

District Committee Meeting
June 7, 2012
One Bergen County Plaza
Hackensack, NJ,

Key People

Pat Stamato, District Chair
Leslie Sonkin, District Vice-Chair for Program
Sal Bellomo, District Commissioner
Steve Leonardi, District Director
Joel Lieberman, Senior District Executive
Oliris Ramos, District Executive

Guest speakers

Todd McGregor, Acting Scout Executive for NNJC
Pat Coviello, Director of Field Service for NNJC
Walter Koroluk, Chair of the Search Committee

See attachment for other attendees

Opening - A New DE and three guests

Norman Kasser led the Pledge, then Pat introduced Oliris Ramos as our new District Exec, joining Steve and Joel. He joked with Lillian Molnar, who said she had already spoken to Oliris, but was still adamant that Three Rivers should have four DEs. Pat then introduced Pat Coviello as the new Director of Field Service, and Walter Koroluk, Committee Chair for the Lenape Trails District, but who came tonight in his capacity as chair of the Council's search committee. Finally, Pat introduced Todd McGregor as the acting NNJC Scout Exec and also an Area Director for BSA National. Pat turned the meeting over to Todd.

PART 1 - Search for a New NNJC Scout Exec

Before starting his presentation, Todd also joked with Lillian by asking, "Is Oliris your third DE because you have two others, or is she the third DE because you lost two DEs before her? Because if you've been through two others..." Several people all answered at once, with comments such as "Well, actually we have..." but Todd said, "I wasn't trying to pick a scab. I was just trying to have a little fun."

Searching for a new Council Scout Exec - We need a profile

Todd explained that Walter is part of a 12-man search committee, but that Todd himself cannot cast a vote; instead he is acting as a kind of secretary. Walter said that tonight's task will be to come up with a "profile of what our new Scout Exec should look like." The next step will be a list of candidates, which will be reduced down to 3 or 4 best prospects, then interviews, and then an offer. He said, "The purpose of doing this is to find the right match for the Council -- however long it takes -- not just to settle on someone." Walter said that he and Todd came "to hear from you about what you are

looking for in a Scout Exec. You can help us." Todd wanted to make sure that consideration would be given to both the needs of the districts and also to the needs of Scoutmasters and Den Leaders.

Who are the candidates?

Todd said that our profile will be combined with the other districts and sent out as a national search to all Scout professionals. Later in the meeting Ed Quinn asked Todd to clarify what the pool will be; that is, what qualifications a person must have in order to be an acceptable candidate. Ed suggested that the pool would be limited just to people who might want to transfer to our area, to people who feel ready to be promoted to Scout Exec, and to Scout Execs in smaller councils ready to tackle a larger one. Ed was concerned that the small size of the pool would affect the outcome and said, "This is not the first Council Exec that we've hired..." Walter and Todd both tried to assure Ed that the process will be a good one. Walter said, "We are not going to hire someone we don't want." Todd said, "I traveled 350 miles today. If I thought this process would be a *fait accompli*, I wouldn't have bothered."

Paul Adams asked about the possibility of "recruiting from within." He liked the idea that someone now working for NNJC "would know everybody and would have worked with everybody, while someone brought in from the outside will need 6 months to meet everybody -- and then decide that he doesn't like it here and leave!"

Sal asked Todd, "Am I correct that you won't hire a Scout Exec from the DE level?" When Todd agreed, Sal asked what level would be appropriate. In response Todd described how National designates its councils by size, ranging from Class-100 down to 500, with NNJC at Class-200. He said that an entry-level SE would typically start at the low end of 500 or maybe 400. Todd stressed that Walter's committee will make the decision, but he predicted that they would not consider an entry-level SE. Todd said, "In my opinion, you're looking for someone with the skill sets of a successful SE or its equivalent."

Job Description - What does a Scout Exec do?

Paul Adams asked Todd for a list of the SE's responsibilities. Todd said that he didn't have the written description with him, but he did his best to recall what it says, starting with the fact that the SE is responsible for the strategic plan and for its execution. Todd noted that the strategic plan "cascades all the way down to den meetings with every level in between. Scott Lomberk also had an answer, saying that the SE is responsible for the strategic plan as it relates to program, membership, and money. Gordon Beattie added that the SE also supervises the professional staff.

Todd said, "This is a big sophisticated council," and he listed some of the staff positions that report to the SE (Pat Coviello estimated 25). Todd said, "They're there to support you and to support units! That's their job!" Warren Dressler pointed out some limits, saying that the Council has no position for nor can it afford to have a Program Director,

Camping Director, or Training Director. He added, "That's why DEs have to do double duty."

Coming up with a profile - The results

Todd conducted a brainstorming session, soliciting suggestions, and rendering each as a terse phrase on a flip chart. Here are the chart's contents with details given below for each entry:

Understanding of	Be in the Field
Volunteers	Wear the Uniform
Program	Provide Vision, Support, Encouragement
Business	(not goals)
Staff	Align district, DE, and Council Goals with strategic plan
Development	Navigate merger
Team Building	Enabling leaders
Esprit de Corps	Service oriented
Bridge Volunteer/Staff - Goals	Unit Leader Relationships
Face of Scouting	Honesty & Integrity = tenets of Oath & Law
Listen	History of merger-reorg
Availability to/for Support	Enthusiasm Energy
Corp./Media/Civic Presence, \$	More DEs
Recruiting Success - Youth & Volunteers	Uniform-friendly

The Scout Exec must understand the volunteers

Bill Severino asked for someone who "speaks and thinks like someone from northern NJ. We have a certain sarcasm and a certain way we deal with each other." Later in the evening Mark Worthington gave an example of how his own family deals with each other over differences, saying, "I argue with my wife and my sister, but we still all get along." He proposed that the new Scout Exec should have a "thick skin."

Leslie said, "For years I've gotten the feeling of an 'us-and-them' mentality. The professionals and volunteers are on the same team and in the program for the same reason." She summarized by saying that the Scout Exec must understand volunteers, program, and business. Todd added all three requirements to his flip chart.

The Scout Exec must develop his staff

Todd asked, "What are we really proud of in this Council?" Pat responded by applauding the District's volunteers and DEs. Sal nodded and said, "We have some damn good DEs!" He said that he wants the Scout Exec to deal with the DEs fairly and to listen to them respectfully. He wanted to avoid this: "If the DE doesn't agree with the SE's position, he's not good." He cited DEs who may not agree with the SE but who nevertheless "work their tail off for the boys and the district, but don't get recognized and get put down." Todd responded by adding to his flip chart the need for staff development and team building. He also added "Esprit de corps," to which several people gave approval.

The Scout Exec must be a bridge between volunteers and staff

Rich Curran picked up on Leslie's concern about "us-and-them." He recalled the acronym TRUST (Through reasonable unity Scouting thrives), and also recalled something that

volunteers have said to staff, "We were here before you came, and we'll be here after you leave!." Plus, "It's for the boys!" Todd wrote on his flip chart, "Bridge volunteers/staff."

The Scout Exec must be the face of Scouting in the community

Leslie said, "We need someone who's not afraid to be visible. Todd responded, "You want someone to be the face of Scouting in the community."

Gordon said, "I want to see enthusiastic support of BSA." He drew a contrast with the Girl Scouts, who are currently all over the media, including C-SPAN and ABC radio. He said, "If I hear another ad about Girl Scout cookies on the radio, it will drive me crazy." He said, "I want our Scout Exec to make the other SEs jealous of our media presence and civic presence." Todd wrote on his flip chart, "Face of Scouting."

The Scout Exec must be able to listen

Lillian said, "I want someone who is willing to listen and not just say, 'It's my way or the highway.' He may not go along, but at least he should listen." She added, "We haven't had that recently." Todd wrote on his flip chart, "Listen."

The Scout Exec must be available during off-hours

Susie Becker pointed out that the Council runs a business, but unlike other businesses that are typically 9-to-5, we have a lot of activity during off-hours. She said, "I think you have to be available during the times when the volunteers are working." Todd wrote on his flip chart, "Availability to/for support."

The Scout Exec must be able to achieve financial stability

Gordon agreed that the Scout Exec must have all the people skills already mentioned, "But he must also be someone who can relate to corporate America and make the Council financially solvent." He said that staff and program are important ("I'm a program guy through and through") but "Without money we're dead! I want a money guy -- someone who can raise it!" Todd wrote on his flip chart, "Corporate/Media/Civic Presence/\$."

The Scout Exec must have ideas about how to recruit adult leaders

Scott Lomberk told how Membership Committee meetings are always about "We're losing boys." He said, "I agree with getting the image out and getting media presence, but we need someone with ideas about how to recruit adult leaders." He added, "I think we have the boys, but we just don't have the adults in this Council. They're too busy with their jobs running back and forth to New York City."

Todd summarized Scott's comment as a need for a Scout Exec with a good history of recruiting elsewhere, both at the district and unit level. Scott added that location is also important, since recruiting success in the mid-west is not the same as a large urban district. Todd wrote on his flip chart, "Recruiting success - youth & volunteers."

The Scout Exec must show up at program events

Jim Africano agreed that the Scout Exec will be very busy with finance and administration, and will therefore delegate program-related tasks to someone else. Even so, he should "Come out and recognize the program, since that's what Scouting is all about. It will connect with the volunteers at the ground level." Jim added that our last three SEs "really didn't get to do that." Todd summarized for his flip chart: "Be in the field! Wear the uniform!" The call for uniforms received a lot of approvals.

The Scout Exec must ensure that goals are realistic

Mike Carp said, "The Scout Exec must set realistic goals and also provide the districts and DEs with the means to achieve them." Mike clarified that he was thinking in terms of program, fund-raising, and membership. Todd set off a lengthy discussion when he responded, "The SE doesn't set the goals. The district should be doing it -- at least that's the model."

Sal said that he had attended goal-setting meetings, "Where various districts indicated the goals they thought they could make, but we were told, 'No, you will make these goals!' which were higher." Sal said, "Everybody was set up for failure, the DEs and the volunteers." For his flip chart, Todd proposed, "Provide vision and encouragement, but don't impose the goals."

Scott asked for better alignment of DE goals and district goals. He gave the example of the Scout Exec telling DEs to increase attendance at summer camps, versus a district's goal to send as many boys as possible to a summer Jamboree. For his flip chart, Todd proposed "Align DE and district goals with the strategic plan," but he got some push-back on the "strategic plan" part.

The Scout Exec must deal with hard feelings from the district consolidation (1)

Gerry Beatty said, "The people in this room have survived the merger and have even seen some good come out of it," but she was concerned that lots of unit leaders and families have not yet reached the point that we have reached. She said, "I think that people are still grieving." One of her main concerns was that a large district means that events are now much farther to drive. For his flip chart, Todd proposed that the new Scout Exec should help "Navigate the merger."

The Scout Exec must be a leader who enables other leaders

Warren Dressler said that he had recently attended the Scout "All Markets Strategy Seminar" in Florida, and spoke glowingly of presentations by three councils that had made "amazing penetrations" into Hispanic, African-American, and Asian markets. Warren credited their success to each council's emphasis on leadership development. Warren said, "To me, a leader is someone who enables other people to be successful." He said, "I want someone to enable us. That means inspiring and motivating us to deliver more quality program to more youth with well-qualified youth and adult leaders." For his flip chart, Todd wrote, "Enabling leaders".

The Scout Exec must train the staff to be service-oriented

Fred Creswick said, "Over the years one of the biggest complaints is that the Council staff is not service-oriented." He cited numerous occasions when a request was made "and the ball gets dropped," usually because the request is handed off to someone else. Gordon added that the staff needs organizational tools to help them with their responses, "otherwise it becomes a thankless and impossible job." Todd agreed with Fred, saying that Scouting is a service organization and "That's what I'm employed to do! That's my job!" He added "Service oriented" to his flip chart.

The Scout Exec must deal with hard feelings from the district consolidation (2)

Mike Carp recalled current and past mergers and the hard feelings they caused, saying, "It goes all the way back to..." But Todd finished the sentence for him saying, "... all the way back to 1910! Trust me. That was the first merger and they hated it!" Mike continued by recalling a question at the time: "How will the merger affect the unit leaders, and how will it provide better service?" Leslie responded that this most recent consolidation resulted in a "plus," in that it enabled the District to offer more activities and program to the Scouts.

Mike proposed that the new Scout Exec "try to mend the hurt feelings of some unit leaders." He credited Pat when he said, "If they don't participate in our program, then they're off the reservation." For his flip chart, Todd proposed "Unit leader relationships."

The Scout Exec must have honesty and integrity

When Todd asked, "Are there things that the Council is doing that it shouldn't be doing?" he touched a raw nerve with Lillian, who said, "I was out-and-out lied to!" She was clearly still upset as she told about working on the consolidation committee with Walter. She told about commitments and assurances she received, how she believed them, and how she defended the Council in conversations with skeptical friends. She said, "I'm sitting here leery about this whole process because I've been lied to before."

Walter agreed that Lillian had a point, but he said, "We're not going to go back there. Today we're at where we're at. Our job is to find someone who can help heal whatever wounds we may have and move us forward." Fred proposed that Todd add to his flip chart "Honesty and integrity."

Todd apologized to Lillian on behalf of the organization, saying, "If you are disenchanted with Scouting because someone was disingenuous, then I owe you an apology." He then tried to head off another future problem by explaining tonight's process. Todd said that our profile list will be combined with the lists from the other two districts plus the staff. That long list will contain an "important set of attributes to help us identify candidates, but there's no way we'll get all of them. Please don't say that Todd promised that he will deliver all of these things."

Sal said, "The people in this room have worked hard to get past all that and to make the merger work." He warned, "If the next Scout Exec lies to us, he's going to lose us." Todd

responded by adding to his flip chart, "Being able to live and work by the tenets of the Scout Oath and Law".

The Scout Exec must deal with hard feelings from the district consolidation (3)

Gerry suggested that if we want a Scout Exec able to deal with hard feelings from the consolidation, it would be helpful if that person had lived through one himself, saying, "Maybe the experience of navigating through a successful merger would help. Maybe they'll have a good idea." Walter added, "Maybe even a reshuffling..." Todd wrote, "History of merger reorg."

Question: Should the Scout Exec be a "turnaround guy"?

"Is NNJC broken?" Ken Dutcher asked the question as carefully as he could, thinking that, if the answer is "Yes," then Todd should discuss it with just the Key-3 and the Executive Board instead of the 30-odd people here tonight. He asked, "If the Council is broken, or if significant pieces are broken, do we need a "turnaround guy?" Ken quickly added that, if it were the case, we have many good things that could act as a starting point to build on, such as "incredibly great units, and a great training program."

Todd's replied, "I don't think you're broken. If this were a turnaround thing, this conversation wouldn't be 'Who's the next Scout Exec?' but rather 'Which council do you want to merge with?'" He joked, "That's not happening! Not on my watch! Read my lips: NO NEW MERGERS!"

Todd elaborated. He said that, as Area Director, he had been in contact with NNJC since September and was immediately concerned with our shaky finances. But he also spotted "a plethora of brilliant passionate volunteers that want to serve kids." He called the staff "strong but in need of guidance." He called the program and properties "outstanding." Shifting to a cooking metaphor, Todd said, "The ingredients are all here. In my opinion you need someone to sprinkle and stir and simmer."

The Scout Exec should have enthusiasm and energy

Susie Becker said, "I want someone with enthusiasm. Negativity can be contagious, but enthusiasm can be even more so." Peter Hilaris said that he wants the Scout Exec "to have enough energy to help maintain and raise morale in the office and the volunteers." Todd added "Enthusiasm and energy" to his flip chart.

Need more District Execs

Lillian took the floor again to praise our DEs. She said "What we managed to accomplish this year happened with just two basic DEs. We were grossly understaffed and they worked their butts off to get us where we are." She joked with Todd, "We were supposed to have four -- in case you didn't remember that." Todd assured her that he did and added it to his flip chart.

The Scout Exec should not favor people in suits over people in uniforms

Gordon told of his experiences "with some Scout Execs," who conveyed a message with their "body language," which he characterized as, "If you're in uniform you get 5 seconds, but if you're in a suit, you get an hour." Todd added a second "Uniform-friendly" to his flip chart.

Walter's thanks and summary - plus a joke at the end

Walter said, "Thank you for giving us your time this evening." He said that he had taken four pages of careful notes, and had also taken notes with sessions at the Lenape Trail and Ramapo Valley Districts. He said that his job will be to consolidate everything, but noted that he had heard many of the same suggestions in all three places, saying, "We've all identified the same strengths and weaknesses, and we're all looking for the same things in our new Scout Exec." Because of the overlap, Walter predicted that his final notes may turn out to be the "same four pages."

Walter got a lot of laughs when he said, "After listening to you, if any of you (except for Sal) want to come to Lenape Trail, I'll be happy to have you."

PART 2 - Regular Meeting Agenda

Warren Dressler is the new District Training Chair

Leslie announced that Warren had agreed to take on the position, saying, "He really knows his stuff," and asked if he wanted to say anything. He responded by telling about a seminar he attended recently in Florida where he found that BSA National intends to change how it does training. He characterized the past 5-10 years as National aiming for "trained monkeys," where "you opened up the can and read the script or you went online." He dismissed the online training for Cub Leader-Specific as "250 PowerPoint slides, most of which are irrelevant." Warren said that National and the LDS Church are piloting a new simpler approach, "Where you sit around a kitchen table with a group of people who want to be Den Leaders." The subjects are "How to run a good den meeting" or "How to run a pack." He said, "There's lots of good stuff coming, but we'll have to be patient."

Warren said he spoke with Wayne Perry, the new National President of BSA, who said, "If there's anyone [in the program] who is not competent, he needs to get another job. That includes me." Perry announced his intention to do away with the paper Adult Application form.

Warren said, "We need to find lots of great trainers willing to help other people by sharing their experiences and enabling them to be better leaders and enabling youth to have a better program."

Upcoming Wood Badge Courses (Sep+Oct and May+Jun)

Warren announced the fall and spring Wood Badge courses and gave the dates. He said "Wood Badge is for everybody. It develops leaders and leadership skills." He urged

people to recruit attendees, saying that it is much more effective than flyers or simple announcements.

Upcoming NYLT for training youth leaders (Aug 12-18)

Warren said that the staff is preparing to handle 90 Scouts this summer. He said that the course is usually sold out.

Pat Coviello is the new Director of Field Service for NNJC

Referring to something that Bill Severino said earlier, Coviello said that he grew up in Brooklyn, "So I speak Northern NJ." He said he looks forward to visiting the Scout summer camps, which he characterized as the "pinnacle of the Scouting experience."

Coviello told how impressed he was at the size of our District Committee, since the national average is typically 10 members. He repeated Todd's comment about how dedicated the Council's volunteers are and added, "That's an inspiration to the staff and to me." He said, "There's only one reason a Scout council exists, which is to serve the units." He said that our mission should be to reach every eligible boy in our area, saying, "We serve 5% of the kids, which means that 95% are left out on the street. We've got to fix that."

Upcoming District Fishing Derby (Jun 16)

Gerry said that the Fishing Derby will take place at the Oradell Reservation, but so far the number of online sign-ups has been far lower than expected from our new, larger district. She asked unit leaders and Commissioners to talk it up. She said that the requirement for fishing licenses was lifted for just this weekend when New Jersey declared June 16-19 to be an open fishing weekend. In response to Leslie's question, Gerry said that Boy Scouts can come to this Cub event and fish, but they won't be eligible for prizes.

Upcoming District Swim Meet (Jun 22)

Mike Carp said that the Swim Meet will take place at the Lyndhurst high school pool on Friday evening. He reviewed the various events and how they will be run by age groups and the starting times for each. Mike explained that the organizers wanted to echo the patrol method, and so they asked for Scouts to sign up as 4-man teams and will charge \$10 per patrol/team. However, they will do their best to accommodate numbers other than four. Leslie noted that sign-ups so far are low, possibly because units will have wrapped up their 2011-12 year by then. She said, "If that's the case, then this could be one of your summertime activities."

Train ride as a possible fund-raiser

Ed Quinn recalled that he had suggested organizing a district fund-raising event at a past meeting. He had suggested a train ride, but noted that "we're running out of time." He displayed a flyer for one possibility, which showed a train rented from Warner Brothers and decorated to look like Thomas the Tank Engine. Ed proposed charging \$12 for adults and \$8 for kids, but said that he can drop prices if needed. He said to Leslie, "Please let me know if we're interested."

Upcoming District Camporee (Oct 12-14)

Leslie said that the Committee met last night and had settled on Oct 12-14 at Laurel Hill Park in Secaucus. The theme will be "The Environment." She said, "We definitely need people on staff," and then added, "This event can be a great meld of the Scouts in all our communities from the former districts." Leslie noted that the Camporee does not have an official chairman, but called John Sedlock the "point person" to contact with questions. She said that one consideration for setting the date was so as not to conflict with the Catholic Retreat weekend.

Upcoming Hudson County Bike Rodeo (Jun 9)

Pat said that Hudson County will run a bike safety event at Lincoln Park in Jersey City, with Boy Scouts assisting the instructors. He said that there will be cable coverage and Scouts or adults will be interviewed, but apologized for not being able to attend himself. The time is 10:00-3:00 and a table will be set up for recruiting.

Upcoming District Program Launch (Jun 12)

Leslie said, "If you are running an event in 2012-13, please have flyers ready. Steve can run them off."

A suggestion about how to recruit parents

Bill Severino had an excellent idea to recruit parents, likening it to the way that fraternities "rush" new members to join. He proposed that during each Cub event, parents should be approached and asked to attend some kind of training session to occur the following week, such as "Fast Start." He said, "As a parent walks up and says his son would like to join, we can say, 'I'd like you to see what it's all about...' If we rush in the adult, the child will follow." Leslie suggested that Bill take up the idea with Warren.

Commissioner's Report

Sal said "We need new Commissioners. If you know anyone out there: Recruit them!" He said that three new Commissioners were signed up last night but we still can use another 20, Bill Metts counted 64 units with no Commissioner assigned. Sal concluded, "Having said that, we're still in better shape than the other two districts," to which Bill added, "They've got 10 or 12 total!"

At this point in the meeting, Walter Koroluk from Lenape Trail District happened to re-enter from the hallway, and Pat couldn't resist having Sal loudly repeat what he said. Walter responded, "This is the third committee meeting where I've heard that." Sal got a lot of laughs when he immediately threw back, "The third? That means your own district told you that you have a problem!"

Membership Committee report

Susie Becker said that her committee had been watching the Girl Scouts ads and were now exploring ideas about publicity. She proposed ads with local children, saying, "Children get very excited when they see their friends on TV or in the newspaper." She

mentioned two towns that need support: Fair Lawn and Union City. About the latter, she said the past attempts to start a troop and pack had run into a language barrier, but she is both familiar with the city and also speaks Spanish. She said "I can help out there."

FOS presentations needed

Pat urged units to schedule FOS presentations, saying, "We're falling behind. And especially now with all that's going on, we need to bring money into the Council."

District Chair's report "For the Good of the Order"

Pat said how impressed he was with the comments and suggestions made earlier to Todd and Walter, saying, "You handled yourselves well and you were right on target." He said to Lillian, "I'm pretty sure they got your message about the need for four DEs."

District Exec's minute

Pat pointed out that the DEs were instructed to keep silent for the first half of the meeting and invited Steve to speak. Steve turned to Oliris and got applause when he said, "This *is* the district that you want to start a career in!" Joel got more applause when he said that Oliris was an excellent addition to the staff and cited her urban Scouting background and ability to speak Spanish. He said, "You couldn't find a better person to help support the District."

Two thank-yous

Pat thanked Warren for agreeing to be District Training Chair, and Sal thanked Steve and Joel, saying, "We appreciate the work you guys have done to make this district merger work."

**District Committee Meeting
June 7, 2012**

Attendance

Paul Adams
Jim Africano
Gordon Beattie
Gerry Beatty
Susie Becker
Salvatore Bellomo
Greg Boyle
Richard Carr
Fred Creswick
Richard Curran
Eric Dlugosz Sr
Warren Dressler
Ken Dutcher
Ricky Gomez
Kenneth Hesse
Peter Hilaris
Norman Kasser
Steve Leonardi
Joel Lieberman
Bob Lilley
Scott Lomberk
Barry Messner
William Metts
Lillian Molnar
Ed Quinn
Oliris Ramos
Bill Severino
Mark Wrightington
James Wrynn