

# MINUTES

ABSF Board of Directors Meeting

Monday March 15, 2021

3:00 PM

Online via Teams Meetings

**Board Members Present:** Mike Mandli, Jeff Tumbleson, Kathie Pautsch, Mike Brown, Paul Eckerline, Tom Duffy, Charlie Dee, Bill Brown, Sue Scheer, Yuri Gusev, Karen Manske, Brett Rondeau

**Absent:** Jan Guenther

**Staff Present:** Ben Popp, Allison Slavick, Joe Vadeboncoeur, Susan Kendrick

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

**Approval of Minutes** from February 15, 2021 Board Meeting:

Eckerline move, Rondeau second. **Approved**

**President's Comments:** Mike Mandli

- Congratulations and thank you to staff for their hard work with all Birkie events and the Fat Bike Birkie. Fantastic job!
- There are two actions proposed by staff for the next fiscal year that require board approval.
  1. **New Event:** There has been a lot of interest expressed by skiers for a Birkie open track event similar to other Worldloppet events. This would be held on the Wednesday of Birkie week, using the Birkie course (starting in Cable and ending on Main Street in Hayward). It will be less crowded with a rolling start, and have minimal support on the course. The town of Hayward has approved snow on Main Street starting on Wednesday of Birkie week. This event will have the same fee structure and will count toward Birkie event. There will still be a registration cap. An individual cannot ski two Birkies.

**Motion:** ABSF board of directors approves addition of an open track Birkie event to be held on the Wednesday of Birkie week. Duffy move. Manske second. **Approved** unanimously.

2. Entry fee increase for 2022 Birkie events by \$5 is proposed by staff. Although the budget is not yet complete for next fiscal year, this increase will help keep

staff salaries competitive, and allow the organization to fill new staff positions. Additionally, costs of everything from bibs, bussing, porta-potties, etc. have been increasing. The entry fee for Birkie events is considerably lower when compared to similar events in the country and world.

**Motion:** ABSF BOD approves a \$5 increase for entry fees for 2022 Birkie events. Pautsch move. Tumbleson second. **Approved** unanimously.

### **Executive Director's Comments:** Ben Popp

- 2021 Virtual Birkie events were difficult and stressful for staff to negotiate, but the outcome was excellent and they pulled off a very meaningful event.
- Still working on purchase of an excavator. The demo-model was not acceptable. Looking at other options.
- 2024 World Cup: There is an upcoming meeting with financial committee to go through budget and feasibility. More information to come on this in April.
- LWC: next board meeting scheduled for April. Modifications may need to be made due to close quarters of the seating. Some tickets have already been sold (pushed forward from last year).
- Fat Bike Birkie went very well and was a great way to wrap up the season.
- USA Triathlon has asked us to host a National Winter Triathlon Event.
- There is also some discussion of hosting a National Mountain Bike event in 2022.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Telemark Fundraising Committee-Capital Campaign:** Bill Brown and Allison Slavick

- Grants:
  - Two DNR grants will be submitted; we will know if awarded in approximately six months.
  - Applying for an AARP grant for \$40-\$50K that focuses on developing trails that are appropriate for (grand) children and families.
- A major donor list (approximately 4,000 potential donors) is being compiled for the Capital Campaign.

- Current focus is defining the Conservancy piece of fundraising. Considering selling shares at \$100 per share with incentives to support buying shares at a high level. \$100 per share is recommended as 17,000 donors in past capital campaigns gave \$100 or less; we do not wish to exclude these important donors. Working on goals for each category of giving. Would like to set a finite end date for campaign in approximately one year. We are also focusing on creating good engagement with Birkie Community.
- MOU with Landmark Conservancy:
  - Landmark has decreased their staff cost from \$15K to \$7.5K. The fee for their endowment is negotiable and based on the complexity of the conservation easements. They will allow us 5 years to pay the endowment fee. Cost could be anywhere from \$22.5K to \$43K depending on complexity.
  - From a fundraising point of view, recommend entering into the agreement with Landmark as this gives us credibility and legitimacy. Several potential major donors have expressed their desire for us to go forward with Landmark.

**Motion:** ABSF BOD approves the MOU with Landmark Conservancy. Dee move. Manske second. **Approved** (with recusals from Scheer and Eckerline).

Next step is to determine what will be put into conservancy and finalize plans for all areas. As this is a big task with ramifications that will last forever, it is recommended that a temporary board committee be formed to work with staff to develop options for land conservancy as well as overall design plan for all three sections of the Telemark property. Recommend adding non-board members to this committee as well. There is some urgency to this as some potential offers for sale of the western land have been discussed. Landmark can supply a menu of easements that are commonly applied to similar properties. LHB will also be very helpful for this as well.

**Motion:** The board will establish a temporary committee to evaluate options for both land conservancy and long-term design plan and to recommend actions on both to the entire board. This committee will be composed of board members, staff, and members of the ski community with appropriate expertise and chaired by a board member. Dee move. Pautsch second. **Approved.**

Committee members will include Charlie Dee, Yuri Gusev, Bill Brown, Ben Popp, Joe Vadeboncoeur, Jim Sokup, Kristi Maki and Allison Slavick. Will ask appropriate members of ski community to join as well. First meeting to be held later this week.

**Finance:** Mike Brown

- Review of operating financials as of the end of January:

February:

Income \$204K; Expense \$498K; Net Income deficit \$(294K).

Deficit due to many bills coming in.

Variance to budget is mixed. Expense showed the largest variance and was unfavorable to budget by (\$58K) largely due to Telemark (\$105K), offset by Expense Ops \$24K.

Year to date:

Income \$2.664M; Expense \$1.833M; Net Income Surplus \$831K.

Variance to Budget is favorable for both Income and Expense.

Revenue is favorable by \$531K with Donations/Grants/Sponsorships 85% of total. Event Ops savings is larger than expected by \$257K, offset by Telemark (\$111K) and Trail Expense (\$64K).

Bank Balance \$838K. (Project \$905K end of year, compared to \$930K last yr.)

Notable Balance Sheet items show Current Liabilities down to LY by nearly 50% due to lower Birkie events expenses. Total Liabilities are up nearly 24% due to Cares Act Loans received last year.

We received Cares Act PPP v2 loan for \$178K.

Trail Pass Revenue for February was \$6.7K, down 34% from last year. YTD is \$159K, up 25% compared to last year

Event participation for Birkie week events is 8,447, compared to 10,855 last year. Financial impact (\$370K).

Event participation for Fat Tire Birkie is 598, compared to 1,010 last year. (Financial impact (\$20K).

**Documentation:** Charlie Dee

No report.

**Competition:** Mike Mandli

- Upcoming meeting later this week to review anticipated costs/financials/budget for feasibility of hosting a World Cup event in 2024. Will have more to report in April.

**Development:** Jan Guenther

- No report.

**Diversity:** Jeff Tumbleson

- No report for this month. Meeting in near future to discuss Core Values.

**New Business**

- Susan Kendrick announced that Slumberland is working with ABSF to renew their generous sponsorship for another three years. A team meeting with Clay Diggins and Ken Larson was held this morning. They extended thanks to the ABSF for the outcome of the Birkie in this challenging year. They are very happy with the outcome and excited about the future of the Birkie!
- Next meeting Monday April 19, 3pm, Online via Teams Meetings.
- **Motion** to adjourn: Dee move. Tumbleson second. **Adjournment** at 4:52 PM.