

SNSA Board, Annual Retreat

Yadon's house @ Lake Coeur d'Alene

April 29, 2018, 9 AM-2 PM

PRESENT: Andy Anderson, Kate Burns, Susan Engel, Peter Groza, Mike Powers, Libby Schoedel, Lisa Sunderman, Jay Wisor, Dave Yadon

Warm up exercise: write three random facts about yourself and the board will guess who wrote them.

Board members signing 'thank you' cards for various friends.

Motion to approve March minutes. Approved.

SEASON REVIEW

Junior racing team and membership numbers declined, both about 33%, in 2017/18 relative to previous.

Problems with membership due to website glitch that prevented people from signing up.

Significant decline in race team membership without decline in coach salary. Salary not sustainable.

Rangers/Nordic Kids grew. Potential for growth into race team years.

Barkerbiener and skijoring are an insurance concern for us. ACTION: Lisa and Kate will resolve.

FINANCE

Assets summary from Lisa.

Proceeds from champions dinner 2016 transferred to SNSA 'adaptive' fund.

Liabilities: Some remaining payroll taxes. ACTION: LISA to resolve with Karen Nelson.

Van and snowmobile fully depreciated.

Profit and loss summary from Lisa. We are at -\$4K for the year; George still has some travel expenses not yet resolved. We will need a donor to cover any expenses related to Brad and his work during the summer.

Profit and loss are sorted by both account and program.

Profit and loss spreadsheet sorted by program shows whether particular programs are profitable or not. Breaks out the costs associated with each program. For instance, Loppet 2018 made \$128 total after coordinator salary. Useful breakdown of coordinator's efforts.

ACTION: Kate to meet with Brad to assess his efforts toward programs and whether the profit/loss justifies that effort.

ACTION: We need Claire's notes/documents on Champions dinner to see if effort is justified. Will have to be run by volunteers instead of Brad.

ACTION: Susan Engle to take over Champions event planning... both Claire's role and Brad's role. Need to finalize date.

George Momany is courting some Olympians to serve as guest speakers.

JNQ: Donations 'not specified' are actually JNQ, so profit from JNQ is \$12.8K, not \$7.8K.

Bank/Paypal online fees are \$2.3K. Race/T team are direct payments, not accepted online, so we save money there. Need to be cognizant of, and try to avoid these online charges. **ACTION: Account representative from website to restructure payments.**

Race team negative due to reduced race team enrollment. (But T team and JNQ profits make youth race programs sustainable @ \$2K profit).

ACTION: Mysterious \$170 associated with champions event and Challenge/Loppet may be misclassified. Lisa to check.

Mike requested a 5 year summary of program profit and loss (current spreadsheet has only 2 years).

ACTION: Lisa can put that together.

Two loss years in a row is a significant concern for the board.

Brad's contract will end on June 30. Board needs to decide when to start next contract. If he is not paid over the summer, who will be responsible for overseeing trail days.

More generally, we have to consider cutting specific events/programs that are not either profitable or essential for community building (Winterfest is an example of the latter).

Fitness Fanatics complains that we undercut their ski lesson profits with our \$5 lessons. We could make lessons contingent on a rental from Fit Fan.

MEMBER SKIER SURVEY

What are areas for improvement?

Grooming, improve lodge and add a new warming hut

Opportunities: Expand education roles: adult race training programs; outreach to local colleges and the military (Air Force base). Lisa's work with Spokane Swifts is a model for this area.

Are we tapping into the running community enough? They are probably not interested. Can we advertise the health benefits of low-impact Nordic skiing relative to high-impact running.

Kara and Chris Messinger are offering to coordinate a meetup group for an adult (age 16+, including college) ski training program (three days a week). Could be people interested in racing or just people interested in skiing for health. Kara and Chris would coordinate, SNSA will provide resources and support in return for fees. **ACTION: Jay and Lisa to dialogue with Kara and Chris.**

Cross train ski team not ready for race team yet, but maybe too mature/advanced for T team. Not sure where they will fit in in the coming year but it may be necessary to merge into T team.

There are 300 SNSA members. Most members are Nordic kids/race team families (n=approx. 100) or people who have signed up through lessons (n=approx. 100).

BIATHLON

Biathlon will not happen within State Parks because of political, cultural and logistical concerns expressed by the State Parks people. Could be done on IEP land; will have to be done by someone other than parks. Biathlon is not a SNSA program; we are stakeholders.

SPONSORSHIP

We need to elevate income from sponsorships, but Brad cannot do this for us under his contract. We need a sponsorship committee. Brad will put together a marketing package for the group.

We need to oversee his development of these materials. **ACTION: Establish a sponsorship committee of community volunteers. It needs a board member, and it is recommended to be Kurt given his outdoor business.**

NORDIC KIDS

Andy Anderson summarizes past season and potential changes for upcoming season.

Lack of reliable coaching was a significant concern this year. Kids with special needs. Parent volunteering is not seen by parents as an absolute requirement, but it should be.

Recommendation for coaching issue: increase group size and have redundant coaching (more than 1 coach per group). Group heterogeneity (in terms of student skill and fitness level) will be OK with larger groups.

“On snow helper” only for the 4-6 year old students; anyone associated with older kids is ‘assistant coach’.

Four skill levels, to be identified by parent when registering online. When skill level and age considered, there are basically 7 age/skill groups.

When asking parents about on-snow volunteering on registration page, ask if they want to be involved in their own child’s group or not.

Volunteer opportunities will be coaching, session management, or olympics.

We need to have a specific volunteer for waxing/scraping skate skis. Do we need to change our skate skis to NNN bindings?

We also need to resolve whether the Nordic kids program will provide boots for skate skiing.

Do we need to wax the skate skis in advance of the season? Revisit this in the fall.

We need to do background checks on all coaches.

Make it official policy that any coach is 18+ years old. Younger people are 'assistant coaches'.

Do we want to start Nordic kids on Linder Rd rather than learning area? Benefit: it is lower and less exposed to wind; students don't have to fight their way up the hill. Downsides: Not visible from lodge; only one trail for all groups. Instead, let's start just outside the lodge.

Make training cards for the coaches so that they have a convenient on-snow resource for skills/drills/games.

ACTION: Andy to make training cards

No more pins for kids.

ACTION: buy arm bands for the group.

ACTION: replace the wooden posts for each team with fiberglass

ACTION: Coordinator needs to assign the skate ski sessions to specific teams, wax and inventory the skis.

ACTION: Libby will look into cloud storage options for all our electronic documents.

Nordic Olympics should be much less formal. Formality/competition makes it intimidating to smaller kids, so they do not participate. Have a closing parade at which all kids get a ribbon for their participation.

Spokane Nordic will not supply plates/plasticware for Olympics.

Tee shirts should be included for all Nordic kids and added into the entry fee. **ACTION: Someone needs to oversee the design of the tee shirt.**

Need to fund: arm bands, training cards, flags, 6-ft fiberglass posts, wax supplies, sharpies for coaches, skate boots (encourage people to donate these to the organization as their kids outgrow them).

ACTION: request involvement of Sean McLaughlin (for his expertise in product sourcing).

ACTION: Andy make a budget to offer to potential sponsors. Find a sponsor for the Nordic Kids program.

Do we want parents to have a monetary 'opt-out' for volunteering if they are not interested? Group consensus was no.

Do we financially incentivize early registration, and if so what is the cutoff for early registration?

MOTION: Approve Andy's plans for the next Nordic Kids season. APPROVED

GENERAL BUSINESS/BOARD COMPOSITION

Diana Dupuis has requested that State Parks establish a written agreement with SNSA that states the roles and responsibilities of the parties. Other user groups have agreements with the park.

ACTION: Kate will draft the agreement and share it with the board.

Need to fill 2 vacant board positions. What skill sets do we need to fill on the board?

Treasury? Someone with financial skills.

We need a vice-president to transition into the president role.

ACTION Kate will have individual discussions with us over the next month about our roles over the coming years.

ACTION: Dave will contact Ben Mandel, Kate will contact Lynn Stryker, about possibility of joining the board.

ACTION: Kate will make sure someone goes to the May 9 grooming committee meeting and the May 5 Paralympic Celebration.

SKIJORING

Diana Dupuis has requested a formal board opinion on when skijoring should be allowed. **ACTION:** Kate to invite Diana Roberts (skijoring advocate) to join us at June meeting to discuss whether skijoring will expand to Thursdays.

ACTION: Kate needs to ask ranger Steve if Tripps Knob outhouse needs to be pumped. Or someone can ride their mountain bike out there to check it.

BRAD THIESSEN DELIVERABLES

We need to get a list of deliverables from Brad for May and June.

ACTION Kate will give Brad a list of deliverables from the board (update registration portal for Nordic Kids, racing programs) and present it to Brad. Brad's current contract is through May 2019 but can be terminate without cause. Use this conversation to shape his future involvement in SNSA starting in autumn.

CHAMPIONS DINNER

We need to pick a date so that we can reserve the room. This is not a big money maker; it is really about the community building opportunity at the start of the season.

ACTION Susan will recruit community volunteers

MISCELLANEOUS

ACTION: Peter will distribute flyers to the local universities/colleges when they are available.

ACTION: Jay have lunch with George and lunch with Chris to check in.