

Marin County High Schools
Automotive Technology Advisory Committee

Minutes of the Meeting

DATE: October 30, 2018

TIME: 6:00 to 8:00 PM

PLACE: Tamalpais High School Auto Shop & Classroom

1. Welcome & Introductions

Judd Blunk is retired from management positions at Porsche Cars of North America and serves as Chairman of the committee.

Jay Hansen is Technical Service Manager at Marin Luxury Cars.

Doug Gold is General Manager of Marin Subaru and father of a Terra Linda High automotive student.

Steve Hamilton is Service Director at Audi Marin.

Vince Van Hoven is a master technician at Mercedes of Marin and the father of a former Terra Linda auto tech student.

George Hritz is Executive Director of the California Automotive Teachers and retired from teaching at College of Marin and San Marin High School.

Joe Farasati is a mechanic for the Tamalpais Union High School District and operates Farasati Racing.

Dale Miller is President of the Golden Gate Electric Vehicle Association.

Dave Del Grande is an automotive instructor at College of Marin and retired from management at the City of San Francisco's Central Shops.

Greg Davison is Career Liaison for Marin County School to Career program (Tamalpais district).

Araceli Nunez is Career Liaison for Marin County School to Career program (San Rafael district).

Mike Grant is Career Technical Education Director for Marin County Office of Education (MCOE) that sponsors, in full or in part, the automotive programs at Terra Linda and Tamalpais High Schools.

Corey Shultz is a retired high school/ROP automotive instructor.

Jesse Madsen is Assistant Project Manager for Marin County Office of Education.

Brian Scott is heavy equipment mechanic for the County of Marin Garage.

Dan Silin is the auto shop teacher at Terra Linda and Tamalpais High Schools and serves as Secretary for the committee.

Tom O'Neill of "Shifting Gears" is the founder of the Tiburon Classic Car Show.

Charlie Goodman is the founder of “Shifting Gears” and owner of the “Checkers” car collection.

Quynh Dao is Human Resources Manager for Mercedes of Marin.

2. Website and Minutes of Last Meeting

Dan handed out copies of the evening’s agenda and minutes of the previous meeting. In the past we have provided binders to each participant but, for now, the binders will not be provided to new members unless requested. Instead, he intends to make all the documents available on-line at dsilin.wixsite.com/advcomm. He clicked through the tabs of the website to show how it is organized, emphasizing the Meetings tab where agendas and minutes may be accessed and the Timeline tab where student interactions with industry are documented.

3. Work-Based Learning

Judd began by reminding us that we have been focusing our efforts on increasing student involvement with industry. The many ways to do this include job fairs, guest speakers, open house shop tours, job shadowing, internships, apprenticeships etc. The bottom line is that our industry is in dire need of new technicians. Hopefully, tonight, we can “close” the deal with specific commitments to offer such opportunities to our students.

Vince mentioned that he and Quynh had recently visited Madrone High School and spoken to students.

Corey noted that parents may still be reluctant to see their sons and daughters pursue careers as technicians because of the negative stereotypes associated with our trade.

Tom brought up the fact that today’s youngsters generally do not have the emotional attachment to cars that most of us felt in our youth. They have social media and digital entertainment in the palms of their hands instead.

Greg pointed out that automotive technology is changing so rapidly and becoming so high tech that a different kind of mindset will be needed in the future.

Mention was made of Uber and Zipcar. Many people may choose not to own a car in the future. Electric cars and advanced driver assist technologies may make much of our current technology obsolete. But there will always be a need for transportation and for technicians to maintain and repair vehicles.

Charlie bemoaned the fact that the Sonoma Raceway event for students hosted by Shifting Gears drew only about six students in the spring. Even though Tom (and Dan) promoted the event this fall, only two students showed up when we tried again a few weeks ago.

Several participants felt that racing was an important way to stimulate student interest and introduce some of the “sizzle” needed to attract today’s youth. But this is not the only way. We want to expose students to all aspects of the industry.

Jesse described some of the obstacles for high school students. It is hard for them to commit, to take time out of the weekend, to arrange transportation and so on. Organizing a formal field trip on a school day is complicated. It requires signed permission slips, arranging bus transportation, taking students out of their regular classes etc. We need to “scaffold” the process and make it easier for them. As Judd has also described, a step-by-step progression that takes a student from open house to job shadow to internship to job may be more successful than jumping directly into an internship.

Mike wanted everyone to understand that education experts at the state and even federal level are waking up to the value of Career Technical Education (CTE). A “strong workforce” program at the community colleges is an example.

Mike described the two hour a week evening restoration class that MCOE may be willing to sponsor at Terra Linda High School starting in the spring. This is the brainchild of Charlie and Tom. It would utilize experts from the industry in various areas: everything from upholstery to carburetion. We still need a coordinator for this program.

Joe, noting that he was probably the youngest man in our group, believes motorsports and drifting are great ways to get students fired up about our industry. He actually teaches these activities at Thunder Hill and other raceways! Perhaps we could guide students to build their own racecar, then take it out to the track and race it.

Tom suggested that we invite some students into our advisory committee to get younger persons’ perspectives. Most of us are not so young anymore.

Doug knows a young person who might be a good addition to our group and who is an expert with digital and social media. He asked if we are we doing a good job communicating how much money one can make in this field.

Charlie suggested that, along with the students, we should invite the parents so they can learn about the opportunities in our industry.

Judd and Mike agreed that it would be good to have reliable data about the numbers of jobs available and the amount of money that can be made.

Dan thought it would be great to invite parents and students to an evening event at Charlie’s “Checkers” facility that could include presentations by our industry leaders.

George introduced the TechForce Foundation that is working to guide students through education into careers as technicians. Perhaps TechForce could support our efforts. As others recognized, high school students are often too young to commit to a career. Bringing community college (College of Marin) automotive students into our activities might be beneficial for all concerned.

Steve emphasized that we want to present options. Rather than focusing exclusively on motorsports, we should introduce students to all aspects of the industry.

Dan admitted that he has never been interested in motorsports and knows nothing about racing. Figuring out how things work, troubleshooting and repair are what got him interested.

All agreed that we should present many different aspects of our industry to excite the interests of different individuals.

Jesse explained that schools are in recess one week in February and one week in April. These would be ideal times for internship opportunities. He presented a graphic showing the type of step-by-step progression mentioned earlier and asked for commitments from employers. Several participants agreed that they would be willing to provide workplace-learning opportunities.

Dale expressed disappointment with our emphasis on internal combustion engine technology. He sees any career focusing on IC engines as a dead end. Electric cars and driver assist technologies are the future of our industry and the areas where our students will find their careers.

Although most of those present have spent much of their careers around IC engines and might not so quickly predict their demise, all agreed that automotive technology must teach

transferrable skills that can be adapted to any area of transportation technology as an individual's career evolves over time.

Steve described his "Sonnen Academy" approach to bringing on young technicians. Early on, Mr. Sonnen brought technicians from Europe to the U.S. in order to develop the expertise he needed within his dealership service departments. In Germany, students pursue careers related to their aptitudes at an earlier age. Audi is committed to training as part of their mission.

Steve's "Sonnen Academy" takes on about four student technicians at a time, at \$21 an hour, for a three to five month training period under an expert Audi technician mentor. They then attend classes at the Audi training center and are stepped up to \$24 an hour. Steve's enlightened leadership provides a model that gives young technicians the support they need to be successful.

4. County Programs

Dan pointed out that the San Rafael and San Marin automotive programs are no longer functioning, leaving only Terra Linda and Tamalpais with high school automotive programs. We need to support these programs to keep them viable and healthy.

He also announced that he no longer intends to run two high school programs simultaneously and hopes to retire from Terra Linda to focus on Tamalpais High School next year.

The auto shop and other CTE buildings at San Rafael High School have been torn down. Judd lamented that it seems short sighted to tear down an auto shop with no plans to replace it. Mike made clear that careful consideration is ongoing. A brand-new state of the art CTE center is planned. Transportation technology in some form should be a part of these plans. Perhaps members of our committee could play a role in advising educators about the needs of our industry.

As mentioned previously, plans are in the works to offer an evening auto restoration class at Terra Linda and we need to find a teacher/coordinator for the program.

A new teacher can be hired with a temporary credential. By taking classes (at UC Berkeley Extension), the individual can "clear" the "designated subjects" credential within a couple of years.

George suggested that College of Marin's "Contract Ed" office might be able to assist with setting up this program.

Mention was made of acquiring one more donated vehicle at Terra Linda. Vince and Quynh have offered to work with Dan on this. Doug also offered to provide a vehicle. George described the arrangement he has helped to work out with the Bureau of Automotive Repair to provide vehicles from the CAP Vehicle Retirement Program to qualified automotive programs.

5. Next Meeting, Photo & Shop Tour

The next meeting will take place in the spring but a specific date was not announced.

Members adjourned to tour the shop where Mike took a photo of the rest of us.

Minutes submitted by Dan Silin.