**In attendance:** Andy Anderson, Ben Mandel, Dave Yadon, Jason Halloran, Libby Schoedel, Liz Addis, Chris Coppin, Matt Halloran, Colin Quinn-Hurst

**Guests:** Lara Gricar and Diana Dupuis, State Parks

Meeting started at 6:03pm

Action Items:

* 1. Parks: send rough budget/general budget numbers to SNSA for grant match and other budgeting purposes.
  2. Andy/board: Meet with Lara Gricar in late-summer/August to go over all permits and operating plan and get those ironed out early.
  3. Liz/board: For significant donors, in the past we have given them some kind of special thank-you in recognition of significant contributions. Please think about what that should look like this year, send thoughts to Andy and Liz.
  4. Colin: Return to the board with a write-up summarizing a potential proposal to the current Race Coach candidate, as well as a summary of what the broader vision is for long-term coaching for the team.
  5. Matt: Post Nordic Kids coordinator position soon, draft a more formal posting for last board meeting of the year.
  6. Chris: Add Van as a specific sponsorship line item. Send ideas to Chris for categories and sponsorship levels to integrate into the document and discuss at the next meeting.
  7. Jason: chat with local business/Fitness Fanatics and see what they say about Expert Voice.
  8. Jason/Andy: Locate and update snowmobile operations document from Tim Ray
  9. Board/all: Send Andy any thoughts for the annual member survey

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Calendar Notes:

12th of April will be last board meeting of the year

Followed by annual board retreat in late spring/early summer

1. Approve February meeting minutes – Moved to approve and seconded. Approved
2. Partnership Updates
   1. State Parks – in process of purchasing new grooming machine – Prinoth Husky X. A lot trails still need to be widened, and some are inadvisable to widen due to limited width between trails. This machine will enable consistent grooming of narrower trails. Between Husky and current 350, will be able to cover all the trails in the park.
   2. Some parts can be shared. Current groomer is an expert in Prinoth machines.
   3. Snow Park permits will be increasing in fee next year, season pass with special groomed sticker will be $120 next year.
   4. Winter Rec funding meetings will start soon and Diana will need to write about six grants. If they get the second machine, would like to look at increased funding for fuel costs through winter rec program to have both machines out on some days, looking to ask winter rec program for more support for fuel and machine supplies such as oil, etc. to keep all the machines going.
      1. If Spokane Nordic could cost-share, a 15% or 20% match would look a lot better going into these funding meetings. Would look for both an organizational letter of support and funding support.
   5. New State Parks director is very familiar with eastern Washington, was previously Park Operations director for the City of Tacoma. There is potential for a meeting with the new director which Spokane Nordic could attend.
   6. Jerry retiring as a State Parks ranger, April 2 will be his last day. Worked very hard for many years with a smile on his face for 33 years. Getting ready to update job description for Ranger 3 position opening.
   7. Starting interviews next week for Volunteer Coordinator position.
   8. Action item: Parks to send rough budget/general budget numbers to SNSA for grant match and other budgeting purposes.
   9. Action item: Meet with Lara Gricar in late-summer/August to go over all permits and operating plan and get those ironed out early.
3. Review Financials – Liz
   1. Profit/Loss comparison: Have added some income from ski school lessons operated on behalf of City of Spokane Parks and Recreation
      1. Will have some fees come in from JNQ – awaiting lump sum that usually arrives 4-6 weeks after the event.
   2. Skiathon sponsorships: Going into Foundation donations under unrestricted contributions.
   3. Karma consulting is listed under Marketing/Signage, so that is higher than in the past
   4. Foundation Postage is up for thank-you mailers for Sno-cial Distancing effort
   5. Action Item: For significant donors, in the past we have given them some kind of special thank-you in recognition of significant contributions. Please think about what that should look like this year.
4. Grooming/Trail clearing – Dave
   1. Updates: A lot of good discussion recently between groomers and grooming committee members about when and how to place tracks for maximum efficiency.
   2. Groomers have offered helpful, creative thinking about new connections on outer trails to improve grooming efficiency. Example, a new trail out by Tamarama, a connection off Paper or off the top of Quartz could improve efficiency.
   3. Comments from Groomers: wind effect and drifting coming off the hill out by Mica due to recent logging. This created some challenges for grooming due to resulting snow drifts. Some snow fencing could help address this.
   4. This type of collaborative problem-solving indicates the high quality of the new groomers and how they are thinking creatively on how to improve grooming.
   5. Grooming committee openings could be coming up. Committee charter from last fall has some details on rotation and how people can join.
5. Race / Transition – Ben
   1. JNQ review – Good feedback from those who participated. The solution we came up with was wise and worked well.
   2. George retiring. In recognition of George, Race Team is voting to rename the Junction 4 cutoff after George in some capacity.
   3. At some point, having a gathering for George when the COVID restrictions allow us.
   4. T-Team: Ted wiped out and took a Sunday off, but should be recovered by this weekend.
   5. Race Coach Search – Colin – The group is looking to define what the broader vision is for coaching, whether the aim is to find a parent-volunteer/recent graduate to fill the seasonal role or if, in the long-term, a full-time, all-season, multi-sport professional coach is the direction for the organization, which would be a major commitment of recurring annual funds that will need a funding source. In the meantime, the current applicant could be approached with an offer consistent with past contracts, with the potential to add-on new or expanded programming.
   6. Action Item: Return to the board with a write-up summarizing a potential proposal to the current candidate, as well as a summary of what the broader vision is for long-term coaching for the team.
6. Nordic Kids– Matt
   1. What did we learn this year? Regarding the new format, there’s a market there for the weekend-by-weekend format, where individuals can sign up kids for one-off sessions, so there is likely a role for one-time lessons in a limited format.
   2. Could possibly move to a family lesson format, or a simultaneous parent/adult lessons and kid lessons, if coordinated with the adult ski school program.
   3. Most people are conditioned to expect and interested in the full 8-week program, so we will probably move back to that.
   4. Nordic Kids coordinator.
      1. Aims – continuity, long-term sustainability in program
      2. Solution – hire someone to do the coordinating
      3. It takes a lot of time for a coordinator to do this position, and this could increase the quality of the product and meet the expectations of the parents who are coming into this program
      4. There’s a foundation of expectation that we are super-organized and everything is set, and paying someone could help with meeting those expectations and accountability for the coordinator role
      5. How likely are we to find someone willing to do this?
      6. We are essentially looking for a really good organizer and people person
         1. Foundational skill set of people organization
         2. We aren’t looking for someone who is an excellent skier, but the skillset of organization and corralling and managing ahead of time. Most of the work occurs between the weekend and pre-season, and it is less about day-of coordination.
      7. Three-year commitment would help with consistency
      8. With paying someone, you can hold someone more accountable
         1. Return on this investment would show up over 5 years in the programs for older age groups, benefitting the race team years down the road
      9. Continuity between programs would be important, communication and coordination between coaches
      10. Would want this individual to work with Trevor and Dee on a marketing plan
      11. This person is probably someone in our community already, maybe working part-time
      12. This role takes 100-150 hours throughout the winter season
      13. Action Item: Have this posted up as soon as possible, draft a more formal posting, if we have it done by last board meeting of the year, that would be enough time
      14. Motion: Move forward with writing up Nordic Kids Coordinator position as described in Matt’s memo to advertise this spring. Will share coordinator job description with full board before posting. All approved.
7. Adaptive / Skijor – Susan – No updates
8. Sponsorships – Chris
   1. Review draft program
      1. Five different categories and list of different ways to advertise through the organization’s outreach avenues
      2. Depending on how much they pay, sponsors get various levels of exposure through the Spokane Nordic website and various publications
      3. Will want to add back in maps to list of advertising possibilities. State Parks intends to have new maps for next year.
      4. Similar to map for Riverside State Park, Riverside Foundation raised funds and had recognition for donors in business-card-size spaces on the map.
      5. Regarding the value of providing the opportunity to advertise on the Spokane Nordic map, most of the income from those sponsors went back into the printing costs of the map. State Parks will include Spokane Nordic in those discussions going forward.
      6. Van would offer a kind of permanent display.
      7. Action Item: Add Van as a specific sponsorship line item.
      8. On coats and bibs there are logos. The bibs were a big investment requiring considerable sponsorship of $4-$5k.
      9. Generally, we should have some bigger categories available at the $5k or $10k level and have their name front and center on the van. Title Sponsor.
      10. Action Item: Send ideas to Chris for categories and sponsorship levels to integrate into the document and discuss at the next meeting.
   2. Expert Voice – what are the member benefits of this program and is this something we should notify our members about?
      1. Pros:
         1. Benefit for members
         2. It’s a portal to hundreds of brands of outdoor gear, aimed at professional outdoor organizations, and it’s not easy to get approved to be granted access to the portal
         3. There are 2,000 to 3,000 regular skiers who take advantage of the trails, and currently have 500 members. If we could capture an additional 1,500 or 2,500 members it could amount to $60k to $80k more for the organization
         4. Increased membership could help pay for other program needs
         5. Could potentially attract people who are not necessarily regular skiers
         6. No limit on how many members we can have accessing the portal
      2. Cons:
         1. Local businesses bring important intangibles of community connections and education on the side, as well as ski swaps and ski fitting for T-Team and Race, that they bring to the community, and we want to prioritize and respect long-standing relationships
         2. What do we get out of it as an organization?
            1. If membership volume does increase, what kind of membership is it?
         3. Diana – There are many ways to demonstrate the value of Spokane Nordic that State Parks can help with – posting signs and pictures that say “this has generously been provided by Spokane Nordic,” communicating that for every good thing you see, Spokane Nordic had a hand in it. People are joining and seeing a tangible benefit on the trails, actually improving the Park for everybody.
      3. Action Item: Jason to chat with local businesses/Fitness Fanatics and see what they say, members to talk with Fitness Fanatics and Ramble Raven and just see what the feedback is.
9. Adult Lessons and Events
   1. Skiathon review – Trevor
      1. Skiathon was a success
      2. Gary Silver Award – success and good format
   2. Virtual Birkie review – Susan/Pete
      1. Went really well
      2. Had a few people out on the Spokane trails
      3. Birkebeiner organization now doing some studies on virtual events to see how the participation played out and what they learned
10. Snowmobile Operation Plan and Assets – Jason
    1. Tracking assets, locating where our stuff is
    2. Action Item: Locate and update snowmobile operations document from Tim Ray
    3. Received another list of some assets we have
    4. Developing shared calendar of when snowmobile is taken out, in addition to idea of a text thread
    5. Will bring back more information in next meeting
11. End of year survey
    1. Last year the survey was around the lodge and prices
    2. Send Andy some bullets on things we’d like some feedback on
    3. How were the programs this year?
    4. Which trails would you like improved grooming on?
    5. Action Item: Send Andy any thoughts for the survey

Meeting adjourned: 8:00pm

1. Executive session