

## **RMAA Annual Business Meeting Minutes: 10 Oct 2025**

The minutes from last year's business meeting in Laramie, WY as well as the RMAA Board of Directors meeting (BOD) held on 26 September 2025 were previously distributed to the Directors. This year's business meeting agenda was sent to Jason Labelle on 30 September 2025, who included it in the final conference program sent out on 3 October 2025 in an email blast as part of the advance publicity for the conference.

The annual business meeting of the BOD convened at 4:12 pm MDT. It was held in Room 101 of McDaniel Hall at Adams State University (ASU) during RMAC 2025 in Alamosa, CO. About two dozen conference attendees were present at the meeting. The meeting was led by Ken Cannon, RMAA President, who began by displaying a slide with the text of our informal "mission statement" hashed together at the first RMAC in Jackson, WY.

Roll call taken, with six of eight Board members present, as follows:

Kenneth Cannon, President  
Kevin Black, Secretary  
Spencer Pelton, Treasurer  
Beth Horton, Director  
Jena Sadd, Director  
Aaron Whittenburg, Director

Directors not present at the meeting:

Rebecca Sgouros, Vice-President  
Matt Stirn, Director

On the following pages, all people listed by their first names only are among the eight Directors listed above.

### **In Memorium**

Ken began the meeting with a remembrance of those friends and colleagues who have passed since RMAC 2019 in Logan, UT. He named the following people who have gone before us:

Sam Drucker	Mike Nowak	Dennis Stanford
George Frison	Ken Pierce	Ana Steffen
Jim Judge	Chuck Reher	Jaqueline St Clair
Mary Lou Larson	Bruce Rippeteau	Rosemary Sucec
Alden Naranjo	Jack Smith	Steve Sutter
Sarah Nelson		

Chris Merriman added the name of Bruce Huckell of the University of New Mexico, who passed away in May 2024. Ken continued by noting that Bill Eckerle, former RMAA Treasurer, had advocated the addition of a page on our website honoring deceased archaeologists who made

significant contributions with their research on Rocky Mountain archaeology. Ken felt that we should follow up on that idea made several years ago.

### **Previous RMAA Annual Business Meeting Minutes**

The next order of business was a vote on the minutes of the previous business meeting held during the RMAC in Laramie, WY on 3 May 2024. The draft minutes from this meeting were distributed to all Directors on 19 May 2024. Ken asked if anyone had any comments or changes for the minutes. No changes or other edits were offered, then Paul Burnett made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Scott McKern. No further discussion occurred regarding potential changes, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

### **Previous RMAA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

The next item was a BOD vote on the minutes of the previous board meeting. The draft minutes from the BOD meeting held online on 26 September 2025 were distributed to all Directors on 29 September 2025. No requests for changes were received prior to this meeting. Ken asked if any of the Directors in attendance had any comments or changes for the minutes. No changes or other edits were voiced, and Beth made the motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Jena. No further discussion occurred regarding potential changes, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

### **Treasurer's Report** (Spencer Pelton)

Ken asked Spencer to provide an update on our financial status. As of October 4, our checking account balance was \$14,776.28. With final RMAC 2025 figures not yet available, he reported conference expenses to date at \$4,880.19 with a couple invoices not yet received. Most of that figure is from catering services, including the banquet, totaling \$3,075.19. Total assets are at \$19,927.92 with a projected checking account balance of \$15,047.73, once all RMAC financial transactions are completed. This equates to positive conference earnings of \$271.45, a figure that accounts for all forms of student assistance as well.

Thus, Spencer concluded that RMAC 2025 will finish in the black, close to breaking even, which is the main goal with each of our conferences. Following Spencer's review, Ken asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer's report, unless any audience members had questions or comments. With no further discussion forthcoming, a motion to accept the report was made by Marcia Peterson and seconded by Lynn Harrell. The motion to accept the Treasurer's report passed unanimously.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **RMAA Board of Directors Election 2025** (Kevin Black)

The next item on the meeting agenda was the report on election results, held online during the period 11 September 2025 through 3 October 2025 and supervised by Vice President Rebecca

Sgouros. In Rebecca's absence, Ken asked Kevin to summarize the results of balloting. Kevin thanked all those who sent in ballots, reporting that 27 votes were received, which was a small total but not the lowest ever received. He also thanked the nine people who agreed to run for a position on the BOD, the largest slate of candidates that he could remember.

The four successful candidates to serve on the BOD for the next four years are Ken Cannon, Matt Stirn, Beth Horton, and Kelton Meyer. With three of those four people being reelected, Kevin then thanked departing Director Jena Sadd for her service over the past four years, noting that her help on the BOD will also be acknowledged on the website and Facebook. Then, Ken thanked Rebecca for her efforts in managing the online election.

### **RMAA Annual Report 2024-2025** (Kevin Black)

Ken asked Kevin to provide a summary of the annual report for the past year, which covers the period of 15 October 2024 through 4 October 2025. In lieu of reading the full text of the eight page draft report, he highlighted key points, noting that the report is a duty of the RMAA Secretary specified in the Bylaws. Also, each of the past annual reports submitted to the BOD since 2017-2018 can be publicly accessed via links on Facebook and the 'RMAA Reports' page on the website.

Kevin added that, in a conference year such as 2025, there is necessarily more activity to report than in non-conference years. Annual reports generally apply to October-October periods, and the results of a given conference are reported in the following year's report. Thus, the final numbers on RMAC 2025 will appear in next year's report, and this year's report covers the year prior to the start of this conference.

For the 2024-2025 reporting period, five online Board meetings were held, all of which included significant time devoted to planning for RMAC 2025. This past year, there was also some time devoted to discussions on the impact of agency changes occurring at the federal level. He went on to list the eight Directors on the BOD, four of whom served as Officers [see roll call above], and noted the slight change in membership that will take place as a result of the just-concluded election.

Kevin said that current four-year terms end at the conclusion of RMAC 2025, and the recent BOD practice has been to hold the first meeting after an election in the period just before the holidays to welcome incoming Directors. Since the coming year does not include a conference, he expects BOD tasks to be lower in number than this past year, with perhaps some preliminary talk about content for RMAC 2027.

Acknowledging Spencer Pelton's Treasurer's report, Kevin noted that our checking account balance in mid-October 2024 was \$14,789.14 which is close to the current balance that Spencer provided. The numerous transactions, both income and expenses, associated with RMAC 2025 will change our bottom line somewhat.

Next, he summarized RMAC 2025 planning activities, naming the principal organizers of this year's conference led by Chris Merriman. Chris received significant assistance with RMAC from Spencer Pelton and Jason LaBelle. Publicity for the conference began in the spring, and increased through the summer as details became available about lodging, registration, and the keynote speaker at the banquet.

Fundraising was largely focused on finding donors and sponsors for the conference, in addition to the Donation links on Facebook and the website, and merchandise sales that go towards student assistance. Although a year-to-date total has not yet been reported, Kevin and Spencer agreed that merchandise sales in 2024-2025 have been slow.

In terms of social media activities, our current footprint is limited to Facebook, with some past discussion among the Directors about the merits of adding Instagram to our outreach efforts. Kevin added that the audience was welcome to weigh in on what venues the BOD uses for public outreach. The RMAA website gets frequent updates, especially in a conference year, with seven of the ten pages posting new content this past year. The three pages not updated in 2024-2025 were About RMAA, Member Projects, and Past Meetings.

Kevin called out the Member Projects page as a very underutilized one that can include conference presentations should attendees wish to provide them. He also noted that our Facebook page sees frequent new postings, likewise more abundant in conference years such as this one. Last year's RMAA annual report was posted later than desired, but finally became available in February 2025.

To finish his summary, Kevin mentioned that RMAA's annual corporate registration fee was paid and our federal tax form 990-N was filed. A couple instances of spoof emails were received by certain Directors, but these potential scams were caught early with no adverse consequences experienced. Ken asked if there needed to be a vote to approve the report, and Kevin said it was not needed since the report is in draft form. Ken said final discussion with a vote to approve the annual report can take place during our next BOD meeting.

### **RMAC 2025 Roundtable Discussion** (Ken Cannon)

Ken began the follow-up on this afternoon's roundtable session by noting that, although we have an active website, we have not been very successful in attracting new content from people outside the BOD. He asked the audience to send us information about field schools, photographs, etc. that we can put on the website. Although acknowledging the potential copyright issues with posting complete, published articles, he said we can post links to articles that authors have published. Ken added that even photographs by themselves would be welcome. Kevin agreed and, in noting that the current images on our website have not changed in a long time, he specifically requested that archaeologists send in recent photographs of field work in the mountains.

Ken also mentioned our Facebook page regarding the need for new information. Kevin asked about how many people follow us on Facebook and Jena responded that the number of followers hasn't changed much since last year [when we had nearly 2,500]. She added that part of the reason for the static number was that the younger generation[s] don't really include Facebook among their social media choices.

Ken brought up our recent discussions on opening an RMAA account on Instagram, and Jena again dismissed this as another app in rapidly declining use among younger people. Spencer strongly urged against RMAA using TikTok. In that regard, Jena suggested that the BOD find a younger student to help us run our social media activities. Beth added that emerging professionals in addition to students should be considered for such a position.

Returning to website updates, Ken mentioned our ongoing hope to see more dialogue presenting more information about the many interesting projects happening within the mountain region. He also wondered if it would be possible for RMAA to have a podcast that could include interviews with researchers, perhaps 30 minutes in length on a range of topics. He acknowledged that it would take a lot of effort to add this to our postings. Paul Burnett said that the program NotebookLM [an AI tool] could help us do this if we upload relevant content into it. Jena mentioned existing podcasts on the subject, but was unsure of their success.

Marcia Peterson brought up the fact that Spencer had recently appeared on a podcast with Todd Surovell. Spencer added that this podcast was but one of a large number on the Archaeology Podcast Network. Since it is an existing platform for archaeology-themed content, he suggested we could use it for podcasts highlighting Rocky Mountain archaeology as opposed to starting our own, new podcast. Jena said we could also advertise our conference on that outlet as well. Beth concluded with a plea to the attendees to send the BOD any and all ideas on how we can better reach out to our audience.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **RMAC 2027 Venue** (Ken Cannon)

Ken acknowledged that finding a place to hold our next conference in two years was our current biggest challenge. He asked if anyone had any suggestions on a viable venue and Lynn Harrell responded first, regarding a previous conversation she and Scott McKern had with Kevin and Spencer regarding Kemmerer, WY as a possible location for RMAC 2027. She noted the remoteness of the Kemmerer area along with its large-scale growth that includes a new power plant, housing developments, and population influx. These issues gave her doubts that there will be sufficient lodging available to hold RMAC there within the next five years.

Spencer asked if Craig Lee might be able to help organize RMAC in Bozeman, MT. Aaron supported the idea of RMAC 2027 in a more northerly location, as well as a northern New Mexico option even though the latter is near our present location in Alamosa. Beth suggested contacting Doug McDonald at the University of Montana in Missoula, although others mentioned Missoula was our venue in 2012. Ken advocated a push to find a Montana venue, perhaps teaming with the Montana Archaeological Society (MAS). Paul Burnett added that we last held RMAC in Bozeman in 1997, which brought up the possibility of a 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary RMAC there in 2027.

Faint conversation among several audience members about a Montana venue ensued, followed by Kevin suggesting that we hold RMAC wherever MAS will be holding their 2027 annual meeting. Several people then noted that MAS holds their meetings in the spring rather than in the fall months. Spencer advocated for a Montana venue, no matter the specific location, and Ken reiterated that Craig Lee may help host RMAC in Bozeman given that he wouldn't have to travel to attend.

Aaron asked Beth if Salish Kootenai College [in Pablo, MT] might be a viable venue given its robust archaeology program and proximity to Missoula. Beth agreed that access via Missoula would take about an hour. She also mentioned a potential contact there while complimenting their nice campus. However, she noted that this college, like so many other academic institutions, is facing challenges in the current environment and may not be in a position to decide whether or not to host RMAC until

next spring. Aaron suggested that it might be easier to identify a point of contact at an established institution such as that college.

Kevin asked if “ice patch” conferences [i.e., ‘Frozen Pasts’] were still being held, and several people responded that one was held this summer in Ecuador. Jason LaBelle noted, however, that attendance was low. More faint conversation among the audience about Frozen Pasts conferences followed, including mention that these conferences are held every four years and that Craig Lee had helped host one in 2021 at Chico, MT.

Ken reiterated our past attempts, and lack of success, in finding a venue for RMAC in the state of Idaho. He expressed interest in Beth’s idea of potentially holding a joint meeting with the [Pacific] Northwest Anthropological Conference in 2027. Aaron and Jason LaBelle both mentioned Pocatello, ID and the Idaho State Museum in that regard. Paul Burnett then highlighted the fact that the Idaho Archaeological Society is holding their annual meeting this fall, and that their meeting preference matches our desire to hold RMAC in the fall season.

#### **Recognition of RMAC 2021-2025 Directors** (Ken Cannon)

Ken began by acknowledging the past four years of service by departing Director Jena Sadd. Kevin followed by thanking the other three Directors, all reelected, whose terms on the BOD also began in 2021: Ken Cannon, Beth Horton, and Matt Stirn. [applause from audience]

#### **Other New Business: Student Participation with RMAA** (Jena Sadd)

Ken asked if there was any more new business to discuss, and Jena said that she and Beth had been discussing the possibility of adding a student position on the BOD—following the same election process as all current Directors—then having them work on our social media outreach. Beth added that this approach may help us better understand the needs of that part of our community.

Aaron wondered if there would be enough interest from students, and spoke in favor of the idea expressed earlier to find a local student contact in the area where we decide to hold the next RMAC. Jena felt that if a student was voted in, that person would necessarily want to serve on the BOD. Jason LaBelle replied that, in his opinion, students want to do fun things at a conference such as throw atlats, rather than sit on a Board during a meeting.

Kevin pointed out a structural issue with having a formal student position on the BOD, namely that this would necessitate an update to the RMAA Bylaws. Instead, he suggested having a student voice on a committee or similarly informal position. Kelton Meyer followed with a suggestion that, wherever the next RMAC is held, we contact the local university to help identify three students to work with during that conference.

Beth recognized that two different entities were being targeted in this discussion, RMAC and social media. Multiple people responded that both were of interest to us. Spencer said that something the BOD could control was establishing a ‘subcommittee on student engagement,’ and that sub-committee would consist of a single Director on the BOD tasked with finding those people and give them the tools to advertise RMAC to students and boost student participation. He compared this

approach to our current practice of having a social media manager, and said that we could establish such a subcommittee immediately.

Spencer asked Kevin to check the Bylaws regarding his idea, and Kevin consulted a written copy of the current Bylaws, finding the relevant section labeled 'Committees' in Article 2.14. He read most of this passage to the audience, emphasizing the requirement that any committee created by the BOD must be composed of at least two Directors. With that in mind and a BOD quorum in attendance, Spencer made a motion to establish a Subcommittee on Student Engagement, a motion seconded by Beth.

With a question of who would lead this subcommittee, Kevin opined that we did not need to immediately decide who would serve on it but, instead, we could just create it now then decide its membership at our next BOD meeting when the new term for elected Directors begins. Ken and Spencer asked if there was any further discussion before the BOD voted on the resolution. Hearing none, the Directors voted unanimously to create the 'Subcommittee on Student Engagement.'

### **Recognition of RMAC 2025 Organizers** (Ken Cannon)

Next, Ken acknowledged the time and efforts of all the RMAC 2025 organizers and planners, specifically naming Chris Merriman and Caroline Gabe, with significant help from Jason LaBelle on the program, Spencer Pelton with finances, and Kevin Black and Rob Koenig on Sunday field trips. Then he expressed his thanks to ASU for hosting RMAC and donating venue space.

Chris Merriman also recognized the donated spaces and free use of the van for field trips, noting that the university's generosity saved RMAA a couple thousand dollars. Jason LaBelle added his thanks to Chris and Caroline, followed by a round of applause from the BOD and audience. Jason then asked the BOD to write a letter of thanks to ASU for hosting RMAC and suggested that Chris could tell us to whom the letter should be sent. Ken and Spencer agreed that this was a good idea.

Ken asked if there was any more new business to discuss and, with nothing mentioned, he asked for a motion to adjourn. Spencer and Scott McKern jointly made this motion, seconded by Lynn Harrell, and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:53 pm MDT.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin Black  
RMAA Secretary