

## MINUTES

ABSF Board of Directors Meeting

Monday October 21, 2024

3:00 PM

Birkie Office

**Board Members Present:** Paul Eckerline, Chris Morley, Kathie Pautsch, Andy Ubel, Karen Manske, Tom Duffy, Mike Mandli, Jan Guenther

**Electronically present:** Bill Brown, Marit Ross-Sonnesyn, Kris Bjerkness, Yuri Gusev

**Staff Present:** Ben Popp, Mike Brown, Jim Sokup

**Absent:** Madelaine Rekemeyer

**Approval of Agenda:** Duffy move. Morley second. **Approved.**

**Approval of Minutes** from September 16, 2024 meeting: Duffy move. Morley second. **Approved.**

**Election of Officers:** Conducted by Mike Brown

- **President**

**Motion:** Move to nominate Paul Eckerline as President. Ubel move. Morley second. **Approved** unanimously.

**Motion:** Move to close nominations and elect Paul Eckerline as President. Ubel move. Mandli second. **Approved** unanimously.

- **Vice-President**

**Motion:** Move to nominate Chris Morley as Vice-President. Ubel move. Mandli second. **Approved** unanimously.

**Motion:** Move to close nominations and elect Chris Morley as Vice-President. Duffy move. Eckerline second. **Approved** unanimously.

- **Secretary**

**Motion:** Move to nominate Kathie Pautsch as Secretary. Eckerline move. Ubel second. **Approved** unanimously.

**Motion:** Move to close nominations and elect Kathie Pautsch as Secretary. Ubel move. Mandli second. **Approved** unanimously.

- **Treasurer** (appointed position)

**Motion:** Move to reappoint Kris Bjerkness as Treasurer. Mandli move. Pautsch second. **Approved** unanimously.

**President's Comments:** Paul Eckerline

- There is no meeting in November. Our next board meeting is scheduled for Monday December 2, 2024, which will be followed by the ABSF Christmas Party.

**Capital Projects:** Jim Sokup

- \$200K devoted this year to snowmaking: \$150K for infrastructure including upgraded electric wiring and strategically placed pedestals and \$50K for two new snow guns (stick guns vs. fan guns).
- There is a new maintenance building at Mount Telemark for storage of equipment.
- An excavating project at the Korte Start for parking lot and bus drop off area is completed.
- Biathlon Range area is being excavated with goal of having two targets available this season.
- Competition Stadium will have two boxes by the Great Hall and three boxes at the finish line.

- Mount Telemark Village has many projects including the newly completed pond (\$58K) and future pedestrian bridge.
- Staffing for snowmaking is always an issue (relying on significant staff time and need for volunteers).
- A new position is posted for Trails/Facilities Director.

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

- Ben sent out a detailed report electronically prior to the meeting.
- Louise Dressler is working with UW River Falls on a demographic study of ABSF event participants with over 40,000 participants.

Interesting data:

- 84% do not have second home in the area.
  - 91% ski
  - 29% mountain bike
  - 22% hikers/trail run
  - 1% fat bike
  - 64% have taken part in an event in the last year.
  - Of the skiers, 58% ski the Birkie and 28% ski the Korte.
  - 72% have no children in the household.
  - 90% are college (or higher) graduates.
  - 50% with household income greater than \$150K.
  - Ratio of male vs female is 60:40.
- Staff are continuing to work on the sales tax issue. Goal is to start our own platform that would be less costly than our current system and able to manage all database and registration needs.
  - The Foundation for the Endowment of the ABSF is meeting and hosting an informational session on November 16 at MTV from 3-5PM. All are invited.

- A winter kick-off with Ariens (on-line) will occur on November 7 with updates on snowmaking and Birkie events, and will include raffles and prizes.
- Sponsorships are close to budget due to the hard work of Mike and Kyle. We are at 90% of our goal for the year with strong leads on new sponsors.
- Our new Retail Manager/Buyer was introduced. Allie King is originally from Hayward and recently graduated from UW Madison.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Finance:** Mike Brown and Kris Bjerkness

- The 24-25 YTD Financial Summary as of September 2024 was shared.

Revenue \$2.9M

Expense \$809K

Revenue Variance to Budget is \$558K.

Expenses are close to budget.

ABSF Commercial Insurance Policy Coverage was reviewed. Staff are looking closely at this to ensure that we have adequate coverage.

Current total cost is \$113K.

Total Current Assets \$369K

Total Current Liabilities \$428K

Bank Balance \$217K

SBA loan is \$1.3M (2.75% for 30 years)

Our recent events (Epic Bike Fest, Birkie Trail Run and the Enduro event) were all profitable and had great reviews. The Birkie Trail Run had record number of participants.

Birkie week registrations are at 9,404, with a goal of 11,200.

**Telemark Capital Campaign:** Bill Brown and Ben Popp

- We have raised \$7.5M with another \$1.4M in pledges.  
We have spent \$8.5M to date.  
We will likely need to access our construction loan soon.  
Goal is to raise another \$2.5 M which will allow us to complete snowmaking infrastructure, biathlon range and the Lobby Plaza.  
There will be a big fundraising push at the year end and with Birkie week.

**Birkie One:** Chris Morley

- Birkie One recently met with the principal of the Hayward Middle School and the 6<sup>th</sup> grade physical education instructor to develop a program with Birkie One. Goal is to develop an on-site program at the school to get students out on snow. Need to obtain enough ski equipment to outfit about 30 students per class.
- On November 11 Birkie One is meeting with Meredith Ingbretson with the Community Ed. Ski Program to further discuss this.
- The committee is exploring ways to fund an ABSF staff person for sports development.

**Documentation:** Andy Ubel

- Andy sent out a proposed updated procedures manual to board members to be reviewed and discussed today and voted on at our next meeting. The changes are:
  - Sue Scheer added to the list of former Board members who receive complimentary entries for all Birkie events for life.

-Adjustments to reflect the changes in ABSF membership classes.

-Added that future budgets have a goal of setting the expense budget at no more than 97% of the revenue budget.

- Updates to the Bylaws will be presented at our next meeting and will be voted on at our January meeting.

**Team Birkie:** Yuri Gusev

- Yuri has received positive feedback from athletes and parents of Team Birkie members.
- An appreciation dinner is planned for this Thursday. Contact Yuri if you can attend. Athletes and key donors will be giving updates.
- A Roller Ski Race/Championship is happening this weekend at MTV along with a Nordic Ski Coaches Conference. There will be 30 coaches from all over the United States attending.
- Operational Update:
  - Team Birkie is working with ABSF staff to update financials.
  - Team Birkie is being treated as a stand-alone organization.
  - A newsletter was sent out last month.
  - A significant donation/gift is in process.
  - Contact Yuri know if any board member would like to be further involved with Team Birkie.

**Old/New Business:** none

**Motion** to adjourn: Duffy move. **Adjournment** at 4:45PM by acclamation.