

American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation
Board of Directors
Meeting of June 17, 2013

Members present: Jane Bidwell, Scott Chapin, John Garrett, Jan Guenther, John Kotar, Dennis Kruse, John Leighton, Amy Rowley, Sue Scheer, Joe Timmerman. Present by phone: Mary Wingfield, Yuriy Gusev. Not present: Don Becker Also present: Ben Popp, Shellie Milford, Susan Kendrick, Terry Penman

Minutes of the meeting of May 20th, 2013 were approved.

Agenda. Report from Executive Director, Ben Popp, was moved to prior to Other Business. Agenda was approved as changed.

Committee Reports.

Headquarters. Amy Rowley provided an overview of the most recent headquarters idea which is utilizing the current building with a remodel and add-on. Terry Penman gave a visual presentation of the architects drawing and a small scale model of the proposed building. Some of the information given was: increased space for storage; increased retail space which will be combined with a museum; increased and more private staff space; men's and women's bathrooms as well as a separate shower; potential board meeting area; committee and group meeting space; insulation and siding added to existing exterior; no sprinkler system because of it will be a Type 5 class B structure. Estimated annual cost to ABSF operating budget is \$22-23,000. Included in this amount are increases to insurance and real estate taxes. Projected time from move out to move back in is 6 months. Concerns expressed were: how will the public and volunteers respond to the ABSF spending this money? After a question and answer session, Amy Rowley retracted the motion from the May, 2013, meeting. It was suggested that 5 or 6 major talking points be developed and should be discussed in public to get feedback. Amy made a motion that we move forward with the project as presented with a budget of \$500,000 and that the vote take place at the July Board meeting. Joe Timmerman seconded the motion. Motion is tabled until July. Amy will send out an email with drawings and key points.

Personnel. Jane will go over notes from the Personnel Committee meeting during the closed session.

Skier Development. Grant requests are coming in slowly.

Competition Committee. Dennis Kruse talked about the FIS Marathon Cup which has nine races on the calendar for 2014. Three races have withdrawn from the FMC. It is in competition with the Ski Classic series. He thought that there was good foreign elite representation at this year's Birkebeiner event. He also is suggesting that we offer prize money in the form of "preems" during the Birkie event. The Seeley Hills Ski Club will offer \$1000 for a "preem" at "OO." He thought a second "preem" should be offered at Mosquito Brook Rd. If the

Trail. John Garrett said that the negotiating team of Dennis, Joe, John and Ben have a permanent easement agreement in principle with the three parties of Telemark – Dick Short, Steve Kaufman and Great Southern Bank, but there is not yet a signed agreement. Work has started on Birkie Ridge. We were contacted by the family of Rosie Martinson. They would like

to sell the property and wanted the ABSF to have the first opportunity to consider a purchase. Ben and John spent time at the land with a family member and have a good understanding of the property. Discussion took place regarding: concern about easement should property sell to someone else; the value of having the property for multiple purposes (trail, parking, etc.); possibility of Sawyer County being involved; utilizing the well which ABSF put in on property for potential snowmaking.

Executive Director Report. Ben indicated that he will send a mid-month report to the Board. He and Susan are working on several potential major sponsorships. He indicated that we can do a better job of managing our data. There is a donor who has offered \$10,000 in matching funds for capital improvements. The Worldloppet Annual General Meeting was a great success. It is apparent that many of the races face the same challenges as our event. A point of information; Sweden has ten million dollars in sponsorship and spends five million to maintain the sponsors. Bill Pierce has resigned from the Trail Chief's position. Leslie Strappon resigned also. Ben is working on developing an overall trail plan and a full-time position for the trail management. Also, he is developing a full-time position for a combination of Birkie Enterprises, assistant to race operations and media. Ben wants to review every line item in the budget and build a budget for next year. Sue Scheer suggested that the organization have a retreat in September to get the ball rolling on Ben's ideas as well as other topics of discussion.

Budget for 2013-2014. Discussion took place regarding suggested budget changes. On the expense side included are the following: Additional \$33,600 to develop Assistant Race Director and Trail Manager positions; Volunteer dollars to stay at budgeted \$45,000 (\$10,000 more than projected for current fiscal year); \$5,000 added to prize money with the distribution to be decided by the Competition committee; leave sponsor recruitment at \$1,000 but the executive director could consider higher; sponsor benefit, keep lodging at \$4,000 for total of \$23,300; sales commissions (sponsorships) leave as is for now; there was discussion about increasing the skier development budget, but it was decided to keep it at \$40,000. Income: add Nikkerbeiner back in to Thursday/Friday events and add \$10,000 to income; add \$4,000 to Fat Bike sponsorship income. After discussion, Dennis Kruse made a motion and John Kotar seconded the motion to approve the preliminary budget based on changes outlined in discussion. Motion carried. Final budget approval will be at the July meeting.

Capital Budget Changes. Dennis Kruse suggested that ABSF should not replace the older snowmobile unless technology improves. Ben agrees that buying a new snowmobile does not seem like a pressing need. Suggested that \$6,500 be removed for snowmobile replacement. John Leighton suggested adding \$50,000 for new heated bathrooms at OO, but the Board decided against making this change. A line item will be added for Headquarters with estimated costs through June 30th. Amy and Terry will come up with a projected figure by the July meeting. Added back \$200,000 as a placeholder for trail corridor acquisition or development. Dennis Kruse made a motion and John Garrett seconded the motion to approve the preliminary budget for capital expenses. Motion passed.

Unpaid IPC Grooming Bill. Yuriy Gusev had asked that the Board look into adjusting the outstanding bill of \$8,590. He asked that it be reduced. John Leighton made a motion and John Kotar seconded the motion that the balance due be cancelled. After lengthy discussion, the motion passed.

Discussion took place regarding the need to establish a policy for grooming done for events other than American Birkebeiner events.

Upcoming Board Election. The questionnaire in the application for Board membership will be revised to combine the first two questions into one and eliminate the rest. Discussion took place regarding reinstating policies regarding Board meeting attendance and committee participation. Dennis Kruse made a motion and seconded by John Leighton that the Board accept one member from Bayfield County and one member from Sawyer County appointed by each county's Board. John Garrett made a motion and Amy Rowley seconded the motion to reduce the number of the Board by one for the 2013 election and one more for the 2014 election, bringing the total number again to 13 after the 2014 election. Motion carried

Board went into executive session.

Submitted by Shellie Milford