**Sedona Westerners Executive Committee Meeting – September 22, 2025**

Present: Kelley Malek, Ray La Porte, Jim Thomas, Michael Henry, Jon Petrescu, Dan Celeste, Jackie Pinho, Lisa Critchlow, Dave Vanderwater, Mary McCaffrey, Clay Dunsmore, Lou Sideris Donna Forsythe, Jane Dasher, Sandi Heysinger (via zoom)

Absent: John Regalski, Lynn Moffatt, Gary Morgan

A quorum of executive committee members was achieved.

The Trail Boss, Kelley Malek, called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

**Old Business**

Prior to the start of official business, Kelley announced the passing of Terri Weinsek, the wife of Dan Weinsek. Terri was a recent member of Sedona Westerners (SW).

**Financial Topics**

1. 2025 Budget
   Kelley presented the proposed SW 2025-26 budget. The only changes from the draft version circulated at the May 12 Board Meeting related to: the holiday party; insurance; and the Site Steward Program.

   At the May meeting there had been support for a "nicer" holiday party this year. Increases in membership numbers coupled with the recent $10 increase in membership dues have made a more upscale event feasible. Revenue and expense items were increased accordingly, reflecting a change of venue and menu as well as increased attendance. The current numbers are estimates – $2,000 in revenue and $3,500 in expenses - and will depend on actual attendance. Details of the proposed new arrangements will be presented later by Lynn Moffat (or Kelley in Lynn's absence).

   The Insurance budget is the actual for fiscal 2026 (it was due and paid in August).

   Site Steward Program is a new budget item. It is a pilot program towards which we allocated a modest $250, primarily for miscellaneous expenses encountered in start-up and operational expenses (room rental, refreshments, etc.).

   Mary McCaffrey inquired about the large increase in the fall cookout budget from $912 in 2024 to $1,752 and $1,800 in 2025 and 2026, respectively. Kelley said she would ask about prior year actuals. (Follow Up: The total expenditures for picnics – fall and spring - in 2024 is correct and in alignment with 2025. It appears that some fall picnic expenses were booked to the spring picnic line item.)

   Jim Thomas asked if the proposed 3% increases in the cookout budgets are sufficient in light of the significant increases in food prices. After discussion, the budgets for both the Fall and Spring cookouts were increased to $2,000 (from $1,800 and $1,860, respectively).

Kelley then asked for a motion to approve next year's budget as presented subject to an explanation for the low FY 2024 Fall cookout amount and revising both the Fall and Spring cookout budgets to $2,000.

Jackie Pinho moved to approve. It was seconded by Ray LaPorte. The budget was approved by those present.

2. Income statement
   Kelley reviewed the SW July 2025 monthly income statement. Membership dues total $4,120 ($3,968 net of processing fees). Other activity was minimal.

   Kelley then asked for a motion to approve the July 2025 Monthly Income Statement as presented. Clay Dunsmore moved to approve. Dave Vanderwater seconded. The budget was approved by those present.

3. Insurance
   (Gary Morgan's report presented by Kelley.) In connection with a review of SW insurance coverage, Gary Morgan contacted a few agents to obtain quotes and coverage recommendations prior to renewal. SW maintains two policies: D&O and Liability, both of which were with The Cincinnati Insurance Companies. Based on his research, Gary moved the D&O policy to State Farm and decreased the amount of coverage from $2,000, 000 to $1,000,000. He found that the lower amount was typical for organizations like SW. The move allowed us to save $550 in annual premium. The Liability coverage is still with The Cincinnati Insurance Companies as the policy renewed before he had received other quotes. He will follow up with alternative carriers to determine if we would benefit changing our Liability insurer/coverage also. Gary's interest in exploring alternative insurers is not only a pricing issue, but is also due to a lack of responsiveness on the part of the local Cincinnati Insurance agent.

4. Audit Results
   The By-Laws of SW require an annual audit. An audit was performed by Dan Celeste who found no major discrepancies. There were only two adjustments, less than $100, involving ice cream social and cookout expenses.

**Quick Hit Items**

5. Round Up Boss
   Annette Such has agreed to be Round Up boss. She has been acting Round Up boss since agreeing this summer to fill the position vacancy, and now needs to be formally elected. Kelley asked for a motion to approve her election as Round Up boss for 2025-2026.
   Jon Petrescu moved to approve. It was seconded by Lisa Critchlow. Her election was approved by those present.

6. Current Membership

Sandi Heysinger gave an update on current membership. As of today SW current membership is 248 members (versus 274 last year). New members total 33 (versus 44 last year). Honorary members total 29 (versus 32 last year). We are running slightly behind last year in each category. Last year an email reminder was sent in November to people who hadn't yet renewed. That prompted some additional renewals. Sandi would like to send a similar reminder this November and will discuss this with Kelley. (Follow Up: Sandi sent the email and it generated multiple renewed memberships)

In connection with our earlier decision to collect demographic information on SW membership, Sandi reported: full time residents, 189; part time, 45; and visitors, 14. Sandi raised the question whether there should be a work group to analyze this data and whether anyone had any ideas to push membership. She raised the example of the recent ice cream social. SW opened it to non-members, however, only one visitor responded. Kelley noted that the "open invitation" was not well publicized, which likely impacted turn-out. If we decide to do it again next year, we should improve coordination of the promotion.

Kelley acknowledged that currently nothing is being done with the member demographic data. The reason for collecting it was its potential future use in targeting and growing the membership. If this is still the objective, she agreed with Sandi that a working group should be established to review and analyze the data, however, since the data is still being collected, she felt it was premature to commit to a course of action now. We will discuss the issue at the next Board meeting in January.

Jane Dasher asked Sandi whether it might be preferable to use the upcoming Fall cookout as an excuse/opportunity to send out the membership renewal reminder, rather than wait until November. Sandi agreed it might work and said she would follow-up with Kelley. Timing is a consideration, as the cook-out is in a little over two weeks.

There being no further questions, Kelley thanked Sandi for her report.

7. Holiday Party

Kelley reported for Lynn Moffat, who was unable to attend. The new venue for the holiday party is the Juniper Bar & Grill in the VOC and the date is December 11 (the second Thursday of the month). The contract has been signed. The cost for the buffet (2 entrees, sides and a dessert) is $42/person which excludes tax and tip. There will be a cash bar. The restaurant is nice and has the added advantage of being beautifully decorated for the season, so minimal or no additional set up is required by SW. The price for members has not yet been determined, but Kelley estimates it will be around $35-$40. Kelley also mentioned that entertainment has not been lined up yet, and she and Lynn would welcome suggestions.

8. Canmore Sister City

Kelley was approached by a SW member concerning establishing a relationship with the local hiking group in Canmore, Sedona's Canadian Sister City. Kelley recommended that if there were no objections, she would give the individual the go-ahead to work through

the Sedona Sister City organization in contacting the Canmore hiking group. Canmore is located in the Canadian Rockies and thus has proximity to beautiful hiking. Reciprocal memberships could be one possible benefit of the arrangement. There were no objections to pursuing the Canmore Sister City connection.

9. Red Rock News
   SW has an on-going need for articles for the weekly Red Rock News column. Hike bosses should encourage hikers to write up the hikes and submit them to Annette Such.

10. Tracker
    Kelley reported for John Regalski, Tracker Boss, about upcoming events including:
    October 8 - Northern Arizona Audubon Society - birding outing
    October 22 - Ernie Pratt - Red Mountain geology hike
    November 5 - Charlie Schudson - Hiking 101 (2 classes)

    Kelley urged hike bosses to promote the Tracker events at their respective hikes.

**Discussion Topics**

11. Candidate for Honorary Membership
    Ray LaPorte recommended consideration of Scott McFeeley for Honorary Membership. Scott met the formal criteria for Honorary membership last year (he has spent 11 years as a member, including 4 years as an officer) but was passed over at that time. Scott's term as Trail Boss lasted only 10 months – he resigned in March of his term – and this early resignation along with related communication issues were reasons behind the Board's rejection of his candidacy last year. Ray undertook an extensive examination of Scott's history with the organization, including an in-depth focus on his tenure as Trail Boss and the events surrounding his subsequent resignation, which he outlined to those present. As a result of his research, Ray is recommending that Scott McFeeley's candidacy be re-considered. Based on Ray's review and recommendation, the Board decided to grant Scott McFeeley an Honorary membership.
    Kelley then asked for a motion to approve Scott McFeeley's Honorary Membership.
    Ray LaPorte moved to approve. It was seconded by Dave Vanderwater. His election was approved by those present.

    Ray volunteered to call Scott to let him know. Kelley was going to let Jim Sweeney know so that he could include it in the records. Sandi will order the nametag.

12. Trail Fund Campaign
    The 2026 Trail Fund Campaign was discussed. In the interest of full disclosure Kelley said she was on the Board of the Sedona Red Rock Trail Fund (SRRTF). The SRRTF had a recent meeting to discuss the 2026 campaign and the overall target. The SSRTF raises funds through several organizations including the Sedona Westerners. Results for the hiking clubs were a little disappointing last year so the SRRTF Board met to discuss how to improve them. Kelley referred to the handout outlining SSRTF historical results for the Sedona Westerners. Between 2022-2024 there was a steady increase in donations. However, last (fiscal) year there was a significant drop in the number of donors and the total amount donated, dropping 26% and 20%, respectively. Kelley wanted the Sedona

Westerners' Board to be aware of what the SRRTF was brainstorming and get our feedback. The SRRTF had discussed continuing with past strategies: a kick-off at the February Sedona Westerners meeting with a SRRTF speaker outlining past and upcoming projects; one or two e-mails to club members with a link to donation info; and a campaign recap at the March meeting presented by a SRRTF member. The recap includes a report on the fund-raising results. Refreshments for the meeting are provided by the SRRTF.

That has been the blueprint for the past few years. Kelley noted that while everyone gets the email/emails, direct interaction with an actual SRRTF representative only occurs at the meetings, so is limited to meeting attendees. The SRRTF Board considered several possible new approaches including: produce a testimonial video featuring Sedona Westerners who support the fund; set fund raising targets as motivational goals; host a post-campaign party for larger donors; emphasize that the campaign is the Sedona Westerners' only major contribution to trail support (versus trail work and other volunteer efforts by other organizations); sponsor a raffle; and communicate within the club when a donation is received. Kelley requested our thoughts on: what was the problem last year (do we have any insight through member comments, etc.); how can we best address it; what is our opinion of the various "new" strategies outlined above.

Jim Thomas asked if the trail sign revenue was included in any of the totals – potentially skewing the results. It was determined that the sign sales were not included. Those proceeds went directly to SRRTF. Jane Dasher suggested that market dynamics might have impacted results. The market was up in early 2024 and down in early 2025. She also asked why the campaign took place in February and not at year end, the typical time for charitable solicitations. It would also align with year-end RMD-related charitable giving. Kelley said that the question had been raised before. One reason for the timing was simply it was the month coinciding with the beginning of the first annual campaign. The second reason is that the SRRTF has its own campaign which it runs at year-end and there was a reluctance to have the two campaigns "compete" with each other. It was noted that donations made by members at year end can be designated/credited to the Sedona Westerners. In most cases the SRRTF is aware if it is a member donation and credits it accordingly.

Kelley asked if our conclusion was that it was primarily external factors/circumstances (market dynamics, solicitation timing issues, etc.) behind the decline in donations rather than a problem with the message/messenger. She also asked if we liked any of the new suggestions. Lisa Critchlow was wondering if a donation "thermometer" on the website might be a good idea. We could do it on the basis of the number of donations rather than dollar amounts. Dave Vanderwater recommended that hike leaders point out SRRTF trail work during hikes.

Sandi asked if we knew what was the resistance to giving. The Sedona Westerners has around 250 members, and is a major user of the trails – seven days a week – and yet last year only 39 donations were made. She wondered what was the resistance to giving,

and why was there not more of a commitment to giving something, regardless of amount. She welcomed any input and suggestions.

13. How to Become a Scout

The Board had asked the Scouts what might be done to bring them more closely back into the Sedona Westerners. Clay Dunsmore was heading up the effort (which was initiated by Randy Dent) One of the areas identified for consideration was the criteria for becoming a Scout, which currently isn't clear. The Board was interested in having a formal list to make the process of becoming a Scout more objective.

The Scouts came up with the following criteria (outlined in the attached handout):

- Hiking experience (have a full season with the Rough Riders). A target of 50% of the hikes.
- Ability to lead hikes (know trails/route). Must follow the route with minimal reliance on GPS on a minimum of three scouting hikes.
- Leadership capability of Mustangs and other groups. Must have a history of successfully leading at least three Mustang hikes over the course of a full season. However, a visual observation (by the Cactus Dodger) over multiple hikes is the only way to evaluate a candidate's strong hiking ability and willingness to help others as needed. This is an important aspect of safety, regarding which we need to remain vigilant. (Kelley stresses it also allows for cross pollination.)
- Must lead at least two Rough Rider hikes each season for at least two seasons.

Clay emphasized that this represented a major change in the way the group historically had operated and these criteria were established only after overcoming some initial resistance and undertaking a lengthy review process. However, most of the current Scout members have accepted and are comfortable with the current criteria. The question was asked why we were doing this. Was there a pressing need to recruit new Scouts or were there a lot of members who wished to become Scouts? Kelley answered that previously to become a Scout you had to be invited to join and were voted on by the existing Scouts. In the past there have been some people who wanted to become Scouts who weren't voted in and it resulted in hard feelings. (Clay maintained that no one was ever voted down, though people might not have been invited to join.) Mary McCaffrey agreed that the lack of transparency in the past had resulted in hurt feelings. People were discouraged from asking to join. It is hoped that by establishing these criteria and eliminating the vote, it will add sufficient transparency to the process. Dave recommended that the criteria mention leading hikes in other groups – not just the Rough Riders. Mary agreed and said that in the past this was more of a requirement and actively encouraged.

Kelley mentioned that in the on-going effort to "integrate" the Scouts, last year they agreed not to do their "fun hikes" under the auspices of the Sedona Westerners. They will only scout or lead Westerner hikes under the Sedona Westerners name. Sandi raised a question about the visual observation criteria and wondered if it re-introduced subjectivity into the process. Clay and Kelley felt that any hike boss (including the Cactus Dodger) should always be able to use their judgement in assessing the capability of a hike leader.

Kelley asked for a motion to approve the Objective Criteria to Become a Scout. Ray moved to approve. Mary seconded. The Objective Criteria to Become a Scout were approved by those present. Kelley thanked Clay for all his effort in working with the Scouts and establishing these qualifications.

14. Additional Item

Mary McCaffrey mentioned that last Thursday on the Mustang hike Dave Minot had a heart incident. Subsequently Mary learned from Dave's wife, Joyce, that he had a pace maker installed. Mary wondered what the rules are regarding medical incidents occurring on hikes. In particular what is the responsibility of the hike boss. Dave Vanderwater said that both he and Duncan Orr accompanied Dave back from the hike. Dave turned down medical help and decided to wait in the parking lot until the hikers returned. Duncan is trained in emergency medical measures, so he was able to help Dave if his condition deteriorated. In this situation Dave had willingly taken himself out of the hike, so the hike boss did not need to make the determination/evaluation. Other experiences relating to hiker medical incidents were recounted. Kelley summarized by saying we have to use our best judgement in assessing these situations. She also asked that we keep Dave in our thoughts.

Kelley requested a motion to adjourn. Ray LaPorte moved to adjourn. John seconded. The motion was approved by those present.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Dasher

# Sedona Westerners Board Meeting
# September 22, 2025

## CALL TO ORDER

## FINANCIAL TOPICS

- Review and approve final budget for 2025-26 (Handout 1) – Gary Morgan
- Review and approve Foreman's Monthly Report July 2025 (Handout 2) – Gary Morgan
- New insurance policy – Gary Morgan
- Audit results – Dan Celeste

## QUICK HIT ITEMS

- Vote on Round Up Boss
- Current membership figures – Sandi Heysinger
    - Working group to analyze data?
- Holiday Party update – Lynne Moffatt
- Canmore (Sedona's Sister City) – opportunity for interaction with hiking club?
- Need Red Rock News articles
- Upcoming Trackers events
    - Oct 8 – Birding with Northern AZ Audobon Society
    - Oct 22 – Red Mountain geology hike with Ernie Pratt
    - Nov 5 – Hiking 101 (new instructor needed starting 2026-27)

## DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Candidate for Honorary Membership – Ray LaPorte
- Trail Fund Campaign for 2026 – ideas to improve results (Handout 3)
- Scouts (Handout 4) – Clay Dunsmore
    - Proposal from Scouts on how to become a Scout
    - (Time permitting) Improved integration of Scouts into the Club as a whole

## ROUND TABLE

- Any other business – all Board members

## ADJOURN

**SEDONA WESTERNERS**
**FY '26 BUDGET**

| | FY '24 Actual | FY '25 Projection | FY '26 Proposed Budget | Assumptions/Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Income** | | | | |
| Membership Dues | 11,460 | 11,940 | 15,600 | 390 paying members x $40/member |
| less: Paypal/Stripe Fees | (592) | (471) | (461) | Average Stripe charge x 390 members |
| Fall Cookout | 100 | - | 100 | |
| Holiday Party | 1,710 | 1,245 | 2,000 | Assumes dinner and larger attendance |
| less: Paypal/Stripe Fees | (75) | (47) | (75) | Estimated |
| Spring Cookout | - | 50 | 50 | |
| Miscellaneous Income | 75 | 29 | 30 | |
| Total Income | 12,678 | 12,746 | 17,244 | |
| **Expenses** | | | | |
| Chuck Wagon | - | - | | |
| Electronic Communications | 372 | 1,282 | 1,320 | Increased for 3% inflation |
| Fall Cookout | 912 | 1,752 | 1,800 | Increased for 3% inflation |
| Historian | - | - | | |
| Holiday Party | 3,092 | 1,844 | 3,500 | SWAG (Silly Wild Ass Guess) |
| | | - | | |
| Honoraria | 800 | 800 | 800 | |
| Ice Cream Social | 84 | 20 | 100 | |
| Insurance | 3,434 | 3,382 | 3,281 | Actual for 2026 fiscal. Pd August 2025 |
| Meeting Room Rental | 430 | 590 | 590 | |
| Nametags | 467 | 520 | 540 | Increased for 3% inflation |
| Sedona Red Rock Trail Fund | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | |
| Site Steward Program | - | - | 250 | |
| Spring Cookout | 2,192 | 1,808 | 1,860 | Increased for 3% inflation |
| Sunbeam | | - | | |
| Miscellaneous | 253 | 149 | 150 | Increased for 3% inflation |
| Total Expenses | 13,036 | 13,147 | 15,191 | |
| **Net Income** | (358) | (401) | 2,053 | |

**SEDONA WESTERNERS**
**MONTHLY INCOME STATEMENT**
**JULY 2025**
(all amounts in whole $)

| | Opening Balance | Current Month Activity | Current Month YTD |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Cash** | | | |
| | | | - |
| Stripe Accout | 607 | 3,968 | 4,575 |
| Wells Fargo Account | 6,489 | (99) | 6,390 |
| Cash on Hand | 7,097 | 3,869 | 10,965 |
| **Income** | | | |
| Membership Dues | | 4,120 | 4,120 |
| less: Fees | | (152) | (152) |
| Fall Cookout | | | - |
| Holiday Party | | | - |
| less: Stripe Fees | | | - |
| Spring Cookout | | | - |
| Miscellaneous Income | | | - |
| Total Income | | 3,968 | 3,968 |
| **Expenses** | | | |
| Chuck Wagon | | | - |
| Electronic Communications / Website | | 39 | 39 |
| Fall Cookout | | | - |
| Historian | | | - |
| Holiday Party | | | - |
| Honoraria | | | - |
| Ice Cream Social | | | - |
| Insurance | | | - |
| Meeting Room Rental | | | - |
| Nametags | | | - |
| Red Rock Trail Fund | | | - |
| Site Steward Program | | 60 | 60 |
| Spring Cookout | | | - |
| Sunbeam | | | - |
| Miscellaneous | | | - |
| Total Expenses | | 99 | 99 |
| **Net Income** | | 3,869 | 3,869 |

Memo: Remaining Commitment to Red Rock Trail Fund Pledge = $3,000 ($1,000/yr. FY 2024 thru 2026).

# Handout 3

# Sedona Red Rock Trail Fund – Westerners Campaign 2026

# How to Improve Results*

## *Historical Results*

| Fiscal Year | No. Donations | Amount | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2025 | 39 | $27,973 | $11k from 3 board members |
| 2024 | 53 | $35,110 | $7.6k from 3 board members |
| 2023 | 53 | $14,770 | $2.6k from 2 board members |
| 2022 | | $11,375 | Data provided by Westerners |

## *Continue from previous years*

- Kick off presentation by Trail Fund at February meeting
- 1-2 club-wide emails
- Present campaign results at March meeting, with refreshments

## *New things we can try this year*

- Testimonial video featuring Westerners who support the SRRTF
- Set target for number / % participating, number of first-time donors
- Post-campaign party for people who give at least $____
- Emphasize that Westerners' main contribution to trail support is through this campaign, vs other groups who contribute more volunteer hours
- Raffle? NOTE: notify raffle ticket buyers that they will be added to SRRTF email list
- Communicate within club when someone gives a donation (gentle peer pressure). Provide donor with option to be listed as a donor *during* the campaign.

* Ideas from SRRTF Brainstorming meeting to improve all campaign results

# Handout 4

## Proposed Objective Criteria to Become a Scout

## Clay Dunsmore

- Must have consistently hiked for a full season with the Rough Riders. A target of 50% of the hikes.
- Must follow the route with minimal reliance on GPS on a minimum of 3 scouting hikes.
- Must have a history of successfully leading at least 3 Mustang Hikes over the course of a full season. However, visual observation (by the Cactus Dodger) over multiple hikes is the only way to evaluate a candidate's strong hiking ability and willingness to help others as needed. This is an important aspect of safety, regarding which we need to remain vigilant.
- Must agree to lead no fewer than two RR hikes each season for at least two seasons.