

MINUTES

ABSF Board of Directors Meeting

Monday September 18, 2023

3:00 PM

Birkie Office

Board Members Present: Paul Eckerline, Tom Duffy, Kathie Pautsch, Jan Guenther, Mike Mandli, Andy Ubel, Sue Scheer

Electronically present: Bill Brown, Chris Morley, Kris Bjerkness

Staff Present: Ben Popp, Mike Brown, Kristy Maki

Absent: Madelaine Rekemeyer, Yuri Gusev, Karen Manske

Approval of Agenda: Pautsch move. Mandli second. **Approved.**

Approval of Minutes from June 26 and July 10, 2023 meetings: Duffy move. Mandli second. **Approved.**

Old Business: (Moved to earlier in meeting so that Kristy Maki could be present.)

- Inclusion Policy
Kristy Maki has been researching policies that other athletic organizations are adapting including FIS. After discussion, the following motion to amend rules of competition for ABSF events was made by Andy Ubel. This motion will be further considered and voted upon at our next meeting.

Motion: Move that for all events managed by the ABSF, the event rules shall be amended to include the following provisions:

1. Participants may register in the gender category for which they identify.

2. ABSF hereby adopts the World Athletics Book of Rules (Version 2.0, effective 31 March 2023) “Eligibility conditions for Transgender female Athletes.” To be eligible to compete for prize money or non-financial awards in the female classification, a Transgender female Athlete must meet each of the following conditions to the satisfaction of the ABSF rules committee:
 - a. They must provide a written and signed declaration, in a form satisfactory to the Medical Manager, that their gender identity is female.
 - b. They must not have experienced any part of male puberty either beyond Tanner Stage 2 or after age 12 (whichever comes first).
 - c. Since puberty they must have continuously maintained the concentration of testosterone in their serum below 2.5 nmol/L.
 - d. They must continue to maintain the concentration of testosterone in their serum below 2.5 nmol/L at all times (i.e., whether they are in competition or out of competition) for so long as they wish to retain eligibility to compete in the female classification.
3. ABSF staff shall adopt procedures appropriate for each event to ensure compliance with these rules.
4. ABSF staff is hereby authorized to restrict participation in certain event waves (e.g., the Birkie Elite Women waves or the Korte’s U20 Women waves) to only eligible female athletes.

President’s Comments: Paul Eckerline

- Election of Officers

Opportunity was given to nominate new officers. As there were no new nominations, and current officers agree to continue serving in their current roles, the following motion was made.

Motion: Move to re-elect the following officer positions:

President: Paul Eckerline

Vice President: Bill Brown

Treasurer: Kris Bjerkness

Secretary: Kathie Pautsch

Duffy move. Mandli second. **Approved** unanimously.

- Discussion regarding including a closed executive session at each meeting. Consensus is that this is not regularly needed. If a board member wishes to discuss something in closed session, this can be added to the agenda as needed.
- Our next meeting will be October 16, 2023. There is no scheduled November meeting. Our December meeting is December 4, 2023 followed by a Christmas Party with the staff. More information on this to come.

Executive Director's Comments: Ben Popp

- Ben sent out a detailed report electronically prior to meeting.
- Ben and staff are considering a change in ABSF membership categories. Currently we have three categories for membership: Individual, Family, and Business. Proposal is to eliminate the family category. All adults will have an Individual Membership, with anyone under the age of eighteen included free. Business would change to Individual Business. This will require a change to our Bylaws. Ben and staff will submit their recommendation to the Documentation Committee, after which it will be presented to the board for a formal motion. This proposed change would go in to effect in 2025.

Other discussion points included:

Removing the swag items associated with membership categories.

Continuing the Birkie Store discount.

Consider adding an MTV trail pass to the All-Access Pass and offering an incentive such as preferred parking at MTV.

Change trail passes to individual only (with under eighteen free).
Continue Bus Pass for College and High School Teams.

- A dedication to the conservancy donors and official ribbon cutting ceremony for the conservancy will take place on Sunday September 24 at 2PM at MTV.
- A dedication ceremony for the Kawabaming Tower and the Tony Wise Tower Trail at MTV will take place on Sunday October 1 at 2pm.
- A car counter is now in place at MTV. There were 7,800 vehicles recorded during the Fat Tire weekend.
- Ben has been nominated to serve as President of the Worldloppet Ski Federation.

Motion: ABSF BOD supports Ben Popp to accept his nomination to serve as President of the Worldloppet Ski Federation.
Duffy move. Guenther second. **Approved** unanimously.

- Mount Telemark Village (MTV)
The building permit for Base Camp at MTV has been acquired and building has begun.
Goal is to have the Great Hall permitted as a gathering place; staff are working on meeting the required qualifications.

Committee Reports

Finance: Kris Bjerckness and Mike Brown

- There will be a full Financial Quarterly Update at our next meeting in October.
Revenue is on budget at \$450K. Cash Balance is approximately \$2M.
- A Merrill Lynch deposit account has been opened with a current balance of \$754K. We have received interest of \$4.2K so far.

- Construction of Base Camp has started. Royal Construction has been paid \$16K so far. An internal process for review of all payments is in process. LHB will also be providing periodic reviews.
- Staff Update

Andrew Mancheo is now here full time as Partnership Director; sponsorships are on pace.

Meredith Ingbretson has left the organization; Partnership Coordinator position is posted.

Jeff Tumbleson has been splitting his time between trail and event staff. He will now be full time as Event Manager.

Data manager position has been vacated. This may be replaced with another position to assist the trails team.

The Development Director position is open.

Telemark Capital Campaign: Bill Brown

- Fundraising for MTV is over halfway there with almost \$5.6M raised. The launch of the public campaign at the Surly Brewing Co. in Minneapolis on August 22 went very well with good follow-up. On-line donations for MTV are increasing.
- Allison Slavik is helping with the application for a grant through the Bremer Bank Foundation for \$750K.
- The Telemark Capital Campaign Committee has been in place for over one year. To provide better focus, it will be divided into five subcommittees:
 1. Lead Gift Subcommittee
 2. Public Campaign subcommittee
 3. Grant Funding Subcommittee
 4. Commercial/Sponsorship Subcommittee
 5. Mountain Bike Subcommittee

Board members are asked to join one of these subcommittees. An email with more details regarding subcommittees will be forthcoming.

- We are applying for an additional \$250k grant through the Huelsmann Foundation that requires a resolution from the board. Our current Huelsmann Foundation grant ends March 2024. If granted, \$50K annually for 5 years, starting in 2025 would be awarded.
- **Motion:** ABSF BOD authorizes ABSF staff to pursue the above detailed grant through the Huelsmann Foundation.
Brown move. Scheer second. **Approved** unanimously.
- Additional fundraising events are being planned, including two house parties and an event involving Ariens Nordic Center.

Documentation Committee: Karen Manske

- No report.

Birkie One: Chris Morley

- The LCO Trail is being well used. The venue recently hosted a cross country meet which was very well run. There will be a fun run on the LCO trail on October 7, hosted by Ernie St. Germaine.
- Birkie One recently held a highway clean-up day in memory of Dave Landgraf. Ernie St. Germaine brought youth from LCO to help.
- Ernie St. Germaine will be moving to the Minocqua area. His local presence will be missed, but he will still be helping with the Birkie One initiative.
- Reminder that any interaction with LCO school youth requires that visitors sign in and sign out, and that two adults must be always present with youth.

New Business:

- BWCA (Boundary Waters Canoe Area) has expressed interest in a partnership with ABSF. They would like to be part of the Birkie Expo and collaborate with fundraising. It was unanimously agreed that this would be desirable collaboration.
- As part of the Korte Trail goes over the Telemark Golf Course property, staff are pursuing purchasing this parcel of land.
- Our next meeting is Monday October 16, 2023, 3PM at the Birkie Headquarters.

Motion to adjourn: Duffy move. **Adjournment** at 5:05PM by acclamation.