**DRAFT Minutes Seattle Branch Council – January 11, 2018, 6:30 p.m., Seattle Program Center**

Present:

Brian Starlin (Nav), Amanda Virbitsky (staff), Heidi Walker (Vice-chair), Anita Elder (Photography), Steve Payne (Hiking), Alan Vogt (Sailing), Jacob Wolniewicz (Climbing), Peter Hendrickson (chair), Patrick Mullaney (Board), Alex Cowen (treasurer), Takeo Kuraishi (Safety Officer), Chuck Cerveny (Secretary)

Not Presented, Submitted Report:

Brittany Weller (Scrambling), Loren McWethy (Avalanche), Todd Mitchell (Backpacking), Courtney Carolan (First Aid)

Not Present:

Gordie Swartzman (Naturalists), David Bradley (Leadership), Storm Yanicks (Retired Rovers), Carry Porter (Nordic Skiing), Johnny Jeans (Folk Dancing), George Swapp (Sea Kayaking), Jimmy Jett (Snowshoeing), Kirk Peterson (Snowshoeing), Brian Seater (20-30 Somethings), Becca Polglase (Youth Outreach)

Approved Minutes November, 2017 (Maker??)

Chair Briefing

* Mountaineers info and gear grab session 12 February, 2018
  + RSVPs open, ~100 so far
  + Reminder email coming out on 01.12.18 to all committee chairs
* Multi branch investigation, a Problem Behavior
  + Being handled by climbing committee
  + Resolution by early February
  + Form on the website for reporting problem behavior (e.g. harassment), lower levels can be handled by leaders or committee chairs depending on severity
  + Possible lack of communication problems between branches
* Mike Sweeney Memorial
  + Peter attended memorial and shared program
* Strategic Plan Vision 2022
  + Peter interviewed re Fundraising
  + Noted possible funding for additional program centers including one
* Volunteer Recognition Dinner
  + 18 people responded to survey at this time
  + Possibly 03.12.18 [Later confirmed for this date.]

Vice Chairperson Briefing

* Nothing to report

Safety Officer Briefing

* Dave Shema has retired, working with Everett Safety Officer Tony Tsuboi for transition [Later confirmed as Club Safety Chair]

Board of Directors Rep Briefing

* Patrick Mullaney: Working with Bill Ashby to review insurance policies

Program Staff Rep Briefing

People:

* Amber Carrigan is our (now not quite so) new Development Director
* Finished up the first round of Controller interviews
* Part-time gear library coordinator position is posted on the website
* Elaine Kelly is new-ish in Member Services – she’s currently working 2 days/week

Initiatives/Projects:

* Our new header/website changes go live within the first 2 weeks of Feb
  + We had web testers (internal and external) during the summer
  + Learn and Explore are being replaced with Courses and Activities
  + Books is being incorporated into the main site
  + Blogs are upcoming regarding website changes
* Activity edit form changes include
  + Leader rating defaults to blank
  + Pace stated
  + Water activity-specific (waves/wind speed, etc.)
* Member/Leader survey goes out next week
* Check out Sara Ramsay’s 2017 year in review post on the blog - <https://www.mountaineers.org/blog/2017-recap-a-year-in-review>

Events:

* BeWild – 1/23 – Lowell Skoog, tickets on sale via Eventbrite, ~1/4 of tickets sold so far <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/lowell-skoog-bewild-speaker-series-tickets-40115642968>
* Volunteer Appreciation Dinner – 1/27 <https://www.mountaineers.org/about/locations-reservations/seattle-program-center/events/volunteer-appreciation-dinner> - 35 spots left as of 9am 1/12
* MTM/Gear Grab – 2/12 - <https://www.mountaineers.org/about/locations-reservations/seattle-program-center/events/meet-the-mountaineers-and-gear-grab-feb-12>
* Tess Wendell sending reminder to Seattle committee chairs 1/12

Member Survey update from Kristina Ciari:

“Every two years The Mountaineers conducts an extensive survey of our membership to track the health of our organization. We did one in 2011, 2014, and 2016, so we have a lot of data that helps us understand the evolution and impact we are having on the community. We ask all of the questions: how they learned about us, how they’re involved, what they think about our org, if they’ve ever donated, their demographic information, etc.

“We also ask about how likely they are to recommend The Mountaineers and what their intention is to renew. This is how we know that, for example, when someone participates in a 3rd activity with us, their likelihood of renewal jumps from 60% to 80%. It’s also how we know that something magical happens in membership years 3-4 where people start to convert to volunteers. It tells us how we’re perceived in the community and where people think we add value, and identifies ways we can do more to support our mission. This year, we’ve combined this survey with our volunteer survey to get a better overall picture of how to reward, engage with, and retain our volunteers, among a lot of other things.

“The survey is going to launch to all of our current members and some recent lapsed members on January 17. It will also be publicly available via a blog post. In the past, we’ve had a huge response rate to our survey. In terms of surveys, a “good” response rate is 2-3%. We get 20%. We also do something surveyors advise against, which is asking “Is there anything else you want to tell us?” at the end of the survey. Most people don’t’ include this because it’s a throwaway question and no one ever answers, but in 2014, of the 2,000 people who took the survey, 800 of them left us a comment. Mountaineers care about this…. A lot!

Treasurer Briefing

Dealing with 3-month lag in budget posting 1st quarter current fiscal year

This year we'll have two “mid-flight” reviews of budget vs. actual financial performance to identify meaningful variances to share with the Board of Directors (BoD). The reviews are not “forensic” evaluations, but rather quick check-ins to get committee leaders' take on budget vs. actual expenses. Additionally, committee leaders should identify unanticipated occurrences that either have occurred or that they anticipate will occur and that will result in their areas being substantially over / under budget.

The first review requires us to use the data available January 15th and have the findings submitted by February 3rd

The second review requires us to use the data available June 15th and have the findings submitted by July 6th

I'll have more detailed guidance when the data for this month is finalized and will send that along to everyone. Your collaboration on this is greatly appreciated!

**Financial Performance:**See attached for an excel report for how each committee is doing vs. budget as of Period 3 2018 (December, 2017). Here are some highlights:

* We have expensed $33,389 vs. a budget of 97,836 and vs. last year of 21,471
* Budget variance is due to:
  + First Aid 28,095 under budget due to lower Contract expenses (for RMI), this will likely be made up in later months
  + Climbing 10,857 under budget due to lower Leadership Development and Recognition
  + Navigation 9,084 under budget due to lower Program Supplied
* Prior year variance is due to:
  + First aid over 6,905 due to higher contract expenses

**Priorities for the year ahead**:

My goals for the upcoming calendar year are as follows:

* Help get budgets completed and visible for the branch before FYE (9/30/2018)
* Getting revenue reporting available in some form, at least quarterly
* Work with committees and other branches to so that our different financial practices around Leadership Development and Recognition are transparent and clear with the goal of providing the greatest incentive possible to our volunteer community

Given staff and volunteer resource constraints, these may be difficult things to realize, but I'll be working towards them all the same.

Secretary Briefing

* Need to update email list for new committee members
  + Add Steve Payne (Hiking)
  + Remove Loni Uchytil (Climbing)

Old Business

* Concussion seminar
  + Neurosurgeon contact still willing to give talk on this
* Seattle Branch annual report format & call for text, photos
  + Publication target in March, at least electronically
  + Have an example from a committee to send out as a template (possibly Photography)
  + Looking for stuff over next month
* Avalanche (and other committee) charters
* Leadership recognition dinner – new date TBD

New Business

* Course participation refund procedures
  + Link from website cancellation policy addresses concern about cancels
  + <https://www.mountaineers.org/volunteers/leader-resources/financial-policies-procedures-forms/cancellation-policy>
* Building scheduling is open for scheduling, get in by 02.05.18, after that date community groups can start scheduling

**Committee Reports –**

**Alpine Scrambling** – Brittany Weller

Jim Powell was recognized as Scrambling's Top Instructor (due to his conditioning hike series). The 2018 course has 125 registered and 46 on the waitlist (w/ ~20 overflow from interest in Basic),

--Condensed Course is open for registration with 4 of 20 spots still available

Foothills has started a Scramble committee, we are working with them on getting a compressed course running this year.

--There is added focus on leadership development to help build up the ranks in Seattle and to accommodate and plan for growth of each program (here and there)

Scramble Summit took place on November 4th with Andy Cahn & Chris Spanton representing Seattle

* Club-wide Minimum Standards revised last year are still current and require no further revisions,
* Scramble Leader(s) of the Year recommended to provide recognition to leaders based on student vote / # of trips led or instructed / combo of the two (TBD by Chapter)
* American Alpine Club Mountain Leader Training & Certification received suggested edits on document drafted in June (Chris Spanton taking lead on this item)
* Leadership Training is being coordinated for collaboration between Richard Bell (from Foothills) and Nina Crampton (from Seattle)
* Curriculum will be shared between branches to identify opportunities to standardize a common template
* Hasty Harness v. Diaper Harness v. Alpine Harness discussed; decision has been made to remain with the current Alpine Diaper Harness
* Summits to occur annually, during shoulder season

**Avalanche** – Loren McWethy

We completed two AIARE Avalanche Classes in December, one for our instructors with 22 people completing the class and one for the public with 27 people completing the class.  This past weekend we finished up our first AIARE 1 of the season (this was actually the Everett AIARE 1).  Next up we have the Jan 27 & Jan 28 AIARE Rescue Classes, following by two more AIARE 1s.  So we're halfway through the teaching year at this point.

We've been planning for hosting an AIARE Pro 1 at the Baker Lodge in February or March of 2019, which would be a class for 18 people, of which, we would take 12 spots for our instructors.  We've applied for reserve funds for this class.

We participated in an Avalanche Mini-Summit on December 13th.  The take-away was that there are a lot of shared challenges between Seattle, Everett, Foothills and Tacoma and that there are opportunities for better coordinated efforts and thinking on a larger scale, if anyone has the bandwidth to do that type of planning.  It is unclear what next steps are out of this meeting.  
  
Finally, the Avalanche Committee has grown to 11 members!  We're moving towards better division of labor and better overall organization as a result.

**Backpacking** – Todd Mitchell

The Backpacking Committee is planning its beginning backpacking class Saturday 7 April.

1) Reach out to underserved communities in Greater Seattle

Why doesn't the club promote the beginning backpacking class in underserved communities?  The club could offer scholarships.  We will most likely have 10-15 slots that could be filled this way.

<https://www.mountaineers.org/membership/financial-assistance>

I would be happy to give a 2-3 hour presentation on backpacking at a non-Program Center location.  The staff should find the location, advertise the event, reserve the room, and be there to make sure the PowerPoint works.

2) Volunteer recognition and reward

I call everyone who leads a backpack for us and thank them.  Most people I end up leaving messages with.  I am in the process of doing the follow-up with those by email.

**Climbing** – Jacob Wolniewicz

* Basic is going on right now
* Intermediate broken into modules, 60 positions each, half for single classes
* Problem Behavior investigation is ongoing
* Loni Uchytil stepped down as co-chair

**First Aid** – Courtney Carolan

WFA will have two different weekend classroom sessions Jan 13-14 and Jan 27-28. Our scenario evening will be held on Jan 30, 2018.

WFA Course registration for April through November will open up mid-February.

**Folk Dance -** Johnny Jeans

* No report

**Hiking** – Heidi Walker

* Hiking/Backpacking summit 01.07.18 Discussed leader requisites, activities
* CHS opens for registration on 02.01.18, limited to 82 people
* Basic Wilderness travel later in the Spring
* Steve Payne takes over as Seattle Hiking Chair 07.01.18

**Outdoor Leadership** – David Bradley (first meeting)

* Chris retired as chair
* David Bradley new chair
* Planning two meetings to get committee going

**Naturalists** – Gordie Swartzman

* No report

**Navigation** – Brian Starlin

* Summit scheduled for 02.25.18
* Innovation group last Fall to initiate modernization of course content has not met lately.

**Photography** – Anita Elder

* Speaker 11.17 netted ~$2000
* Considering working with MAC
* Volunteer recognition: 4 super volunteers for 2017, picnic in 8/18 for recognitions
* Starting annual field trip leader meeting, aiming for increased activities
* Working to get eLearning involved with program
* Needing to review types of classes offered

**Retired Rovers** – Storm Yanicks

* No report

**Sailing** – Alan Vogt

* Its Winter, sailing is less fun
* Did some Christmas trips
* Class signups started 01.10.18, have about 3 already
* Kick-off event will be in March

**Nordic Skiing** – Carry Porter

* No report

**Sea Kayaking –** George Swapp

* No report

**Snowshoeing –** Jimmy Jett Klansnic or Kirk Peterson

* No report

**20-30 Somethings** - Brian Seater

* No report

**Youth Outreach** – Becca Polglase

* No report

**Good of the Order**

* Elearning for Navigation is really popular

**Adjourn** adjourned at 20:22

Seattle Branch Council meets 2rd Thursday each odd month, 6:30 pm.

Mar 08 – May 10 – July 12 - September 13 – November 08