

Minutes - Four Winds General Meeting  
Saturday, October 19, 2024  
Mosites Motorsports, North Versailles PA

Ed Tatters, President, *presiding*

Ed called the meeting to order at 12:30 PM and welcomed 22 other members and guests. The day brought a beautiful morning for an estimated 18 riders to exercise their machines, including Alex on his exquisite vintage Bimoto and Holly on her brand new R1300GS. Ed thanked Mosites Motorsports for hosting today's meeting (*mositesmotorsports.com*).

The first item of business was election of officers and directors for the coming year. Ed asked if any one who had not already expressed an interest is serving would like to volunteer now. No further volunteers spoke up, so Ed reported the slate for 2025, consisting of:

Doug Himes, President  
Doug Sallmen, Vice President  
Ed Tatters, Treasurer  
Joe Marnell, Corresponding Secretary  
David Donley, Recording Secretary  
Diane Pears, Web Master  
Dennis Mickanin, Director at Large

The slate as proposed was approved unanimously by voice vote. Ed noted the new terms begin in January; he thanked Beth Ann and Holly (outgoing officers) for their assistance over the past year.

With apologies for the long delay, Ed next presented to Joe Marnell the MOA Medallion award for 2024 in recognition of his long and valuable service to the club in the office of Corresponding Secretary. Although first announced at last February's annual Four Winds banquet, formal presentation to Joe has awaited the chance for Joe and Ed to be at the same location. Joe thanked all for the award, and he in turn encouraged all present to recognize Ed for leading the club and assuring its success over a number of years.

Ed reported this year's annual Four Winds rally was not a money maker. Expenses exceeded revenues by several hundred dollars. Without stretching much, the club is able to absorb the loss. Speculation for missing the "break-even" target includes (1) higher costs for just about everything purchased and (2) the rain predictions ahead of the weekend.

Sympathies were expressed to Bill Crookston over the recent loss of his father, Ronald Crookston, a long time Four Winds participant and BMW enthusiast. Bill thanked all for their kindness.

Discussion next turned to a new topic raised by Peter G. He related the details of a recent dealership experience that leads him to question brand loyalty because of the current costs of BMW ownership. His concern is whether or not the club should make known to BMW the dissatisfaction of many owners facing routine maintenance or repairs at factory authorized dealers. He shared the details of a \$256 expense to replace a light bulb on this 2016 RT. He does not discount the complexity of the factors involved, including the reliance upon skilled labor at dealerships, but questions the apparent indifference to the impact upon customers. His conclusion regrettably is the only recourse for him and many others will be to explore alternative dealerships and brands. Simplicity may be the better way to go.

Others shared details of similar repair and maintenance episodes, and the alarming expense left to pay. Among the examples cited, which was characterized as an “ambush,” was a recent \$105 charge to clear his bike’s cache as a routine part of service. Still others questioned the basic premise of the topic, suggesting that current BMW enthusiasts do not have any particular concern for costs of ownership in they walk into the showroom. The counterpoint offered was that most prospective purchasers place a much higher priority upon considerations of safety, reliability, and design engineering than placed upon cost of ownership or ease of maintenance.

Walt recalled that years ago the Four Winds traditions included the Shack Pack, a monthly gathering of club members interested in sharing hands-on maintenance routines and the accumulated mechanical insights of those electing to wrench themselves and avoid the expenses implicit in dealership expenses. Many thought these sessions were a key benefit to club membership. He also noted that the complexity of today’s electronics and other systems likely does not permit a return to this kind of self-help.

With the differing opinions, no consensus was evident as to the appropriate course of action to take on Peter’s proposal. A suggestion was offered that a draft letter be prepared expressing Peter’s point of view and then circulated to interested club members before proceeding. From there, additional action may follow.

The next item of business was selection of a venue for the February 2025 annual Four Winds banquet. Last year’s location (Antonelli’s Event Center in North Versailles) is under new management and has not reached out with any follow-up from last year. Suggested options for the coming year included a return to the Waterhole / Hartmann’s in Evans City ([hartmannsresort.com](http://hartmannsresort.com)), Shakespeare’s Restaurant & Pub in Ellwood City ([shakespearesrestaurant.com](http://shakespearesrestaurant.com)) and Atria’s Restaurant in Peter’s Township ([atrias.com/restaurants/peters-township](http://atrias.com/restaurants/peters-township)). Further exploration will be made by the incoming Board.

Next month’s general membership meeting will be the last for 2024 and is scheduled for a return to the North Park Lounge in Cranberry ([www.northparkloungecranberry.com](http://www.northparkloungecranberry.com)) on November 16<sup>th</sup>. A link to directions and additional information will be available on the club’s website.

Ed asked if there was any old business or any new business as yet to be discussed. Little interest was expressed for a 50/50 raffle today. So, as the final item for today’s meeting, Ed unveiled a birthday cake from the club in honor of Joe Marnell’s and Ken Kucel’s big day. Birthday wishes were extended by all.

Upon motion of the undersigned and second by Tim, the meeting was adjourned at 1:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

David Donley, Recording Secretary