

Minutes
ABSF Board of Directors Meeting
April 25, 2019
4:00-6:00 pm
Forest Lodge Cable, WI

Board Members present: Paul Eckerline, Dennis Kruse, Mike Mandli, Jan Guenther, Sue Scheer, Jeff Tumbleson, Mike Brown, Brett Rondeau, John Kotar, Kathie Pautsch
Absent: Tom Duffy, Yuriy Gusev, Charlie Dee
Staff Present: Ben Popp
Call to order: 4:00 PM

Approval of Agenda: Mandli move, Tumbleson second. **Approved.**

Approval of Minutes from March 18, 2019 Board Meeting:
Rondeau move, Kruse second. **Approved.**

President's Comments: Paul Eckerline

-There has been no further word on concern raised by a Birkie participant. Referred to local authorities.

-Birkie Enterprises: meetings have occurred; working on a "best practice philosophy" and manual. Will bring a formal motion to be voted upon at next meeting: (a licensing agreement) acknowledging that Birkie Enterprises is licensed to use Birkie brand.

Executive Session: closed. No decisions made.

Executive Director's Report: Ben Popp

-*High School State Meet:* encouraged all to attend upcoming meeting and awards dinner; looking at possibly moving the meet to the weekend before the Birkie in 2021.

-*Gitchi Gami Games:* date is flexible.

-*Super Tour:* Sprints will occur Wednesday of Birkie week at the start area; predecessor for World Cup.

-*Media Coverage:* Sports Illustrated article mentioned American Birkebeiner ski race. Talking to ESPN about coverage-they may come for LWC. Gives us access for more sponsors and coverage.

-*Staffing:* No plan yet for replacing Colleen (who will be leaving in May). Looking at various ways to reshuffle staff.

-*Ski Classics:* run by David Neilson; this is very successful in Europe. The Ski Classics Pro Tour has a high demand for TV productions and has live Eurosport broadcast (5 Million watch this in Norway). Cost is \$250-300K to do a full video. They are launching a Challenger Series, which is a way to bring in other events without incurring the cost. Events can be a World Loppet race and a Ski Classic event (they are not mutually exclusive). Advantage is to be listed on the Challenger Series calendar.

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Placemaking: This event is happening in Hayward on May 14, 5:30- 9:00 PM at Veterans Community Center. ABSF has special interest in Lumberjack Bowl (Audun will be attending this node) and Hatchery Creek Park (Ben will be attending this node). There are 7 nodes identified in Hayward. Attendees will develop strategies to explore and discuss improvements for these key public spaces. All are encouraged to attend.

Highway 77 Crossing:

Motion made: (to release funds from Capital Campaign)

“Whereas, the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation having successfully completed Phase 2 Capital Campaign, and Whereas, these funds were secured for the construction of, but not limited to, the Becker Law Link (Highway 77 Recreational Trail Crossing), Key Log Crossing (of Highway OO), Samuel C. Johnson Family Outdoor Center, GymRage Outdoor Fitness Park and Kortelopet Stadium, Therefore, the ABSF hereby approves all.”

Scheer moved; Mandli second. **Approved.**

Motion made:

American Birkebeiner staff shall negotiate with Leslie Martinson (up to \$20K) to purchase his property (of approximately 0.8 acre) so as to assure permanent access for Birkie trail to Highway 77.

Kruse moved; Guenther second. **Approved.**

Discussion of letter from Michelle Hobbs of the National Ski Patrol to ABSF BOD:

All agree that this is very disturbing to hear. Jan Guenther will respond to Michelle; ABSF will offer support. We recommend a meeting between the Hayward Public School Superintendent, President of the National Ski Patrol, Kristi Maki, and Sue Scheer along with Michelle Hobbs.

Committee Reports

Finance: Mike Brown

-No meeting this month.

-Handout P&L Summary and Cash Flow Forecast

-Variances explained

-March 2019 YTD results show a Net Income Surplus of \$903K with an income of \$3.36K and expenses of \$2.45K.

-Bank Balance is of \$279K is incorrect; actually is \$329K (plus \$50K from Birkie Enterprises).

-Recap of Financial Summary to be presented in May and voted on in June.

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-Audun and Mike Brown have exchanged e-mails regarding the language on the Birkie web page pertaining to tax deductions for members. The emails are attached for interested readers. Bottom line: we need to disclose fair value on items that members receive and acknowledge their donations. Language needs to be added to inform that each individual needs to personally determine if such items are tax deductible.

Motion made: The language on the Birkie Website regarding charitable contributions will be updated to conform with IRS standards.

Scheer moved. Pautsch second. **Approved.**

Trail Committee: Mike Mandli No report.

Documentation Committee: Charlie Dee No report.

Competition Committee: Dennis Kruse

No meeting this month, but noted that World Loppet is struggling; encouraged members to be thinking of strategies to increase attendance and awareness of these events.

Skier Development: Jan Guenther

\$37,500 budgeted-working on best way to use this to spur the growth of Nordic skiing.

Perhaps using this to create venues for Nordic skiing (snowmaking). Perhaps developing a "sport committee" to oversee development of venues in the Midwest.

Encouraged board members to consider and email Jan with ideas.

New Business:

Mike Mandli has had several former board members ask him how they may acquire the benefit of free entries to Birkie events. Colleen and Ben will compile a list of all previous board members who qualify for this benefit and determine a code that can be used when registering.

Also discussed having an annual event that includes all former board members (such as inviting them to the annual retreat dinner).

Annual evaluation of the Executive Director-closed.

Adjournment: Kruse move. **Acclimation.**