

## Snow Bowl Four Season Committee

Meeting Minutes - draft

Thursday, July 28, 2016

Present:

Morgan Laidlaw - Chair

Sarah Ruef-Linquist - Vice Chair

Holly S. Edwards - Scribe

Geoff Chapman

Ray Andresen

John Anders

Martin Cates

Jamie Weymouth - alternate

Dennis McGuirk - alternate

Don White - Select Board Liaison

Beth - Snow Bowl

Landon - Snow Bowl

Minutes:

### Changes to minutes from July 15 meeting

Anders - name spelling correction

Chair not chairman - title correction

Fix meeting date from July 15 to July 14

Sarah Ruef-Lindquist - Motion to approve

Vote - Unanimous

### 1. Mission Statement discussion:

Sarah Ruef-Lindquist offered a draft version of the mission statement. With one or two grammatical corrections, the below statement was finalized.

***The Snow Bowl Four Season Committee is dedicated to maximizing the value and offerings of the Snow Bowl Recreation Area to the community by advising the select board and management on policy, pricing, use, development, income sources and other relevant issues that support its financially sustainable year-round operation.***

**Ray Andresen - Motion to approve**

**Vote - Unanimous**

### 2. Budget discussion:

Landon Fake reviewed the budget and answered a variety of questions along the various lines. Looking at page 10, he said that the toboggan chute and Toboggan Nationals expenses have been folded into Alpine as a department. He said that was also true of other items that some were looking for information on.

Landon said that administration revenue was comprised largely of grants and revenue.

Page 20 - Personnel accounts for seven full time staff, year-round.

Beth and Landon are under administration for their salaries, etc.

Ski Patrol - had three paid patrol staff each day per week. They are supplemented during the season by about 40 volunteer patrol people.

The Ski Race Supplies line is offset by the Ski Club, about \$10,000, for fourth-grade ski program and for scholarships.

Contingency - Landon said would be allocated out to various lines as seen fit.

Gift Cards - Beth said that reimbursement goes to the food vendor when people come in and use them. There is about \$12,000 in revenue each year to offset the \$8,000 expense.

Landon said they hired an employee to do full time vehicle repair, or who has the skills, which allowed that the vehicle maintenance line to be reduced from previous years.

Management Fee was for Charlie and the rental shop. Two years ago, when the rental shop manager left, they went to Charlie and asked him to do the whole thing. His fee represents about 15% of the gross of the rental shop.

Snow Making Equip Lease - air compressors. Got approval at town meeting to buy an air compressor, which will help.

Toboggan Reserve - where is that? Holly and others noted it was needed to maintain the chute, which is necessary for the safe running of Toboggan Nationals, as well as toboggan rides to the public on other weekends. Landon thought it was in there, but then said it wasn't and would find out where it went.

## Revenue

The assumption is a 60-day year and good snow

Sarah said- there is pent up demand following a down ski season last year. She said that most of the season pass holders she knows are skiing way more than 15 days. "So many people I know ski Saddleback and Snow Bowl, and Saddleback closed and so where do they go now?"

Landon said that 25% of the lesson revenue is made over Christmas week.

Dennis said that for total revenue, day ticket sales comprise 60%, lessons are 20 % and rentals are 18% of the total.

Landon: "This budget is based on being open for Christmas, and if we are not open then, all bets are off. That costs us \$100,000."

Don said he was a proponent of the new snow guns. This was a side discussion, with Landon and Dennis telling the committee that the newer snow guns turned out to be the wrong type for the weather at the Snow Bowl, and that they were working with a company to purchase their brand of guns, and that this company had buyers "eager to buy ours," which Landon and Dennis said would make it an even trade.

Landon - the ones we want to swap out number 13, and we have a total of 40. "They are a significant set, but they are not the end-all of what we need. But they put us in a better position."

Ray - what happens if you can't swap the guns?

Landon - we won't do anything.

Beth - we hope for cold and no rain.

Don - what is the cost of new guns. I want a number.

Landon said the Snow Logic guns purchased two years ago cost \$5,500 each, with an efficiency Maine grant for 50%. The new guns are \$4,500 each. "The company that wants us to buy them is being very helpful to find someone to buy our old guns."

Asked for a dollar amount, Landon said \$60,000 in total.

Landon - The fallback is to modify the guns to make them work better in marginal weather.

Dennis - To do that, he said they can also add the additive to the water to increase our ability to make

sure we can make snow during Christmas week.

### 3. Ticket Pricing:

With about 15 minutes left in the allotted meeting time, Morgan moved the discussion to Ticket Pricing.

Beth said that the Snow Bowl has some control over what Liftopia discounts the day tickets they sell and the committee should discuss how much that discount should be (maybe at a future meeting).

The committee discussed the proposed season pass and day ticket prices proposed by Snow Bowl staff. Beth said there was already an increase last year, and she is fearful that there could be blowback from season pass holders, in particular.

Morgan - Motion to approve the price increases

Dennis - Asked what is the net increase in revenue with the new prices for \$290,000 versus \$236,000 in season passes.

Landon - About \$200,000 in old prices.

Dennis - Are you proposing to increase the day tickets as well?

Landon - Yes, most by about \$4 each

Vote:

Favor - 5

Opposed - 2 (Holly and Sarah)

Ray - Motion to approve the budget as submitted

Vote:

Favor - 5

Opposed - 2 (Holly and Sarah)

Landon asked Holly and Sarah why they voted in opposition.

Sarah said she felt that there was room to increase season and day tickets more than was being recommended. She also felt that the income projections were not realistic, but overly optimistic.

Holly said she was uncomfortable with the budget increase, that there were recommendations for expense cuts offered by a variety of sources, including staff, the budget committee and Dennis, that were being ignored. That after going to the town to cover the deficit last year, the Snow Bowl should be more conservative and not take "gambles" with the weather and ticket sales and taxpayer money. And that there needed to be more parity in the ticket pricing for both season and day tickets.

### 5. Next Meeting Agenda:

New Revenue Streams

Adjourned: 6:10 p.m.