

EAGLECREST BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Meeting Minutes
February 1st, 2018, 5:30
City Hall, Room 224

Agenda:

1. ROLL CALL: Members Present: Sam Buck, Lee Henry, Dave Hanna, Mike Stanley, Stephanie Hoag. Telephonically attending was Bruce Garrison, Kayla Harmon and Norton Gregory.
2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:
The Agenda was approved by unanimous consent
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - a. January 4th Minutes
Mike Stanley asked for a correction on a typo in item 6A. Mike then made a motion to adopt the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Stephanie Hoag and passed by unanimous consent
4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
Jim Calvin, commenting with his Eaglecrest Foundation hat on that he is there to answer any questions regarding the Foundation.
5. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS
6. MANAGERS REPORT (See Managers Report February 1st)
 - a. Financial Report
 - b. Mountain Operations
 - c. Events
 - d. Alaska Zipline
Dave Hanna asked if we have an approximation on how much additional revenue may be generated through the merger buy out and merger of Alaska Zipline Adventures with Alaska Rainforest Sanctuary. The Manager replied that he expected to see around a 30% to 40% increase in revenue. Bruce Garrison asked if they were going to closing the Sandy Beach location. The Manager responded that he understood the intent was to close the Sandy Beach location.
 - e. Field House (See Managers Report January 4th)

Mike Stanley asked about the potential to extend the season further into April should we end up with a snowy spring and end the season with a deep snowpack. He would like the staff to consider a late season extension. Doing so would show gratitude to the pass holders for their patience during the slow start to the season and likely help to anchor sales for next season. Mike wanted to have the idea on the table for consideration with staff in the weeks to come. The Manager expressed that in his mind every option should be considered to be sure that we can retain the pass holder sales in coming years.

Norton Gregory proposed that for the 2018/2019 season that the Board Consider setting a date in which the pass holders could choose to get a refund, possibly by January 1st to help people to be not so gun shy of purchasing seasons passes in the fall. Kayla Harmon chimed in with her opinion that this tactic would set a dangerous precedence going forward. In the winter sports industry buying a seasons pass is part of the inherit risk of getting the discounted rate of a seasons pass. Mike Stanley commented that in the mid 2000's a similar tactic was used and subsequently put the ski area one million dollars in debt. Norton thanked Mike for the feedback and expressed that he wanted to make sure that all options are being looked at, including consideration of the other end of the spectrum, which would include the idea of investing additional capital in improvements to snowmaking and other mountain infrastructure to make sure that we are able to deliver a consistent product to the customer base to ensure their continued support of the facility. He felt that we shouldn't be stuck in the status quo and should push for the resources needed. The Manager agreed that he feels that a lot of confidence can be gained from the customer if we can show consistent ability to open the mountain even in the absence of natural snow.

7. UNFINISHED BUISNESS

- a. Eaglecrest Bylaws Amendment for everyone's binders.
Lee Henry mentioned that there was desire to post these new Bylaws onto the Board Webpage. Some discussion ensued and it was agreed upon that the Articles would be posted on the website.
- b. Trails Committee, Cabin Project, meeting rescheduled for February 8th
- c. Reschedule joint Finance and HR Committee Meeting proposed date February 22nd

8. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Juneau Ski Club Alternative Training Plan
Randy Bates, Program Director from the Juneau Ski Club spoke to the needs of the Juneau Ski Club to get additional mileage on the hill by using a club owned

snowmachine to tow their skiers to the top of a race course that would be set on Sourdough in the absence of enough snow to run the ski lift. Randy talked about the fact that they have been hiking the manmade snow on Sourdough which has been fantastic for their athletes. They have a small program this year and they are in preparation for a big race and are looking to increase their training potential leading into this race without negatively impacting the mountain.

Dave Hanna asked whose machines would be used. Randy responded that two of the coaches have snowmachines that would be used with three ropes attached to the back of the snowmachine to tow the skiers up. Randy mentioned that two years ago they were able to drive the kids up to the bottom of Black Bear and then use snowmachines to access higher elevation snow and train in Easy Bowl. Their drivers are skilled and experienced.

Kayla commented that she feels that we need to be mindful that these kids have paid a lot of money to be a part of the race training program and that it is important for us to go out of our way to make sure that we are able to support the kids and the longevity of the racing program if logistics can be worked out.

Stephanie does not have much objection to the alternative access if we can properly communicate to the public even though she is opposed to snowmachines at Eaglecrest. She wants to support these young athletes.

Lee Henry asked Brian Davies, Ski Patrol Director, what his recollection of how it worked in the past. Brian said that it did not work well in the past. Brian did comment that the manmade snow is receiving a lot of public use as we do not have any much snow to speak of the rest of the upper mountain. Brian is also concerned about the clubs insurance coverage for this type of activity and for the ski areas liability.

Mike Stanley was surprised that this happened before without Board Consideration and is very opposed to this as it can open the door to other people wanted to do similar things without any policy or guidelines in place. Historically this has been a very sensitive issue. Mike brought up the fact that motorized access is not allowed by CBJ ordinance.

Lee Henry agreed with Mike on the public perception and the many challenges posed.

Sam Buck saw many challenges to the issue from a public perception and the safety of towing skiers. Sam also felt that the snowmachine community may also take offense to seeing one group being able to use machines on the mountain and not the others with the lack of snow around the entire area.

Dave Hanna felt the only way this could be done is if we were using Eaglecrest Equipment.

Bruce Garrison would like to support the kids but would want to see a concise plan from Staff that would work to make this happen.

Dave Hanna made a motion: To approve alternative access plan developed by staff that used Eaglecrest resources and did not violate CBJ Ordinance as long as all costs were covered by the Juneau Ski Club. Sam Buck Seconded the motion and the floor was opened for further discussion. After no further discussion the question was called

The motion passed with 6 yes votes and 1 no vote.

Mike Stanley requested that he be informed as soon as a decision and action plan is arrived upon.

9. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Eric Kueffner, long time pass holder came to express his appreciation for all of the work that the mountain is doing despite the weather. He expressed that in his view when he buys his season pass he is buying a lottery ticket not expecting anything in return. He has bought 34 seasons passes and appreciates all of the snowmaking efforts that have been done during this season. He rode Porcupine Chair and talked to people that were having a lot of fun. He did not want to see the mountain offer any refunds that would create financial hardships in the future.

Gary Stambough, agreed with Erick's sentiments that refunds should not be offered and that skiing and snowboarding are very weather dependent. He thought it would be a great idea to extend the season into the spring should the snow conditions and weather allow.

Jim Calvin, Pass Holder and Board Member on the Eaglecrest Foundation agreed that little gestures to the pass holders can go a long way. He suggested that the Board and Staff consider Pass Holders as investors and that you can never communicate enough when things are tough going. Over communicating will be received well and that the people want to know what is happening and the reasons behind certain decisions.

Erin Lupro, as a current staff member of the snow sports program, former race coach and parent, expressed her concerns of using snowmachines and the safety of the kids in doing this. She also had a problem with the Juneau Ski Club being able to have this type of preferential access with the upper level instructors and students of the snow sports

program of Eaglecrest not also having the opportunity to access the snow in that same way.

10. BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Kayla, expressed that there was good conversation during the meeting opening up ideas for alternative ways to operate during low snow conditions. We need to hope for snow and plan for not a lot of snow. Kayla saved nearly \$300 while traveling to Ski Areas in the lower 48 due to her seasons pass perks.

Bruce Garrison, was calling in while at Jackson Hole Ski Area and commented on how their manmade snow was the only thing that was allowing their lower mountain to be skiable. Our patch of snow on Sourdough is proving that this is the direction that we need to be going and that snowmaking is really the wave of the future. We need to continue our focus on improving the snowmaking infrastructure and capacity. Bruce wanted to make sure that we all thank our loyal seasons pass holders for sticking with us through the bad weather and wants to make sure that we are supporting the race and youth programing. Bruce thanked all of the staff for their hard work to keep the mountain running without much snow to work with.

Norton Gregory, expressed his view that as we continuing to see this warming trend that he encourages the Board Members and the people in their social circles to contact their Assembly Members and to let them know how important it is to them for the mountain to have the snowmaking equipment necessary to open and run the mountain even during bad weather years. It is important for the Assembly to hear from the community. He feels that with the experience that the General Manager brings from his previous mountain we have the right person to make these improvements happen. He wants the Eaglecrest Board to know that they have his full support as the Eaglecrest Assembly Liason and he just wants to see more people on the mountain experiencing nature. He wants to make sure our residents, members of the Legislature and the residents from the neighboring communities have the best possible facility to use.

Mike Stanley, also seconds the other Board Members feelings on the topic of snowmaking. He was just down on a trip to Utah and the modern snowmaking technology was very apparent with the snowmaking towers that are affixed to the side of the majority of the lower slopes to cover large areas efficiently. He is looking forward to seeing what the snowmaking consultants may offer up for guidance on the best way to expand our snowmaking infrastructure at Eaglecrest. Mike reiterated that at the Board Retreat we identified this as the number one objective for future improvements. He also noticed while in Utah how well the manmade snow holds up to rain and warm weather compared to natural snow. Mike also extended his thanks to all of the Mountain Staff that have been working so hard to make the best out of the difficult season.

Dave Hanna, thanks the staff for hanging in there through the bad weather. Dave extended extra thanks for the Ptarmigan lift opening on January 13th. He was also planning on talking about snowmaking and feels it important to be looking at all options for additional water and snowmaking infrastructure keeping the focus of improvement on Snowmaking.

Stephanie Hoag, Agrees with what everyone has said on snowmaking and also had a great time during the one day opening on Ptarmigan. She has been impressed with how much fun you can have on Porcupine Chair and appreciates the efforts staff has put in to make that possible. She is excited to hear about the night skiing on Porcupine with the spaghetti dinner special and is disappointed to have to miss the event do to her being out of town. She is excited to see the new ideas being thought of. She would like to think of some little ways to show our appreciation for pass holders. She is excited to hear about the continued progress on the Cabin Project and will be out of town during that meeting. Talked about the Junior Nordic Team using Eaglecrest for training and how the Juneau Nordic Ski Club is interested in coming up to help groom or add creativity to establishing other trail routes.

Sam Buck, expressed his support for the continued expansion and efforts toward snowmaking to better guarantee access to the top of hooter and higher elevation snowpack. He is excited to see what we can do next year now that we have the new snowguns. He is impressed on how well the staff has been able to power through the bad weather delivering a fun experience on Porcupine. He is very excited to keep the progress on the cabin development and to see some more planning toward expanded mountain biking. Sam gave a thank you to all of the staff on the mountain for their hard work.

Lee Henry, Thanked all of the staff for their efforts in the Porcupine area. He has been having a great time with his daughter and has seen a lot of other families having a great time. He is glad to see so many projects that have been talked about for so long taking shape. Lee also sees the importance to keep the focus on the snowmaking improvements and to not let the time slip by keeping the momentum going.

11. ADJOURNMENT – Next meeting date March 1st 2018 at 5:30 in room 224 city hall

