

MINUTES
ABSF Board of Directors Meeting
May 16, 2017
8:00 AM
Old Chicago Club
Lac Courte Oreilles, WI

Board Members present: Paul Eckerline, Dennis Kruse, Joe Timmerman, Charlie Dee, Jan Guenther, John Garrett, Jeff Tumbleson, Yuriy Gusev, Mike Mandli
Board Members Absent: Tom Duffy, Brett Rondeau, Sue Scheer, John Kotar
Staff Present:

Call to order, 8 a.m.

Approval of Agenda: Mandli moved, Timmerman second. **Approved**

Approval of minutes from April 24, 2017 Board Meeting: Mandli moved, Timmerman second. **Approved**

President's Comments: Paul Eckerline

- The ABSF Endowment Directors will initiate a campaign, "The Spirit of 35." The concept is to identify 35 donors of \$25,000 who will be designated as "Forerunners" in honor of the 35 Birkie Founders who entered the first race.
- Paul announced that Director John Garrett donated \$25,000, becoming the first Forerunner. Paul thanked him for his generosity and the entire board concurred.
- Paul raised the issue of our need for a June meeting, and it was decided to hold one on June 20.
- Announced that evaluation performance evaluation of the Executive Director would be held today.

Executive Director Update: Ben Popp

- Birkie Logo update: We are getting free consulting on updating and standardizing our logo. Last year we used 35 different versions of the logo for various events. We hope to launch the updated logo in the July *Birch Scroll*.
- Our *Annual Report* will be rolled into that *Birch Scroll* to get it in more of our customers' hands.
- The Great Hall at the new start line is being improved with a metal insulated ceiling today. As part of the Birkie Staff's Annual Retreat, the will help with this work this afternoon.
- In the coming year we will run two events that we helped with last year: the Junior National Qualifier (JNQ) Gitchi Gami Games and the Double

- Pole Derby. It is simply easier for us to take ownership of these events than to simply support them.
- The Telemark Resort is in play again with investors looking into buying it. Whether that happens or not, we are always open to acquiring more land or permanent easements in the area of our start for potential World Cup-type loop trails connecting with our start that could possibly be combined with snow making plans.
 - The planned presentation of Birkie Enterprises will be given at our next meeting. Discussion ensued on relationship between BE and vendors/sponsors.

Development Update, Ben Popp

- Phase II – Currently \$838,000 raised/committed.
- Audun Michaelsen will start July 1 as Director of Development.

Committee Reports

Trail: Mike Mandli

- Committee held a May 1 meeting with 16 folks attended.
- Have established two subcommittees:
 - Venue Options
 - Technical/Mechanical Options
- Showed video from HKD, one of three major snow-making companies.
- Mandli outlined the challenges associated with both venue and technical options, which board discussed at length.
- Popp noted that we have \$150,000 in Phase II Capital Campaign funds currently earmarked for snowmaking, but we have nothing in budget for additional labor costs associated with snowmaking.

Finance: Joe Timmerman

- Snapshot summary of Current Period YTD in comparison to last year's budget was sent to Directors to help see our current situation.
- The 2017-2018 Budget was presented to Board.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- A big change here is that we have adjusted budget categories to reflect expenditures in categories that span the many events we manage. We can still break down numbers for each event when we need to, but we believe this gives us a better overall picture.
- Our cost for events in '17-'18 is basically flat, just \$30,000 more than last year.
- No participant fees are raised for 2017-18.

- Membership fees are now booked for the year of the race rather than when the payment is made.
- We have budgeted for work we still need to do around Fish Hatchery; we're waiting for a county permit approval before starting the work.
- Overall staff costs increased \$28,000 or 0.6% FTE over last year.
- Popp explained that we're still working on the division of labor for when Al Serrano leaves in the fall. Ben would like to put \$10,000 more in budget as a retainer for Al to consult with us after he leaves as a full-time employee.

Documentation: Charlie Dee
No report

Skier Development: Jan Guenther
No report

Competition: Dennis Kruse

We will be in FIS World Cup next year but Canada will not.

New Business: Executive Director Evaluation

(No staff present) Mandli moved, Kruse second contract offer to Ben Popp with salary increase plus bonus for his extraordinary performance of communication during the weather-challenged Birkie Week, nimble pivot to Birkie Festival at start line after race was cancelled, cohesiveness and performance of ABSF staff, and establishment of ABSF Endowment.

Approved unanimously.

Kruse moved Adjournment: **Approved** by consent.