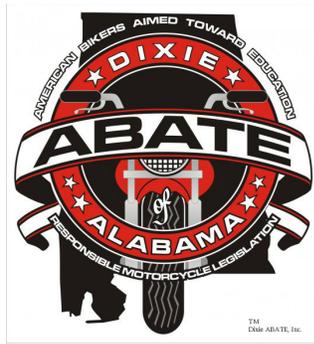


DIXIE ABATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Matthew Schroeder: State Director
Shane Coker: Assistant State Director
Larry Lindsey: Legislative & Education Director
Kris Cook: Acting Secretary/Treasurer
Gene Powell: Legislative Liaison

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DIXIE ABATE STATE MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 7, 2015 AT THE FURNITURE FACTORY BAR AND GRILL, HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

In attendance:

Kris Cook
Mark Pickart
Patty Jones
Nancy Garmon
Ira "Cowboy" Jones
Larry Lindsey
Matthew Schroeder
Shane Coker
Gene Powell
Dee Shaw

Danica Grace
Kevin Cotter (joined at this meeting)
Willie Simmons (interested party – works at HD)
Paul Walker (interested party – works at HD)
Johnny Turner

Arthur Orr

Mike Ball

Kris read the minutes from the previous meeting and gave a quick treasurer's report. No changes were noted.

Senator Orr came by at 2 PM. Gene spoke about the process by which a bill becomes a law. He explained that Senator Orr is in his third term and is on the Transportation Committee and is Chairman of the General Fund Committee. Gene urged us to be on a first name basis with our legislators.

He explained that ALEA is an organization composed of "everyone that has a badge and a gun." He said the state saves 30 to 40 million dollars a year by forming this organization and abolishing the separate organizations that used to exist, including the DPS.

Senator Orr urged us to agree now on what we want, not to "monkey around until April." He suggested we take a look at what other states have, that is working, and start there and "Alabama-ize" it. He said there is a "group down there that doesn't want bureaucracy and regulatory burden," so we might have an uphill battle instituting new requirements for rider licensing.

Regarding the licensing bill, he said a concern he has is that he's picked up on cynicism in the legislature that "on the back side, a business will benefit" from the change. He suggested Gene make up a 50-state grid illustrating what all the other states require, in order to get an M endorsement. He said to build it so that it is very obvious that Alabama is the only state where the "boxes aren't checked."

Larry mentioned that there will be a waiver if a rider has completed a BRC, to whatever bill is advanced. He suggested we amend the bill later to require a skills evaluation.

Rep. Mike Ball said we would be well advised to "take it a bite at a time." He said we don't want to be perceived as putting a regulatory burden on the people. He suggested we get in touch with Phillip Pettus, who is well acquainted with the driver's license process. Rep. Pettus wound up sponsoring the bill for us on the house side.

Senator Orr said he thought we had a chance of getting a riding test required within the next four years. He compared it to the craft beer issue in the state. Rep. Ball said "The less moving parts, the better. The more complicated, the more pain points that people can protest." He said what makes a bill pass "isn't the support, but the lack of opposition." He reminded us that very seldom does a bill pass the first time it is introduced.

Rep. Ball urged us to not take a bite that will activate opposition. He said if we take it slowly, we will be building a track record, credibility, and our relationship with ALEA and our legislators. It will be easier to do things in coming years if we already have those relationships in place.

Sen. Orr and Rep. Ball both urged us to go for the minimum change right now. Ball told us, "If they had a pleasant experience working with you before, they are more likely to work with you later. If you go down the path one step at a time, you'll find that better ideas will come."

Orr doesn't see the written riding test as being as onerous as a mandated BRC.

Orr mentioned that Jabo Waggoner (R-Vestavia Hills) has the power to kill any bill.

Larry said that this would create a revenue stream for the state. We all understand that anything that costs money is off the table, given Alabama's budget shortfall.

Larry asked them what the thinking is on third party testing. Ball said third party would be a huge plus, because we would not be growing government. Johnny said he thought we'd have more kick back from Republicans, since they are generally more opposed to growing government.

Randy Wood is chairman of the Public Safety Committee. That is who Gene has been working with.

After Senator Orr left, Mike gave us some background on him. He also talked about how grass roots movements get things done. We have to generate some media attention. It would be good to get some attention from the governor or lieutenant governor.

He said our Ride to the Capitol will be effective once the media picks it up and word gets out. Once we win the hearts of the public, we've accomplished something.

Gene spoke with Senator Orr before he left. Senator Orr agreed to sponsor the bill on the Senate side if we can come to an agreement with ALEA. There was discussion about whether to write the requirement for a skills evaluation into the bill now for implementation down the road, or leave it as is, with only a written test required. Larry made a motion that we support the bill for the re-establishment of the M endorsement, with the waiver for having passed a skills course, only, as was John Hamm's (ALEA) suggestion. The motion died for lack of a second.

We decided to defer a vote for two weeks, to see what Gene could accomplish with the contacts he has made. Gene will be in touch with the board as to his progress.

Matt talked about the Ride to the Capitol. Joker's ride starts at 1:30. That ride is put on by the American Cruisers. Our ride is separate from theirs. They are riding to the Blue Iguana in Prattville, where they will have a bike show and a winner take all poker run. Our ride is KSU at 11:30.

New members Kevin Cotter and Mark Pickart introduced themselves. Mark comes from Northern Utah ABATE, and Kevin is from Lafayette, Louisiana.

Larry reported on a "slew of new presenters", which will enable our driver's ed module to be given in all drivers ed classes in all high schools in the Mobile area.

The next meeting is Saturday, April 4, at the Jim N Nicks on Atlanta Highway in Montgomery.