new to the
10 IFMGA so there's kind of some heated waters. And I'd
11 like to have you guys supporting me as I go out
12 there, as well as, you know, hopefully a newly
13 certified guide in the next couple of years.

14 MS. WINTER: Thank you.

15 MR. ROSSI: So I'm going to take a stab
16 at, like, the last two for a couple of seconds, and
17 hopefully I don't joke and forget my words and get
18 super nervous. It's really -- it's pretty
19 intimidating being up here in front of you all.

20 So, sorry.

21 Jeff, so I think it's really easy to -- so

22 you look at the board up here -- and my take on if

23 you're a board member is, like, you have the

24 resources and the finances to donate your time and

25 money to be up here doing this three times a year

1 traveling across the country.

2 So for all intents and purposes, compared

3 to most of -- most guides in the U.S., like, you

4 could probably say that we've, like, kind of made it,

5 right? Like, we're -- we're to a place -- I don't

6 mean that in an egotistical way. But, like, I'm not

7 struggling to make ends meet every single day like I

8 was for 15 years. Okay.

9 And I bring that up because it's -- it's

10 really easy to see, like, when someone's done with

11 that process, that they're only an IFMGA guide.

12 My first course was a top rope site manager course

13 in -- whatever it was a long time ago. So it's --

14 it's not that I don't have that perspective. But if

15 you're on the board, hopefully it's the case that you

16 have that perspective and many others along the way

17 that can help educate you and other members that are

18 just starting this thing and act in your best

19 interest.

20 And I think what it comes down to is -- is

21 working for the ability for guides to have bargaining

22 power. And I don't mean that in a negative way. I

23 mean that, like, you're worth something in this

24 industry. And it's really easy to -- it's really

25 easy for that not to be the case.

1 And in my mind, that comes down to, again,

2 like, these terrain guidelines and working within

3 your scope of practice and your -- your ability and

4 your capability and your skill set. Like, that's

5 really important.

6 And if we all do that, it gives value to

7 the other people that are working in other

8 disciplines or more disciplines or fewer disciplines.

9 It actually lets the public choose.

10 Among all these things, this common voice

11 that's saying, Yes, I'm trained for this terrain.

12 Like, I've been through courses; I've been through

13 peer review; I've been examined. Like, that's a

14 pretty big deal.

15 And I think as an organization, like, we're

16 growing and feeling all these growing pains, and it's

17 -- it's, like, turmoil, right? Like, we're, like, in

18 it right now.

19 And transitions -- just like rock climbing

20 and guiding, transitions are tough. Where you can

21 lose time; it's more dangerous; things get unclipped,

22 right? You don't see it.

23 Like, that's what we're in right now, and

24 we have to keep the big picture. And -- and you have

25 to be active, and you have to trust the people you

1 vote in on the board.

2 And I don't mean that to say, like, don't

3 be involved and don't push us, because that's what we

4 want. Like, I'm still in it. Like, every day I

5 think about this stuff, and I lose sleep over it and

6 it's a big deal.

7 And I'm not up here for me, because I --

8 yeah, I probably will have kids sometimes soon, and

9 I'll be right back to square one.

10 But -- but it's for the next generation,

11 right? It's not for people in this room even. It's

12 like the next people. It's like the people that are

13 having kids now can actually maybe someday have their

14 kids be guides, and not be like, Holy shit, that

15 person is going to be a guide. They'll never make

16 it.

17 But they're like, Oh, it's a sustainable

18 career; it's a professional career. And maybe we'll

19 make it happen like. Maybe it's worth it.

20 So that was kind of a roundabout way of

21 offering, hopefully, some perspective on that.

22 And I think hopefully, Austin, that

23 addresses your point as well that, like, that's what

24 we're striving for. And it may not always seem like

25 that. But that's, like, the big picture stuff,

1 hopefully, from my perspective.

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Next can I speak to

3 Austin's comment?

4 MS. BURHARDT: Pat, can I speak to your

5 comment first?

6 MR. ORMOND: Yeah, go ahead.

7 MS. BURHARDT: So I -- I didn't want that

8 to go without comment from the board. And I think

9 what you're asking for is something that we need to

10 hold very closely and clearly, that transparency is

11 one of our main goals.

12 And I think that that is -- it continues to

13 be tricky. I think that you can have a concept of

14 what transparency looks like, and then you have the

15 execution, and I think we can always do a better job

16 on that.

17 And I think that I would -- you know, is

18 the end of six years on this board, and one of the

19 things that I've seen really grow during that six

20 years is always trying to say, How can we communicate

21 this better? How can we get it out to our members?

22 But there's always problems that we run

23 into with trying to figure out, What is that medium?

24 Do people read the newsletter? Do they read an

25 E-blast?

1 I don't think that means you guys should
2 let us off the hook, and I think that the more that
3 the membership can ask, you know, Hey, what the heck
4 is this? I'm hearing about this. Why haven't I
5 heard about this? That's okay, and sometimes we need
6 that.
7 And sometimes what happens on a board level
8 is that we'll talk about things for a while, because
9 we're trying to understand what we want to do about

10 it, and what we should do as responsible stewards of

11 the AMGA about it.

12 And, you know, sometimes you can talk too

13 long about things before you talk -- before you

14 address them to the public.

15 And I think it's a little bit of a

16 give-and-take, and I think we're learning how to do

17 that dance. But damn straight, we could do it

18 better, and I think that we should always have that

19 as our goal.

20 And I think that people who are on this

21 board believe in that wholeheartedly, but keep

22 pushing us. And I will help you keep pushing us when

23 I'm in your seat next year.

24 MS. WINTER: Thank you, Majka.

25 Patrick, maybe --

1 MR. ORMOND: I'll come up.

2 Hey, Austin, you've got to know we all have

3 your back. We're all -- all of us in this room,

4 we've got to preach the gospel. We are members of

5 this organization. We all understand the benefits of

6 our training and certification.

7 And it's our duty as members to inform

8 people that aren't on board that as a profession,

9 this is what we, as their peers and coworkers, expect

10 of them. So we've all got your back.

11 MS. WINTER: I'm going to add to what

12 Majka said. This is more of a request for input

13 from the membership, because in the eight years that

14 I've been with the AMGA, one of our greatest

15 struggles is figuring out how to communicate to you

16 guys.

17 And it is the office who is responsible for

18 being the messenger. It's really hard, and at times

19 really frustrating, because we think we're doing all

20 the right things to get you the information you need,

21 and it's not working.

22 And we've invested a lot of money in our

23 brand audit to help figure out what can we do better.

24 How can we message things?

25 But if there's any insight into how we

1 could be better communicating to you, please let us

2 know. Because it is, it's one of our greatest

3 struggles. And we have come up with the blog and the

4 Guide Bulletin, and we're trying to do more direct

5 communication.

6 But we want to make sure we're getting you

7 the information that you want to hear, and we're

8 doing it in a way that you hear it.

9 Part of me thinks a lot of that's not

10 coming through reading news bulletins and other print

11 publications or E-news publications.

12 It comes in the field. It comes through

13 beers at the bar after a day out climbing, after a

14 day on an AMGA program. That's where the majority of

15 the communication happens.

16 And so I think organizationally we need to

17 take a hard look at how we can communicate back to

18 the membership, because it needs to change, and we

19 need to make sure you're getting a consist message.

20 Because what happens is there's very much

21 fractured information that gets imparted on you guys

22 when you're out there in the field or on AMGA

23 programs. And I think it's really important for us

24 to make sure you have a consistent message so you can

25 trust the organization that is representing you.

1 So please, send us feedback. I mean it.

2 MR. REMSBERG: Betsy, can I have the mic?

3 So one of the things I've been working on

4 is just trying to link the office staff to the
5 technical staff quite a bit more by spending a lot
6 more time in the office and working a lot more
7 closely with Betsy in creating strong messaging for
8 our instructor team members so that when they're in
9 field or on courses the message is clear and not
10 fractured.

11 And so I've been working on that for three
12 years. It's going to take a long time. I think it's
13 getting better, but I would also encourage you to
14 approach me if you have ideas about how to make that
15 more structured over time.

16 Because as you know, when you're on a
17 course with Chauvin somewhere and then you're on
18 course with Rob somewhere, you might hear something
19 different.

20 And so one of my goals is to try and create
21 a more consistent message if you're an instructor
22 team, which is 39 strong now and -- and growing. So
23 I have a lot of -- I have a pretty big staff working
24 underneath me, and so that's a -- that's a -- that's
25 a challenge. So -- but that is something on my radar

1 and I'm working hard on.

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I address that

3 quick -- unless someone else has something.

4 MS. WINTER: Let's see. Does anyone else

5 want to come up and ask questions, make comments?

6 MR. SPINER: I'm Wade Spiner from New

7 York. I grew up in the city, so I'm CWI. I just got

8 certified in my rock guide course earlier this year.

9 And not necessarily got a specific

10 question, but one of things that I'm struggling with

11 as a new guide is the course of taking this towards

12 getting a pin. And so as a rock guide course

13 graduate, I'm just working towards prerequisites, and

14 that -- going out.

15 And one of the things that I'd really like

16 is to get paid to go out and do things around the

17 world, right? Like, don't we all?

18 So I guess my point or my comment is that I

19 think it would be nice to have a little extra

20 information on -- I know it's not like a specific,

21 you can do this, and then you'll get this result.

22 But, you know, a little, you know, push in the right

23 direction. Informational resource, I guess.

24 Something like that.

25 I don't -- I don't really know where I was

1 going with that. But, like -- like, yeah. Like I

2 said, I would like to go out and get paid and travel

3 the world, and I don't really see how from this point

4 I'm going to get to there.

5 MS. WINTER: All right. We'll see what we

6 can do for you regarding that question.

7 MR. NORDSTROM: You said you're from New

8 York, right? Yeah, I probably should let Marty

9 answer this.

10 MR. DELAP: Yeah, you know, pursue

11 organizations that are accredited through the AMGA,

12 so they give you good mentorship. I think we're

13 setting up that process as a board to, you know, give

14 guidance to younger guides to go work with certified

15 guides and help them through that process.

16 I know in our company, Fox Mountain guides,

17 we help you with, you know, all kinds of things. We

18 have training. We talk about everything from getting

19 insurance to -- you know, personal insurance to, you

20 know, technical systems.

21 So I think starting to look at those bigger

22 companies and going out and working for some of them

23 can help in that mentor process.

24 MR. ROSSI: You're -- you're here to meet

25 everybody that works around the country. Like,

1 that's a huge first step. Just talk to people about

2 what you can do and who you can work with and where.

3 Like, that's what it's all about, and that's what

4 courses are all about too.

5 MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah. I'd say apply for the

6 companies that you think are doing what you're

7 interested in, ideally accredited companies.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I add to that

9 question?

10 MS. WINTER: I don't know.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Am I a hog?

12 No, I'm in line next though.

13 MS. WINTER: Well, I think we should let

14 people who haven't spoken speak.

15 So, you, please come on up.

16 MR. HAVLICK: All right. My name is Ian

17 Havlick. I'm about halfway through the program. And

18 I didn't plan on speaking tonight, but I took the

19 public speaking course today, so . . .

20 But I have two thoughts: I think that it

21 could echo some of the things that were mentioned

22 just -- just now. And one would be a forum, you

23 know, an insider membership forum that we all pay our

24 dues for. And I think it was attempted at some point

25 along the way, and kind of faded away. And that

1 could be a huge resource. Info X, slash, just data,

2 mountain project, but for guides.

3 And then asking those that have been

4 certified already for maybe a free -- you know, I'm

5 not -- I realize we all have to make money, but if

6 you could donate your time to the young little shits

7 out here that are trying -- I'm fortunate to work for

8 a guide service that has certified guides employed,

9 and so I've had some of that.

10 But I think there are a lot of us out there
11 that could gain a lot from a call list or, you know,
12 just e-mail list out there where we're like, Hey,
13 we're in the pacific northwest. Anyone want to come
14 out and climb X with me?

15 So those are my two cents.

16 MS. WINTER: Great. Thank you, Ian.

17 Dylan Taylor.

18 MR. TAYLOR: All right. Hey, you guys. I

19 have one minute; is that right?

20 All right. This is for -- I just got here

21 late. Estes Park, long drive, walk. Thanks for

22 driving, Karen. Everybody.

23 I just wrote notes back there, and I forgot

24 them already.

25 All right. I'm Dylan Taylor. I'm a UIAGM

1 guide. I'm an American Mountain Guide. I grew up in

2 Boulder, Colorado. I live in Chamonix, France

3 full-time.

4 And I think that a lot of people in this

5 room and in this membership would think, oh, that's

6 pretty cool. I want to get my pin. I want to go to

7 France. I want to guide in the Alps. And it's true,

8 it is cool.

9 And I just wanted to say, this is my first

10 -- no, no, no. Hold on. One of my first statements

11 is -- is -- is just to like -- is to be realistic

12 here. Because I would love to come back and guide in

13 the U.S. I would love to have my career based here

14 for more of the year, and I think that's going to

15 happen some day. I don't know when. It may happen

16 really, really soon. It might happen over the time.

17 But I'd like to be -- I'd like to have the

18 freedom and the confidence and the know-how to come

19 back here and -- and -- and do my profession here

20 where I'm from, and maybe go back to -- to other

21 parts of the world when I can. But there's reasons

22 why decisions have been made.

23 And I think that like -- you know, I'm

24 proud to be part of this organization, and I'm

25 psyched to see a bunch of new faces on the board, and

1 I'm really confident that cool things are going to

2 happen and things are going to move forward.

3 And I know that this meeting and this time

4 period for us as a profession and a membership and an

5 organization is really critical and really touchy and

6 provocative, and there's heated arguments all the

7 time. A lot of rumors are spread, speculation is

8 made, accusations are thrown.

9 And -- and, you know, for a better or for

10 worse, some of those things are true on both sides of

11 the arguments, and some of the things aren't.

12 And I think we have a lot of problems and

13 challenges facing us as an organization, and I'd like

14 my board and my membership to try to identify what

15 those problems are, what those biggest problems are

16 that -- that -- that face us. And I want us to all

17 start by agreeing what the problems are before we try

18 to fix them.

19 Because, you know, people will sit down and

20 have a beer and say, Oh, it's the -- it's guide

21 agencies that hold the keys to the permits. It's the

22 -- you know, we're the -- we're like the -- we just

23 have our certifications. We can't get work on land

24 because access is so restrictive.

25 And -- and, yeah, all these things are

1 true, but the AMGA is a -- is an educational

2 organization. It's an 501-C-3 with a charter. It's

3 got limitations on what it can do. And it's got a

4 system of organization called the CGC.

5 Which anyone here, I think, that gets a
6 certification ought to think about joining, or at
7 least look into joining or at least talk to Geoff
8 Unger or some of other representatives from the CGC
9 and consider it, because if you have a certification,
10 you can join. And we want all the advocacy we can
11 get.

12 We want the AMGA on our side. We want the
13 CGC on our side. We want each organization, as we
14 customize it, based on its charter and what it's
15 legally obliged to do to work for us and get things

16 done, because we've got a lot of problems.

17 We've got agencies that can work with us

18 rather than against us. We've got land managers that

19 are making it really hard to get access, and they've

20 got no money. We've got all kinds of problems facing

21 us.

22 It would be nice to sit down and have this

23 board and this membership philosophically agree that

24 the first and best way to solve the problem is to

25 agree what some of these problems are and then attack

1 those problems.

2 And, yeah, I have plenty more I could talk

3 about, but I'm going to turn it over to the next

4 person. Get out of here before I dig myself in a

5 hole.

6 MS. WINTER: Thank you, Dylan.

7 MR. McCONNELL: My name is Trevor

8 McConnell, and I'm just an SPI, but as a person who

9 wants to eventually --

10 MS. WINTER: I think we need to give a big

11 shout for SPIs.

12 MR. McCONNELL: I'll keep my question short

13 and simple, if that exists. I want to know what the

14 reason is behind the extra class that you all need

15 for the ski guide course.

16 And, furthermore, as we've seen, there

17 hasn't been a high number of courses provided. I

18 know that's been one of the issues that we've seen.

19 And so with that, will we see more of the

20 alpine skills courses provided?

21 So, again, first question is: What is the

22 reason behind the extra course for next year, for the

23 ski guides course?

24 And, secondly, will we actually see more of

25 the alpine skills courses that are required now in

1 order to do the ski guide course?

2 MS. WINTER: Thank you.

3 I'll pass it over the Dale Remsberg.

4 MR. REMSBERG: That's a great question.

5 The reason for the new alpine skills course as a

6 direct tie into the ski guide course is that we were

7 finding a pretty significant deficiency in those that

8 hadn't taken any of the rock or alpine programs

9 entering into the ski.

10 And what that was doing was bottlenecking

11 the first part of the ski guide course in technical

12 skills. Like, literally teaching people how to put

13 on harnesses, how to tie a clove hitch, those kind

14 things, when we should be working on ski application

15 skills on the mountain.

16 So that was the -- that was the core reason

17 behind that.

18 Bear in mind that you still can enter the

19 ski guide course program by starting through the rock

20 guides track. So it's an alternative start, if you

21 will. So that was a -- that was a key issue.

22 As far as more alpine skills courses, yes.

23 As -- as demand increases and we see where the

24 sign-ups are, those are easy courses for us to add,

25 and we'll be adding a bunch of those.

1 MR. HESS: I would -- I'd just like to add
2 that one of the important things that we do at the
3 AMGA that other countries don't do, is we have
4 discipline specific offering.
5 In other words, an individual may or may
6 not be a climber, but is a high-level skier, and in
7 order for us to be able to accommodate that, we have
8 to bring them up to a certain technical standard.
9 And I just want to reiterate what Dale was

10 saying, that in allowing that, we've sometimes found

11 that the first-level course folks that were

12 discipline specific, weren't quite where they needed

13 to be.

14 And to avoid redundancy on the course, we

15 wanted to have a pre-course to prep them for that

16 course, so...

17 MS. WINTER: Thanks, Rob. Thanks, Dale.

18 MR. GRAHAM: I'm Casey Graham. I'm also an

19 SPI. To follow up on that: Something -- actually,

20 Trevor and I both run outdoor education style

21 programs rather than your traditional guiding

22 program. So just to give you guys an idea, from our

23 perspective -- or at least -- I'll speak for myself.

24 From my perspective, what that new

25 prerequisite sounds like to me is it was put into place

1 for a couple of reasons. And maybe you can give me

2 some clarification on this, hopefully.

3 But for that ski guide course, I wonder if

4 there -- instead of telling those of us who wanted to

5 go through the ski guide curriculum specifically --

6 instead of saying, you know, you have to take now

7 this alpine course, right, which, from my

8 understanding, was developed for the alpine
9 curriculum for alpine guides who weren't going
10 through the rock curriculum so that they can access
11 the ice instructor course. Maybe you can correct me
12 on that if that's not correct.

13 But in order to stay kind of consistent
14 with that fashion, it seems to me that the screening
15 process for the ski guide course maybe could be
16 stepped up, instead of saying, Now we are going to
17 require you to pay a couple more hundred dollars on
18 top of the \$2,400 course and travel and expenses to
19 take this course.

20 And then also potentially looking at the
21 curriculum for that, you know, the technical aspect
22 of that course. What's more cost effective for your
23 consumer or, you know, your aspiring guides, as it
24 were. Is it more cost effective for us, as the
25 consumer, to add an extra day to that course and have
1 those skills covered, or is it more cost effective to
2 make us take that, again, extra couple hundred dollar
3 course, plus travel fees, and expenses and, you know,
4 how we sustain ourselves there if we're not being
5 paid through another guide company to -- to do that,

6 being an entry-level course into that particular

7 curriculum of the AMGA.

8 So I would just kind of throw that at you

9 as far as, you know, was that discussed? Was it kind

10 of brought up as, you know, are folks going to be

11 able to afford this? Or is it going to set people

12 back another year now for, you know, applying for the

13 course, because now they have to raise funds for this

14 extra course?

15 That's all.

16 MS. WINTER: Thank you.

17 MR. REMSBERG: So those are -- those are

18 great questions and real concerns. And, yes, we

19 definitely discuss those at the instructor team

20 level, the TC level and, you know, at the office

21 level with Betsy.

22 What we were finding in the ski program was

23 that our -- our pass rates were quite low, quite a

24 bit lower than the rock and the alpine. And trying

25 to identify what was causing that was something that

1 we were really focusing on for a couple of years.

2 And we were finding that, basically, the --

3 oftentimes the down guiding and the actual movement

4 skills was a problem.

5 But, you know, it's -- oftentimes it's just

6 the practical amount of time we could train people in

7 down guiding, was a big issue.

8 And so part of the alpine skills course and

9 -- yes, the name is misleading. It -- it quite -- it

10 could be called a technical skills course. It's not

11 -- it's not designed specifically for the alpine.

12 It's meant to be cross-disciplined.

13 And we're going to work on it and continue

14 to improve it. It was a hot topic at the TC meeting

15 in Las Vegas last week.

16 And I'm actually going to turn it over to

17 Rob, because he can speak a little more specifically

18 about some of the issues in the ski. But, yeah, it's

19 a problem. It's a concern, and we'll keep addressing

20 that.

21 MR. HESS: Well, you know, maybe we'll

22 spend a little time after we're done here getting

23 into it.

24 But we really stepped it up quite a bit.

25 But, again, what we're finding -- theoretically, what

1 you can have, is you can have an individual who is

2 certified in rock and alpine paired with an

3 individual who is -- it's their very first course in

4 the ski. And where -- that's workable, for sure, and

5 we have a high level of expectation. It just wasn't

6 panning out, unfortunately.

7 And we were spending a lot -- we were

8 spending a lot of time on very base-level curriculum

9 where we really, really wanted to be out doing a

10 little bit more advanced application and bringing it

11 up.

12 And so it's -- we discussed it at length

13 and, you know, it's something we want to try to have

14 people -- have -- better prepare people for their

15 exams and have them do better and do well. So that's

16 the root of it all.

17 And I -- I can appreciate higher standards

18 in the beginning and so forth. But I think we tried

19 that, and we're -- we weren't seeing the type of

20 results that we would like on that and just getting

21 too much redundancy.

22 And we want to even the playing field a

23 little bit so we can really get into the heart of

24 what that first-level course needs to be.

25 Dale mentioned some elements. You know,

1 the down guiding. All right. That's a huge thing.

2 And -- and then the touring guiding and those

3 elements that -- we want to be able to just jump into

4 that and speak -- speak intelligent to each --

5 intelligently to each other as a -- as a course

6 instead of getting into -- you know, having a mouse
7 playing catch-up, you know. And that really was the
8 spirit of it all.

9 We really just want people to be in a
10 position where they can learn better on that course
11 with what we really, really want to get into.

12 So we can talk about that a little bit
13 further and, you know, bat it around a little bit.

14 But it's great for you to ask, you know, because
15 we're always sensitive to adding these things.

16 It starts seeming like, well, once you get
17 in the club, you make it harder to get in, and, you

18 know -- kind of job security or something like that.

19 But that's not what we're trying to do.

20 But, anyway, so maybe we can talk about

21 that later.

22 MS. WINTER: We are not a club, just for the

23 record. We are a 501-C-3 educational, nonprofit

24 organization. I'm just joking.

25 Anyone else?

1 Yes, Markus.

2 MR. JOLLIFF: Hello, my name is Markus

3 Jolliff. I'm a certified rock instructor. I have

4 three questions. Two are for everyone, and one is

5 for the board.

6 The first question is, How many people here

7 have climbed in Yosemite? Raise your hand.

8 Okay. Second question, How many people

9 would like to guide in Yosemite? Raise your hand.

10 And the question to the board is, Why

11 aren't we guiding in Yosemite?

12 MS. WINTER: That is a great question, and

13 it's something that, obviously, we are all striving

14 to delve into.

15 The political government structure of our

16 country, which you can imagine, is quite complex,

17 quite sticky, and there is a lot of work to be done

18 to get to a point where we can guide, you can guide

19 in Yosemite. And that is something that Dan spoke to

20 with some of the greater advocacy work that is

21 happening.

22 And I do want to make it clear that the

23 AMGA absolutely believes in advocacy, and we

24 absolutely believe in representing our membership.

25 But we are limited in things we can do, given our tax

1 structure.

2 And if that's something that's going to

3 change, then that's going to require major

4 organizational overhaul. And right now we have to

5 work within the context.

6 But, certainly, yes, every day we are

7 trying to crack the code for how to get access into

8 the places that people don't have access to.

9 But it's a very sensitive issue. It's

10 highly political. It's controversial. It's very

11 challenging, and we have to walk a very careful path

12 to achieving that.

13 And right now where the AMGA is is in

14 supporting this much larger initiative that is

15 working to improve access for all and looking at more

16 significant permit reform to address some of those

17 common issues that many permit holders face.

18 So Dan will add to that.

19 MR. NORDSTROM: It's really -- maybe that's

20 the question, right? Everybody wants to be in

21 Yosemite.

22 I've actually had this conversation. Mike

23 Gauthier is a -- a lot of people know Mike

24 Gauthier. He's the -- he's the number two guy in

25 Yosemite, basically.

1 He is one of those people I talked about.

2 He is a reformer. He -- he -- he was at Rainier. He

3 lead the Rainier changes. He wants to make it work

4 better in Yosemite. There's all kinds of issues

5 around.

6 What they don't want to do is have it be

7 the place where everyone comes to learn to climb in

8 big groups all over the place.

9 But he absolutely wants to see a day where

10 small groups of experienced people can go out and do

11 climbs that don't -- there's already mobs there. He

12 doesn't -- they don't want more mobs there.

13 But can small groups go on and do climbs?

14 Mike -- Mike wants that to happen. Again, he needs

15 this larger momentum. Because when he brings that up

16 within his, kind of, bureaucracy, he gets shut down.

17 And so he needs this larger, kind of,

18 political movement from the outside coming in and

19 saying it's okay to hire somebody to go -- to go

20 climbing -- or to go out in the land in general.

21 And right now there's a huge bias in

22 America, which is a really strange thing, that if

23 you're -- if you're -- if you're not -- if there's no

24 money changing hands, people can go anywhere the hell

25 they want. But as soon as money changes hands,

1 you're perfectly restricted to only these things.

2 And it's -- you know, you think about some

3 of the reasons why, but it's -- you know, it's --

4 it's -- it's overregulation; it's anticapitalism.

5 There's all kinds of interesting political elements

6 there.

7 But the point is, I think if we do this

8 right over time, we can change the bias in the system

9 so that it's okay to pay somebody to take them

10 climbing. And, you know, if it's not 12 people; if

11 it's just two people, maybe that would fit Yosemite.

12 And I know Mike really wants to see that

13 happen. So there is hope out there.

14 MS. WINTER: Thanks, Dan.

15 Hold on, Steve.

16 I know you guys will get your second turn,

17 but look. See (indicating).

18 MR. JUDYCKI: I first want to thank the --

19 the woman who is doing all the recording. I think

20 she's doing a great job.

21 My name is Randy Judycki. I'm a certified

22 rock guide.

23 The question is, I've applied a few times

24 to become an instructor for the courses and have been

25 turned down. And is there any kind of internship or

1 something that could -- people who have specifically

2 one discipline could be a part of working with the --

3 the people to become part of that pool?

4 And so that's my question.

5 MR. REMSBERG: Another great question,

6 Randy. I think I'm one of the people that denied

7 you. Sorry.

8 MR. JUDYCKI: Yes, you did.

9 MR. REMSBERG: So hiring instructors is a

10 very complex issue. And having a broad perspective

11 with multiple certifications is something that's

12 pretty important when you're talking to young guides.

13 Is there an opportunity for single

14 discipline and multi-disciple people to become

15 instructor team members in the future? Possibly.

16 The one thing you have to consider is that

17 it actually goes against IFMGA platform. One of the

18 requirements for teaching guide level courses is that

19 you're an IFMGA guide.

20 We do have some latitude to work with that

21 based in North America. But it's something that's

22 fully on my radar as we continue to grow and making

23 sure we do that responsibility and sustainably is

24 what's important, and don't get in over our head

25 there.

1 So, yes, we're looking at it.

2 Thanks.

3 MS. WINTER: Anyone else?

4 Gary.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nice stroll.

6 MR. FALK: My name is Gary Falk. I'm an

7 American Mountain guide.

8 I'd like to add to my friend, Joe

9 Thompson -- is he still here? -- anyway, the working

10 together thing.

11 You know, I started guiding having no

12 guiding experience. I had a job. And I learned

13 everything I knew until I started taking AMGA

14 courses, and then I learned more.

15 And what I try hard to remember as a

16 certified guide is where I came from. And, you know,

17 I have a lot of roots in this country. You know, I

18 have worked for and with a lot of people in this

19 room.

20 And I'm starting to see a rift between
21 these people, between people who have their pin and
22 people who hold permits. And I think this rift is
23 what's going to destroy us. And I think that we need
24 to stand together in this industry and work together
25 in order to get what we want.

1 And I think this -- if we keep dividing,
2 then that's going to be a very big deal in our
3 industry.

4 So certified guides, I'd like to caution
5 you to remember where you came from, because this is

6 how you became certified, is by working through

7 companies. This is where you got most of your

8 clients, is from working through companies.

9 And I want to caution the companies to look

10 at where we're going and recognize that. You're not

11 going to be the only permit holders, probably,

12 forever.

13 So we need to find a way to bridge the gap

14 between us in order to stand.

15 Thanks.

16 MS. WINTER: Thank you, Gary.

17 Don't be shy. Nice. Nice.

18 MR. HORGAN: Good evening, everybody. I'm

19 Peter Horgan. I would -- I guess I consider myself

20 half SPI certified. I've taken the course but not

21 the exam yet.

22 But it's very exciting getting the ball

23 rolling, being part of this community and part of

24 this room full of all these bad ass people.

25 I guess I wanted to not express anything

1 new, but express my support for some kind of formal

2 mentorship program that my co-worker, Ian Havlick,

3 brought up.

4 We're expected to meet all these

5 prerequisites and do this on our own personal time.

6 And we go out and do these things. And if we can,

7 you know, reach out to some certified guides that

8 were going out to do these trips, that if they're

9 willing to join us, that we can really be put in the

10 right direction and learn the AMGA -- AMGA way --

11 AMGA way right from the beginning and not have to

12 learn -- kind of unlearn our own personal ways of

13 doing things. We can get that started from right

14 from the beginning.

15 I think that would show and demonstrate

16 just how we do things here, and I think the results

17 would be really, really expressed throughout the

18 courses and exams.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. WINTER: Thank you.

21 Betsy, can I just -- just real quick?

22 MR. REMSBERG: So I think that mentorship

23 is, obviously, critical in developing as a guide,

24 absolutely.

25 One of things to pay attention to -- I'm

1 not sure if you guys have all read the terrain and

2 supervision guidelines yet, but it actually creates a

3 framework for mentorship and -- and working through

4 the program. So if you haven't read that document, I

5 encourage you to do so.

6 And I think working on some sort of

7 structure like that over time will really help with

8 that problem.

9 And then, of course, bolstering the

10 official mentoring schedule would be great too.

11 Can I add something?

12 MR. MOLITORIS: Hi. Just to comment on what

13 Gary said and what Peter asked: You know, I operate

14 a guide service, and we encourage guides to -- to

15 come out and shadow mentor with guides when they're

16 working with a certified guide.

17 So if we have a private client, another

18 guide can come out and as an apprentice to shadow and

19 work with that guide and see him operate in the

20 terrain and pick up the skills.

21 So maybe you should talk to your guides

22 service owner or whoever you work with and see if

23 that's a possibility, too, because that's a great way

24 to get the additional skills.

25 MS. WINTER: Richard.

1 MR. RIQUELME: Hi, guys. My name is
2 Richard originally from Chile. That's where my
3 accent is from.
4 And most of you guys not know me. Some of
5 you guys know me. And I want to be more than an
6 inspiration to you, the members, rather for them
7 (indicating) to learn from, but they will learn from
8 me. I can assure you that.
9 What I want to tell you guys is basically

10 share my humble experience through the mountain guide

11 path. I am an SPI certified through the AMGA, but

12 I'm a South American from Chile, full guide. No

13 international certified.

14 And we went through this process to become

15 IFMGA and we failed. And I see how things crumble

16 down. I see how fails fail. And I know and I

17 understand your concerns.

18 And the only thing, if I have to sound

19 wisdom, is just keep doing what you're doing. Never

20 tell any -- don't take anything that somebody else

21 tells you to do. Think. Don't judge. Use your

22 discernment. Don't allow anybody to tell you what to

23 do, once again.

24 You're a mountain guide, no? You want to

25 be one, no? Start doing your own decisions.

1 But more than that, I think you have -- you

2 have already something great. Work hard to make it

3 better. Yeah?

4 And I feel a lot of these questions and

5 stuff around. Especially I resonate with what Dylan

6 says because I'm a foreigner in my own country, and

7 I'm a foreigner here too. And I don't want to tell

8 countries about what you guys do and tell all the

9 people from other countries here.

10 But if something is reality, and you want

11 to do something, they want to do something, everybody

12 want to do something.

13 But at the end of the day things -- things

14 need to change. Change is part of the actual growth.

15 If you do not change, you decay. And that's what

16 happened to us, and we're still struggling to grow.

17 Okay.

18 So another thing -- maybe another topic.

19 But with that being said, I think your

20 institution need to split several -- several ways

21 part of -- they need to work together. Yeah. And if

22 you guys need more board of directors in a specific

23 area, please do so.

24 My -- my education process was amazing. I

25 don't envy you guys. You -- I think my education was

1 way better than you because it was education. No

2 instruction. No -- no hard skill, soft skills, or,

3 you know, and know how to speak of -- to the --

4 what -- geez, these guys are doing for you, which is

5 really, really hard. Because they need to bring so

6 many different challenges that you have no idea. But

7 you may -- may think, but they -- you don't really.

8 Because I been in this (indicating)

9 position more, and believe me, I don't envy them.

10 So -- but thank you guys for doing what you

11 guys are actually doing. Somebody needs to do it.

12 So I think the AMGA should have a education

13 part of it as a stand-alone. They should have a

14 mentor -- which will be -- do a lot of what the

15 mentorship program with the company. The company

16 needs to be part of it.

17 The recent certified or the old time,

18 full-time certified guides should part of that too,

19 and hopefully paid and unpaid. Should be volunteer

20 too. You guys can mentor somebody else behind you.

21 Not because -- you don't have to be certified.

22 Unfortunately, I disagree with that. You need to be

23 certified to mentor somebody.

24 No. You can. You can. Believe it.

25 Thank you very much.

1 MS. WINTER: Thank you, Richard.

2 Yes.

3 MR. MAGEE: My name is Brendan Magee, and

4 I'm an SPI. And this is really my first time coming

5 here, so I'm kind of really new to the whole process.

6 I guess I'm hoping that -- to take the rock

7 course in the spring next year.

8 I guess kind of being new and, you know,

9 you mentioned it earlier, like everything is new, you

10 need some mentorship. It's just very daunting, like,

11 when I go to the website and I look at all the

12 prerequisites for any of the programs. I'm just,

13 like -- it's intimidating.

14 And, you know, I hear things about

15 accreditation changes and whatnot, and that I think

16 it's kind of a -- maybe a question on the

17 accreditation changes, because maybe I don't know

18 where to go.

19 Because I hear these things, 2017 or '16,

20 whatever, there's changes, and I don't know where to

21 look for that.

22 And then I guess I just have a comment.

23 Just, like, I don't know how the -- just kind of the

24 whole process is very intimidating, and I just don't

25 know how, you know, to make it, you know, not seem so

1 intimidating for us new people trying to get into it.

2 MS. WINTER: Thank you.

3 We shut you guys up? What?

4 I really -- I do encourage you. This is

5 the time. And this is a monumental time in

6 AMGA's history where we are -- we're looking -- we're

7 dealing with some really core issues that are going

8 to be addressed at our board meeting on Sunday and

9 for the next years to come, Because we've kind of hit

10 a critical point.

11 And so please don't be afraid to come up

12 here and say whatever you want to say to the board,

13 because I think it's just really important.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Could you let us

15 know what some of those core issues are so maybe we

16 can comment on them?

17 MS. WINTER: Well, I think --

18 Mr. NORDSTROM: It's eight o'clock.

19 MS. WINTER: It's eight o'clock?

20 Mr. NORDSTROM: I -- I really want a

21 beer.

22 MS. WINTER: We could also wrap it up. I

23 didn't know what time it was.

24 Mr. NORDSTROM: Okay. Why don't we

25 mingle and kind of do it ad hoc.

1 MS. WINTER: 7:55.

2 I think if you want to learn about the core

3 issues, you should come to the board meeting. I

4 think a lot of them have actually been brought up

5 here in this dialogue that we have had.

6 I think that some members have more of

7 inside information than others, and our goal is

8 definitely to make sure that all members are aware of

9 what's going on.

10 So the board meeting on Sunday. But I will
11 let you guys know that there's going to be a lot of
12 executive session in the first part of the meeting,
13 and if you come right at nine o'clock, you will be
14 asked to leave the room for portions of the morning.

15 So you might want to get there around 10:30
16 or 11:00. Just -- or you can hang out in the hallway
17 also and have coffee. But just giving you a heads
18 up.

19 But I encourage all of you guys to come to
20 our board meeting.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Where?

22 MS. WINTER: It's going to be here in this

23 room.

24 Okay.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: On behalf of the

1 membership, can I just offer whoever's idea --

2 everyone, who did this, a round applause, because

3 this has been a long time coming.

4 Thank you, board. Thanks, Betsy.

5 MS. WINTER: Thank you.

6 (Applause)

7 MS. WINTER: All right. We're going to

8 adjourn. Go drink beer. Talk amongst yourselves.

9 And we'll see you tomorrow for clinics, and then

10 tomorrow night at E-Town Hall, which is just a few

11 blocks down for the main event -- a few blocks east

12 for the main event night.

13 So thanks, you guys, so much for all of

14 your input.

15 WHEREUPON, the within meeting adjourned at

16 the approximate hour of 7:55 on the 24th day of

17 October, 2014.

18 * * * * *