

KNSC Minutes
6 January 2016
Homer, Alaska

Board members attending:

Jan Spurkland, President
Nicki Scharzi, VP
Carlin Rauch
Andrew Peter
Mike Gracz, Secretary
Derek Bynagle
Stacey Buckelew
Glenn Seaman
Richard Burton, Treasurer

Others attending:

Bob Cicciarella, KSEA Diamond Ridge Chief
Alan Parks, former president, liason with Snomads on proposed MOU
Maddie O'Laire, Admin Assistant
Julie Denison, KPB Land technician

Additions to agenda: Snomads MOU (Gracz), CIRI land leases (Szarzi), trail conditions reporting (Seaman); website (Bynagle)

Additions approved (motion by Szarzi, second by Seaman)

Community Trails Management Plan with Kenai Peninsula Borough

Julie Denison, a land technician from the Kenai Peninsula Borough, was attending to promote Community Trail Management Planning. Ms. Denison responded to questions: There is no explicit time frame for the duration of the plan, 20 years is a suggestion, but it could be longer. It is a new process that will require 90-180 days for approval from the assembly. The agreements can be updated, and that process should be relatively straightforward once the initial agreement is in place. No permanent trail easements will be granted through the Community Trails Management Agreement, but potential land-use conflicts will need to consider the pre-existing agreements. Permanent easements can be granted, through a separate process. Two agreements are currently in progress, and a couple of others, including KNSC and Snomads have shown interest. KPB staff is currently drafting a template for the agreements. General interest from the KNSC board was expressed in pursuing a Community Trails Management Plan with the Kenai Borough, a process initiated by Mr. Gracz in response to Ms. Denison's encouragement and the requirements of RTP grants for long-term landowner agreements.

Parking at KSEA fire station on Diamond Ridge Rd

Mr. Spurkland shared concerns with Mr. Cicciarella about skiers impeding emergency services by inappropriate parking at the Kachemak Emergency Services Area (KSEA) fire station on Diamond Ridge Rd., near the popular KNSC-maintained Sunset Loop trail. Mr. Cicciarella really appreciated KNSC's rapid response and expressed

confidence that we could find a workable a parking arrangement at the back of the station with clearer and more extensive signage.

Mr. Spurkland outlined that we need a short-term arrangement for this season, and a longer-term solution to parking needs at the popular trail. We have ceased parking at the KSEA station, but once we get clearer signage posted, and work out an arrangement with Camp Homer, across the street, we would like to resume parking there, and Mr. Cicciarella agreed to that arrangement, expressing that he never really intended to shut parking down, but did appreciate our rapid and thorough response to an incident where too many skiers were parking in inappropriate locations around the station.

Charlie Andersen of Camp Homer had sent a message outlining some conditions he would like to see met if he agreed to allow skier parking, such as the right to terminate the agreement due to weather and ground conditions, or nuisance, and exemption from liability. Mr. Gracz motioned and Mr. Seaman seconded that KNSC meet the conditions on parking at Camp Homer. The discussion revolved around the number of spaces (15-20) the amount we would pay for plowing, and the precise location of the parking. The motion passed with no opposition.

Mr Spurkland and others expressed that for longer-term needs we need to continue and expand outreach so that skiers do not park in driveways along Diamond Ridge Rd., and that skiers respect the integrity of an agreement with a generous neighbor (Charlie Anderson, of Camp Homer).

Mr. Parks promised to follow-up in pursuing an agreement with ATT/Alascom, the owner of an adjacent parcel that may provide a long-term solution with ample parking.

Other discussion focused on shorter-term needs, especially clear and sufficient signage at the fire station marking out the parking spaces available there, and directing folks to overflow parking at Camp Homer, across the street. During events, or larger gatherings a volunteer could direct traffic at the KSEA fire hall. It is possible that Mr. Cicciarella intended that KSEA might provide that volunteer, but that was never clarified. The possibility of obtaining access to the KPB land behind the fire station was also discussed.

Snomads MOA

Mr. Gracz outlined the history of the \$45,000 grant that Snomads had obtained from the legislature to construct a connector trail from Diamond Ridge to Ohlson Mt. Road. The funding was obtained in part by stating that Snomads was working with KNSC, although KNSC was not aware of the partnership. Funding was also obtained in part by stating that a public process had been undertaken showing support for such a trail, although the only process we are aware of was a State Community Revenue Sharing meeting where support for a multi-use trail along Diamond Ridge Road was prioritized.

A motion by Gracz, seconded by Seaman was made to approve a MOU between Snomads and the Kachemak Ski Club, drafted 15 December 2015 by Snomads, “regarding the completion of grant 15-DC-465 (Diamond Ridge upgrades to Watermelon/Marathon/Diamond Ridge trails)”

Ms. Buckelew expressed admiration for the Snomads trail system and the desire to work with them to get KNSC's Marathon Connector trail built. However, she also expressed concern that roles for each organization were not defined in the MOU. Mr. Parks indicated that the main goal of Snomads with the MOU seemed to be to spend the grant by the deadline.

Mr. Peter expressed concerns working with an organization that hasn't been as straightforward as it could have been with this grant.

General agreement by the board with both of those sentiments was expressed (roles and straightforwardness). Mr. Spurkland indicated that he would not feel comfortable signing the MOU with undefined roles, and general uncertainty about how KNSC might benefit from the agreement. The motion failed unanimously.

December meeting minutes were approved, motion by Mr. Bynagle, second by Ms. Rauch.

Administrative Assistant's report by Ms. O'Laire:

Total membership has improved, we are up to 172+ memberships with 409 individual names, about \$15,210 so far. Mr. Burton agreed with those numbers based on his tracking: about \$14,000 in individual memberships and \$1600 in business income.

Ms. Rauch brought up the need to recognize business members on banners and Mr. Burton said we also agreed to their names on T-shirts, a short discussion about investigating the need for more patron hats, some of which are available now at Homer Saw & Cycle took place.

Mr. Spurkland said we could move the "thermometers" up to \$17,000 on membership-goal signs posted at the trailheads.

Ms. O'Laire indicated that many folks had been taken care of in insurance letters, but a few letters were still screwed up.

Website

Mr. Bynagle expressed concern that the trail information page on the website was not very user-friendly. Mr. Gracz said that he agreed and that he would make a trailhead map that would help new people and visitors more easily find our trails.

Mr. Burton said now is a good time for new content, because he has a new website nearly ready for beta testing.

Financials

Mr. Burton said that last year shows a \$7000 profit primarily due to McNeil & Lookout capital improvements offsetting depreciation expenses. He received the reimbursable check for the Lookout project last week. There were a few payables owed from last year that were paid this year. Ms. Rauch handed Mr. Burton a check for \$200 from the Jr. Nordic rental program. Program managers should double-check their program balances to see if they make sense. Mr. Burton will be using the year-end profit loss statement to do taxes.

Mr. Seaman asked how income compared to last year, wondering if we could run short of projections?

Mr. Burton replied that we are way ahead of last year, because there was very little snow, but he wasn't sure how they compared to a normal year, but he didn't see any cause for alarm.

Upcoming events:

Friday Night Lights is cancelled until February.

Ski Swap 14 January

The fate of the Besh Cup races will be decided 13 January, we are proceeding as if they will occur.

Jr. Nordic needs coaches!

Strategic Plan review

CIRI lease

Ms. Szarzi read the conditions concerning dogs in the CIRI (Cook Inlet Region Incorporated) lease, Should we just not allow dogs on the "Wolf Ridge Trail?"

Some reservations that these are unenforceable were expressed, but since the policies align with current KNSC policy, and because CIRI land along the Marathon Connector trail is also included no opposition was expressed to the conditions in the proposed lease agreement. Ms. Szarzi is still negotiating the requirement that KNSC pay for a CIRI inspector from Anchorage to visit the parcels.

Mr. Peter asks if our insurance policy is OK regarding CIRI and Ms. Szarzi said that it was.

Mr. Spurkland asked that everyone look over our strategic plan and be ready to discuss it at subsequent meetings. He also said that Foraker is ready to help us sometime the second half of February for 1-2 evenings. (in response to a board development grant obtained by KNSC to review our committee structure).

Volunteer Appreciation

Ms. Rauch requested a budget for awards

Ms. Buckelew suggested that perpetual plaques with spaces for new names could be installed at the maintenance buildings at McNeil and Lookout, and motioned for \$300 for them, second by Mr. Burton, passed unanimously.

Other:

Mr. Spurkland asks about delaying ATV purchase, Mr. Gracz indicated that McNeil groomers were doing OK with current equipment, and that we could wait until we learned whether or not our Regional Trails Program (RTP) grant for an ATV and mower were funded, although the approval would not come in time to purchased equipment until next year. If more immediate need for equipment arose, the club should buy it.

Mr. Spurkland and Mr. Seaman expressed to general agreement that extra equipment is good to have in case of breakdowns. Mr. Spurkland would ask the equipment committee for recommendations and the Homer Foundation to see what our prospects for additional funding from them might be. We would need to approve purchase next meeting if we wanted the equipment to be in place this season.

Ms. Rauch listed options through the Grant Station at the Homer Public Library:

RTP

Rasmusson (and a subsidiary program for skier development grants)

Pick-click-give:

Discussion about tradeoffs between cost and revenue generated seemed to weigh against using this option.

Ms. Rauch indicated that it is difficult for ski clubs to obtain funding at the federal or state level. We need partnerships, perhaps with mental health , arts, health organizations? Or we needed to pursue corporate/ large business assistance. The possibility of using Amazon smile was also raised.

Ms. O'Laire suggested that we develop a wish list to approach business donors with.

Mr. Peter asked if we had a business plan? Mr Spurkland replied that we were in year 2 of a 5-year strategic plan.

Mr. Spurkland thanked the board members and asked fro comments, Mr Bynagle suggested we could do "pop-up" events in addition to the events we already do.

Meeting adjourned around 8:40 PM

Compiled by
Mike Gracz 11 January 2016