

## KISAR May 21, 2025 General Meeting Minutes

Call to order at 7:04 PM at Bayside Fire Hall

Minutes prepared by: Tschersich

Directors present: Tschersich, Boyle, Szabo, Cantu, Ferris, Wielebski, Silva (remotely)

April general membership meeting minutes were read and approved.

New members: Tara Strauss reintroduced herself, MH-60 pilot, USCG Air Station Kodiak

Visitors: Eric Linscheid came to speak about the upcoming Kodiak Mountain Race series.

Treasurer's report: Nick said The Alaska SAR Association (ASARA) had their quarterly meeting. They approved KISAR's grant application to pay for the SAR Academy training in late October. They also voted to approve KISAR using the spring grant money that had been earmarked for Blaine Smith's safe mountain travel class to be applied to the April Wilderness Survival Training instead. Nick mentioned that he had followed quite a bit of the weekend SAR symposium in Anchorage remotely.

Jason McGrath was moved into Takoda's vacant member-at-large board position through unanimous acclimation.

How soon the membership might want another WFA class with Deb Ajango was discussed. The next ASARA grant funding cycle (Jan-June 2026) was mentioned as a good window.

Julia reported that SAR teams in AK are using CalTopo (SARTopo). Trainers could come to Kodiak to instruct members on the use of the SAR mapping application. Julia described some of the benefits to CalTopo. Joletta, who had called in remotely, also spoke about training for CalTopo and the pros and cons of a new software platform were discussed.

Steve mentioned the upcoming Kodiak Mountain Series foot races and the possibility that this could lead to a SAR case.

Eric Linscheid spoke about the Mountain Series races which will take place June 19-20-21. The Heitman loop from Middle Bay and coming out the main Heitman Lake trail will happen June 19. The June 20 course over Sheratin will start at the Red Cloud trailhead and come out at Small Creek at the end of Anton Larsen Bay Rd. The June 21 race will be on Pyramid Mtn starting at the parking area at the pass, go over Pyramid and down the Seismic Trail. Eric just wanted to give KISAR a heads up about the race and the race organizers would work through AST/DPS in the event of an actual SAR case.

Josh and Philip discussed the Monashka Lost Hiker incident with maps, a chronology of the scenario, and the results of interviews with the subjects involved. Philip talked about the decision making that led to KISAR's initial hasty-team deployment. Josh brought up our call-out procedures and email, text, and WhatsApp were discussed. Julia and Joletta mentioned that SAR groups on the mainland use WhatsApp strictly for their initial callouts.

Philip discussed the Near Island joint training with the USCG Air Station in the mock bear mauling case.

Josh presented information on best practices when encountering either an animal attack or possible crime scene as a SAR team member. AST and ADF&G staff conduct investigations of all wildlife attacks. In Kodiak, the only 'suspect' in an animal attack is likely to be a bear but the situation surrounding the incident needs to be understood. How to manage the scene of an accident or possible crime was discussed. The need to protect the area and its evidence was mentioned though with priority given to searcher safety and patient care. The collection of physical evidence like bloody clothing was covered as was recording photos and videos of the area. Josh also spoke about the mental preparation that may be necessary when encountering a deceased subject and the emotional stress this event can have on searchers.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM.

No training followed the meeting.