

Cascadia Chapter Meeting MINUTES

September 10, 2008 / 5:00 – 8:00 PM / Rock Salt Restaurant / Seattle, WA

Attendees:

Andrea Ball (O-Sec)
Hank Ball
Anna Bremmer
Tricia Butler (B)
Ashley Carson
Mike Dyer

Blane Long (O-VP)
Court Olson
Ken Smith (B)
Marlo Stebner
Eric Trimble

[O = Officer; B = Board Member]

- I. Welcome & Introductions
- II. Committee Reports

a. Membership / Outreach (Andrea and Hank):

- i. We have 11 new members since January. This includes folks from WA, OR and Canada.
- ii. Hank has contacted Richard Harrington of the Three Rivers Chapter (central WA) to see if they'd like to join with Cascadia but they were not amenable to this suggestion.
- iii. Hank mentioned that the new SAVE certification guidelines now provide one year of SAVE membership if you take the AVS exam at the end of a MOD I course. Perhaps the Chapter might consider sponsoring a MOD I course as a way to promote the profession and increase membership. Hank mentioned that the MOD I does not have to be five consecutive days – it could be split over two weekends (Th-Sat and then Fri-Sat). Ken Smith mentioned VMS's online course and wondered if this counts? He has 30 folks prepared to take the course. He further mentioned the importance of convincing these new members of the continued value of membership.
- iv. Andrea mentioned that she'd been working with Ashley to enhance the Chapter website (seattleve.net OR seattleve.org), and that this can become a powerful membership, outreach and communications tool. It was asked if the Speaker's Bureau component of the site was still up. Blane confirmed that it was but that it should be updated.

b. Governance (Joel Davis): Nothing to report; Joel not in attendance.

c. Programs (Blane):

- i. Send Blane programming ideas. There were several comments about the importance of making the programming interesting and relevant to bring back former members, encourage active participation, engage first year members and broaden the Chapter's reach.
- ii. Ken Smith suggested giving an award to an owner from within the Cascadia area, and then invite them to present what they've done – similar to what AASHTO has done. Anna Bremmer suggested making this an annual award would help it become prestigious.
- iii. Several "stories from the road" were shared throughout the evening and this led Anna and Ashley to suggest including a "Bloopers" section on the web site. Andrea suggested "Tips and Tricks for Road Warriors" might be

a fun program idea. Possible subtopics could include hardware, software, tools, processes, lessons learned, etc.

- iv. Ken Smith mentioned that the Learn VM points are challenging for veteran practitioners to earn – perhaps we should be selling Learn VM opportunities as an incentive for attending meetings.

III. Membership survey (Andrea)

- a. In order to better understand how best to serve our members, the Board and Officers plan on conducting a membership survey in the coming months. Topics to be explored include meeting logistics (day, time, location), communication preferences (email, web), education (courses of interest), list of other organizations members belong to (ties in with idea of ‘cross-pollination’ of organizations), and general comments on how to make the Chapter more effective.
- b. Comments on meeting logistics: Evenings can be challenging; maybe we could look at a day other than Wednesday; consider a webinar to be held over the lunch hour, etc. Ken mentioned that HDR has had multi-site webinars in the past and would be happy to host something for the Chapter. Perhaps ‘pods’ of folks could gather in Boise, Portland, Olympia/Tacoma, Seattle, Everett, Canada, Alaska, etc. Conduct general business the first few minutes and then have a presentation with Q&A the rest of the hour. It was suggested Hank and/or Blane could re-present one of their previous SAVE topics in webinar format, similar to the series of webinars currently running from SAVE.
- c. Comments on communication preferences: Follow the SAVE format where there is just an email with a link to meeting announcements that takes you to the Chapter web site; be sure to reproduce all communication on the web site.
- d. Comments on other organizational memberships: Post meeting/course info for related organizations on our Chapter web site; inform the *Daily Journal of Commerce* of our meeting schedule.
- e. Comments on education: Provide a link to VMS’ *Value Metrics* online course; announce courses/opportunities offered by related organizations.
- f. Comments of chapter effectiveness: Ken mentioned that he would be more likely to attend a meeting if he knew potential clients would be in attendance. This also comes back to the idea of presenting awards as encouragement to get non-practitioners involved in the Chapter.
- g. Additional questions to ask: What can you contribute to this Chapter? What can the Chapter do for you? General demographics – how long have you been practicing? What is your level of certification?, etc. What part of the VM Job Plan do you find most challenging?

IV. Discussion: Developing a theme for the year (Blane)

- a. During the August Board/Officers meeting we discussed the idea of having a theme or problem statement that the Chapter could revisit and work on over the coming year (or longer). One idea, presented by Tricia, was to look at the challenging of capturing, preserving and reusing corporate knowledge. This includes traditions, business process and policy and information in general. Hank further commented that part of the solution (and something that this Chapter could investigate) was how to build and sustain Subject Matter Experts within the company. Andrea commented that the majority of the discussion this evening supports what the Board/Officers were envisioning, and that the emphasis was on a subject/problem that was common to everyone – Chapter members and others.

- b. Anna wondered if the Chapter has any sort of mentoring program for its officers. Blane explained that the Immediate Past President is on the Board the following year and that the VP moves into the President's slot.
- c. The way ahead: The Board and Officers, with ongoing input from the membership, will spend October/November/December refining the Chapter's direction.

V. Calendar

- a. Until the first of the year, and based on the survey results, Cascadia will continue to meet on the first Wednesday of each month in the evening.
- b. October's meeting will be held on the 8th in Tacoma. Location to be determined.
- c. November's meeting will likely be held in Seattle.
- d. December's meeting is being tagged as a "fun" meeting – more of a social event than a business meeting. Suggestions for format and location are appreciated.
- e. Keep an eye on the Chapter web site for meeting updates and other announcements.

VI. Adjourn