

MINUTES

ABSF Board of Directors Meeting
January 20, 2020
4:00 PM Start Area Birkie Trailhead

Board Members Present: Paul Eckerline, Dennis Kruse, Tom Duffy, Brett Rondeau, Jeff Tumbleson, John Kotar, Jan Guenther, Mike Brown, Kathie Pautsch, Charlie Dee

Digitally Present: Sue Scheer, Mike Mandli

Absent: Yuriy Gusev

Staff Present: Ben Popp

Call to order: 4:00 PM

Approval of Agenda: Dee move, Duffy second. **Approved.**

Approval of Minutes from December 2, 2019 Board Meeting: Kruse move, Dee second. **Approved**

President's Comments: Paul Eckerline

-Discussion of Telemark Properties and Telemark Redevelopment.

Executive Director's Report: Ben Popp

-**Birkie trail** is in great shape! Plan to check depth of ice on Lake Hayward later this week.

-Birkie is very involved (volunteering and helping) with the 2020 Coop FIS Cross Country Ski **World Cup** Sprint Finals occurring on March 17 in Minneapolis.

-Ben is hoping to attend the 52nd **FIS Congress Meeting** scheduled to take place May 17-23, 2020 in Thailand. Would like to announce interest in hosting a World Cup event in 2022. (This would be a \$1 million or more event; need to work out lodging and housing capability.)

-**Registrations** for 2020 Birkie races are over 10,800. Prince Haakon race registration closes in 3 days (January 24); all other races are closed. Deadline to switch events or ski technique is also January 24.

- **Re-zoning at OO** was approved for conditional use to sell coffee/treats at the Highway OO Outdoor Center. Food Inspector requires that all food items need to be prepared elsewhere and individually wrapped before bringing them into building. Working on passing all codes, which may require an additional sink (estimate cost of \$500).

- Sawyer County has decided against an **event fee** for use of the Birkie Trail. Instead, they will ask for a donation from all trail user groups. Donated money will go into the Resource Development Fund, of which some would come back to be used for the trail in the form of a grant. This then could be used to upgrade the trail (for example, improve signage on the trail for both CAMBA and Birkie users). This is a more palatable solution and provides a positive PR aspect as we would be donating to the county.
- There have been mechanical problems with locking the front doors of the Highway 00 Outdoor Center. Looking into solutions to fix this problem.

Committee Reports

Finance: Mike Brown

- Financial Summary Recap as of December 2019 reviewed.
- Monthly income of \$408K with expense of \$247K yielding net income for December of \$160K .
- YTD income \$2,686K with expense \$1,310K yielding net income of \$1,375K with favorable variance to budget.
- There has been \$1.1 million brought in from registration fees.
- Current bank balance is \$580K.
- As we typically have a large bank balance, Finance Committee is looking into ways to earn interest on this. Will bring forth recommendation for investing a portion, while keeping an adequate reserve. Goal would be a no risk investment with availability of quick access to funds if needed (such as a LOC).
- Trail Pass sales are up this year by \$25K (likely due to snowmaking and early snow). Discussed looking into improving technology and security by installing kiosks for electronic trail pass purchases at trailheads.
- Finance Committee is analyzing data from current year events in order to make recommendation for registration fees for next year's Birkie events, as well as a 3 year plan. They will also be comparing fees to other World Loppet races and ski marathons.

Trail Committee: Mandli (unavailable today)

-A Trail Committee meeting occurred; will be updated at next Board meeting.

Documentation: Dee

-No report.

Competition: Kruse

-The Seeley Hills Classic ski race went very well with 490 participants. The Birkie has teamed up with Seeley Hills Classic. The Birkie staff commandeered another great event. Dennis was very complimentary to the Birkie staff and offered thanks and appreciation. This will continue to be a combined effort with the Birkie organization. Suggestion for next year is to provide the interesting history of the Seeley Classic race to event participants.

-Birkie Tour was very fun and successful, with 610 participants.

Skier Development: Guenther

-No Report.

New Business:

-Prior to the meeting, board members were given a tour of the Birkie Trailhead property and a chance to ride in the Pisten Bully with Kurt Proctor.

-Next Board Meeting March 16, 2020.

Adjournment: Duffy move. **Acclimation.**