

American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation
Board of Directors Meeting
January 23, 2012

Members present: Bill Bauer, Jane Bidwell, Scott Chapin, Tom Duffy, John Garrett, John Kotar, Dennis Kruse, John Leighton, Dave Nelson, Sue Scheer, Joe Timmerman, Mary Wingfield. Also present: Ned Zuelsdorff, Shellie Milford, Susan Kendrick

Meeting called to order at 4 p.m. by Sue Scheer, Board President

Minutes of the meeting of December 22, 2011. Joe Timmerman requested the addition of the phrase that he accepted the contingency that Hwy 63 trail head development would be contingent upon the approval from Bayfield County to cross count lands. Mary Wingfield asked that Scott Wilson be listed as present at the meeting and that he raised the issue of the acceptability of the proposed start area trail by FIS. With corrections the minutes are approved.

Mary also asked that when a voice vote is taken at a Board meeting, names and for and against votes should be listed in minutes.

Agenda. The agenda was amended to have the presentation by Dr Ian Duncan take place first.

MS Request for Funding of Documentary. Ian Duncan gave a presentation requesting a donation of \$25,000 toward the production of a documentary. In particular, Drs will address the medical and scientific aspects of MS and demonstrate the ability of MS patients to participate in active sports. A goal is to film three MS patients skiing with Vegard Ulvang at various American Birkebeiner events. Although there is interest, there are no firm commitments by television stations to broadcast the documentary. Dr Duncan feels that this would be a good marketing tool for the American Birkebeiner as well as increase the profile of cross country skiing and the Birkie trail. He indicated that the National MS Society is not involved because of financial concerns. Asked about names of donors so far, Dr Duncan said he cannot share the names of private donors. Some discussion took place regarding the philanthropic nature of such a donation. Joe Timmermann suggested that philanthropic donations be included in the budget process.

Finance. Joe Timmermann began discussion of financial report. Ned indicated that Atomic, Craft, Smartwool, Olympia Granola signed on again. Nabisco and Jack Links came on as new sponsors. He said that the total in cash sponsorship for all events is at \$157,000 and, in addition, in-kind value is currently at \$120,000. Ned commented that there is no major sponsorship agreement at this time. Discussion took place regarding the need to invite potential sponsors to the Birkebeiner, develop a hospitality program with several dynamic hosts. Joe suggested that sponsor benefits could be increased to include this idea.

Personnel. At the recent Personnel Committee meeting the group came up with a method of evaluating the Executive Director. The Committee will send out an evaluation form to Board members and will meet in closed session in early April to do a performance review. There is a current job description for the Executive Director position which will be reviewed and revised.

Competition. Dennis Kruse mentioned that last year's Birkie winner and his team will be returning to the 2012 event. A Finnish World Cup skier will contact Ned about attending. A strong contingent of Russian skiers will be attending.

Finish Line. Tom Duffy indicated that there will be a Finish Line meeting Tuesday at 2 p.m. John McCue, Hayward Police and anyone else interested are invited to attend. Tom Duffy is spearheading the development of a group of "security" people to control the congestion in the finish line area.

Executive Director Report. Ned indicated that there is much effort to deal with the finish line congestion problem. It is hoped that we will be using a disposable chip which will eliminate the need for "chip pullers." Discussion took place regarding whether or not to have the start line timing wire. The general consensus was to keep it because skiers have become accustomed to it and like it.

There were 701 people registered for the BirkieTour this year. Event reviews were very positive.

Ned indicated that the buses used for transportation of skiers and spectators do not utilize subsidized fuel. The bus company has its own insurance coverage.

Tom Duffy indicated that the easement for the Mary Duffy property needs to be revised to include the by-pass portion of the trail which goes around the normal course.

Unfinished business.

John Garrett talked about the discussions which took place at the Trail Committee meeting that morning which centered on the three potential start areas; Airport, Telemark property and Hwy 63. Bayfield County will put the request for Hwy 63 start option land access on the agenda for the January meeting. Ned feels that some of the landowners will offer extensions of purchase option deadlines. After discussion regarding negotiations with Telemark Resort, Mary Wingfield made a motion to authorize the Board President and Executive Committee to meet with Telemark representatives to negotiate and bring a proposal for land access back to the Board for review. Dennis Kruse seconded the motion. After discussion, motion passed. John Kotar voted against the motion.

Other Business.

Adaptive grant request. Yuriy Gusev is requesting \$10,000 donation from the ABSF to manufacture 10 adjustable skis for children with disabilities.

Discussion followed regarding the process of considering donation requests. New requests should be channeled through the Finance Committee and recommendations made from that Committee. Requests should be incorporated into the following year's budget discussion. Sue Scheer said that she will follow this procedure going forward.

Birkie Enterprises. The origin of Birkie Enterprises was explained by Steve Narveson. Years ago the Wisconsin Department of Revenue made an assessment of the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation indicating that race registrations were subject to sales tax. Selling clothing all year long took us ABSF out of the "safe harbor" of 20 days for the event which is the window for the non-profit status. Birkie Enterprises was started as a for-profit" business. Officers were named and Birkie Enterprises is a stock corporation although stock shares are not sold. Effectively, the Board controls Birkie Enterprises.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Submitted by Shellie Milford and Jane Bidwell