

Olympia Branch Council

Meeting Minutes – 09/10/2024

Olympia Center, room 200

Attendees

Officers: Bob Keranen, Dean Taylor, Elizabeth Spaulding

Guests: None

Agenda Items

Meeting called to order at 6:05pm

- Approval of June and August 2024 minutes
 - The minutes could not be approved during the official meeting due to the lack of a quorum, however they were approved the following day via email.
- 2024 Board Elections
 - Branch elections opened September 1 and closes September 22. The email announcing the elections may have landed in your spam folder. The voting page contains club elections followed by branch elections. If you have not already voted, please use the following link to vote: <https://www.mountaineers.org/blog/vote-now-board-branch-elections-2024>
- Social Chair – Elizabeth Spaulding
 - The Conditioning Hiking Series chairs have asked to allow their graduating students to participate in our upcoming awards ceremony at No Charge, the same option as extended to our Climbing, Scrambling and Kayaking classes. The board approved free admission to graduates of all current year Olympia classes.
 - A request was made to allow Dan Mazur to speak at the 2024 fall banquet. Eric Linxweiler has already been secured as our speaker, detailing the Freedom of the Hills 10th edition. The board felt that, due to time restrictions, it would be a disservice to both to try to have two speakers. We will keep Dan in mind for future banquets.
 - The board has decided to not hold an in-person Open House this year. The decision is largely based on the fact that the Social Chair position is vacant for the upcoming season. There is also a question as to whether we get a reasonable return on investment for the event due to sparse attendance. We may look into a Zoom option.

- National Forest Service GMR – Jim French (via email)

- From October 1-4, 2024, Regional Office staff will be conducting a General Management Review (GMR) of the Olympic National Forest. GMRs are routine on each forest every three to five years. With the pandemic, we suspended this process. These reviews are important in our efforts to better serve the public, partners, and stakeholders. The process is simply designed to find out what is working well on the Olympic and what areas need help.

- Jim has a 30-minute block of time to present on behalf of The Mountaineers. Please contact Jim at jimfrenchwa@comcast.net for more information, suggestions, or relevant topics.

- Snowshoeing – Mike Forsyth (via email)

- The 2025 Basic Snowshoe Course facility rental and NWAC presentation dates are confirmed. We plan an enrollment of twenty. (The facility, Friends Meeting House, has room for a larger enrollment, should we decide to change it.) Last year's class included a youth. Our volunteers received instruction and supervision from Qualified Youth Leaders Donna Kreuger and Mike Kretzler, so that the course activities were all conducted in careful compliance with the most recently approved (May 19, 2023) Policy Manual on Youth and Family Policies. That worked smoothly, and enrollment will again be open to youths as well as adults.

- We have not made a final decision on course fees yet. Last year, we charged \$85 for members, \$135 for non-members; Tacoma charged \$85 and \$185 respectively, and Seattle charged \$130 and \$156. This year we are considering \$95 and \$145. The course listing will include a mention of scholarship availability and a link to the scholarship application.

- We are considering adding Stewardship credit to the graduation requirements. Some other branches, including Tacoma, require it, as do other Olympia courses, including Basic Alpine Climbing. I am also a member of the Stewardship and Conservation committee, and a stewardship leader and a trail crew leader, and participate in a lot of stewardship activities. My impression anecdotally is that about a third of our stewardship turn-out are from other branches, whose participation is welcome. We have had disappointing numbers on a few stewardship activities this year. We would like to see more of our Branch members volunteering regularly for stewardship and conservation, and a stewardship credit requirement for the Basic Snowshoe Course might help introduce them. Input and comments from attendees at the Branch Council meeting on this question are welcome.

- Feel free to email comments or questions on these matters to me, Mike Forsyth, at adktripper@earthlink.net.

- Secretary – Dean Taylor

- Starting next month the meeting schedule will return being held the second Wednesday of each month. Our next meeting will be held Wednesday, October 9 @ 6pm on Zoom.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 6:38pm