

## MINUTES

ABSF Board of Directors Meeting

Monday June 17, 2024

3:00 PM

Birkie Office

**Board Members Present:** Paul Eckerline, Chris Morley, Kathie Pautsch, Mike Mandli, Sue Scheer, Andy Ubel

**Electronically present:** Madelaine Rekemeyer, Jan Guenther, Kris Bjerkness, Bill Brown, Yuri Gusev

**Staff Present:** Ben Popp, Mike Brown, Louise Droessler

**Absent:** Karen Manske, Tom Duffy

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

**Approval of Minutes** from May 20, 2024 meeting: Mandli move. Morley second. **Approved.**

**President's Comments:** Paul Eckerline

- Congratulations to Ben Popp who was recently elected as Worldloppet President for the upcoming four years.
- The Lumberjack World Championships are taking place next month. Board members are asked to volunteer if possible. Recent improvements to the dock have been completed.
- The treasurer position, currently held by Kris Bjerkness, is an appointed position on the board. He also heads the Finance Committee. Kris Bjerkness is up for reappointment this year. He will be spending eight months in Spain, starting in October. He can attend meetings remotely. After discussion, it was agreed that Kris will continue as our Treasurer.

The Finance Committee will meet in July (time and date to be determined).

- Louise Droessler was invited to discuss her transition from retail manager of the Birkie Store to Director of Development. Her goal is to connect with people who have connections with the Birkie by sharing stories and creating experiences and opportunities. She intends to focus on our Capital Campaign and fundraising through grants and private donations, as well as improve overall user experience. There is a new posted position for Retail and Buying Manager.

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

- Ben sent out a detailed report electronically prior to the meeting.
- We have almost 6K registrations for Birkie events to date.
- The matching donation of \$80K from Andrew and Jamie Dahl and Dahl Automotive was successful.
- The Grand Opening of Base Camp at Mount Telemark Village will take place on August 17, 2024.
- Johnson Bank is planning to do a workday at Base Camp to help with landscaping and planting.
- A lease agreement between Telemark Stays and ABSF is being finalized and will be sent out for electronic voting once complete.
- The Parker family hopes to break ground on their restaurant at Mount Telemark Village in August.

### **Committee Reports**

## **Elections:** Kathie Pautsch

- There are three board positions to fill this year. Sue Scheer announced that she will not be running after being on the board for over 16 years. She was thanked for all her time and contributions.
- Election timeline:  
Candidates must submit application by Wed, June 26.  
Voting will take place Fri, June 28 – Fri, July 26 5:00pm.  
Must be an ABSF member to vote.  
Results posted by Aug 1<sup>st</sup> on the Birkie website.

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

- The detailed ABSF 2024-25 Proposed Budget that was shared and discussed at our May meeting will be voted on today. There have been no changes.

**Motion:** Move to approve the proposed ABSF 2024-2025 Budget.  
Mandli move. Morley second. **Approved** unanimously.

- Financials as of June 17, 2024:

Revenue \$7.5M  
Expense \$4.8M  
Net Revenue \$2.74M

Operating Revenue \$4.8M  
Operating Expense \$4.5M  
Net Operating Income \$64.9K

- Discussed that over the next two years, goal should be to increase our net operating income to \$100K. Sponsorship is a key factor. Board

members will be sent a list of our current sponsors and are encouraged to let Mike or Ben know of any potential new sponsors.

**Telemark Capital Campaign:** Bill Brown

- We have reached \$7.8M through donations and pledges which is 75% of our goal. Thank you to Dahl Automotive for the \$87K matching donation. The House Party at the home of Mark Hooley was successful. The Major Donor Committee is working hard on this final phase of our campaign.
- Board members are asked to make phone calls to ten potential donors each to inform them of our campaign. If they show interest in donating, please refer to Louise.

**Birkie One:** Chris Morley

- The Birkie One Committee has been consulting with the Skiku program in Alaska, the Loppet Foundation, and with members of the UW Extension Department regarding their programs that share the same goals of Birkie One.
- A paid position and additional resources are necessary to take this program to a higher level. Consider adding a staff person to oversee Birkie One as well as Trail Kids and Team Birkie.
- Funding (primarily through grants) and sustainability are key factors for this.
- Goal is to have a small group of staff and board members meet to develop a plan to develop this program over several years.

**Team Birkie:** Yuri Gusev – no update.

## **New Business:**

- At our last meeting, the Birchleggings Club asked us to consider adding an appointed position to the ABSF BOD for a Birchleggings representative. Our response is that any ABSF member is welcome to attend board meetings and encouraged to run for a board position through our election process. Several of our board members are members of the Birchleggings Club.
- The ABSF Annual meeting is scheduled for Saturday August 10. There will not be a BOD meeting in July. Our next meeting is Monday September 16, 2024, 3PM at Birkie Headquarters.

**Motion** to adjourn: Morley move. **Adjournment** at 5:30PM by acclimation.

## **Addendum:**

After careful consideration and discussion, the following motion was made on August 17 and voted on electronically on August 27, 2024.

This motion authorizes the ABSF to trade the 18-acre parcel of land to Telemark Hills and recognizes that Paul Eckerline will purchase 55 acres of land as part of that transaction. Those 55 acres will transfer to the ABSF at the time of Paul's passing. Until that time, the ABSF is granted an exclusive 99-year lease of that land for events and trails. The agreement between Paul and the ABSF has been modified and reviewed by legal counsel and agreed to by both parties. This is a very generous gift by Paul and a will be very beneficial for the ABSF.

**Motion:** After review of the documents and fully considering suggestions, I move we, the ABSF Board of Directors, approve the authorization of the agreement made between Paul Eckerline, the ABSF, and Matt Pabloske. Mandli move. Rekemeyer second. **Approved** unanimously (except for Paul Eckerline who abstained from voting.)