

Annual Meeting Minutes from October 14, 2023 BVSC Meeting
Approved by the Board on Oct. 24, 2023

The meeting was held at the After Hours Chalet following the annual work day. The meeting was attended by Jon Jurek, Jon Thralow, Bob Cragin, David Grapentine, Tammy Brown, Kathie Culhane-Pera, Al Klein, Louise Beyea, Greg St.Onge, Cordell Manz, Tim Pera, and Linda Hobbs.

Cabin Update

Jon J recently spoke with Dan Kephart and the DNR would like an answer on the cabin regarding the relocation and commitment by the BVSC for Devil's Hole (DH). Jon J wanted a board vote on the issue, Cordell wanted a member vote, Bob wanted a Friends group formed and Linda wanted the cabin moved to a new site west of AH's and used for a new skijoring (SJ) trail system. In discussions Jon J had with Dan Kephart, Dan said a Friends group should be formed because there are potentially larger pools of money that can be sought after by a Friends group than a ski club can access for DH development.

After Hours work-day update

We had 11 people show up for the work day. Three Northwestern High School students from the NWHS Ski Club came out and worked hard. The students were Jenna Hursch, Lawson Burkhart and Aden Hubbard. It was decided later in the meeting that the BVSC will pay for the students' annual passes for the 2024 ski season. Jon Jurek will contact the students and get the required information. The other volunteers were David Grapentine, Tammy Brown, Bob Cragin, Louise Beyea, Kathie Culhane, Tim Pera, Jon Thralow and Jon Jurek. The main project was clearing an overlook at the bottom of White Pine. Earlier in the week Matt Leischer DNR, Jon T and Jon J were able to get a good jump on the project by cutting a lot of brush, removing several dead trees and cutting limbs. The majority of the work was removing the previously cut brush, trees, and limbs and clearing additional brush to enhance the view of the Brule River at this location. The second project was removing overhanging branches on several sections of the Nebagamon Creek, Red Pine and the Cut Across trails. Red Pine still needs additional work but significant progress was made on both projects. The tree removal project on the newest section of the Classic trail was previously on the list for a workday project however this was completed by Jon T and Jon J earlier in the week.

Status of BVSC membership

Jon J reported that currently 10 members have paid their 2023-2024 dues which includes one new Lifetime member. Last year there were 21 members that paid their dues, in 2021-2022 41 members paid their dues and in 2020-2021 27 members paid their dues. Al Klein has added these members and their contact information into a spreadsheet.

Status of the updated bylaws

The bylaws committee has not completed this task yet but Greg provided some updates and suggestions which included changing the date of our fiscal year to match that of the DNR's pass requirement to January 1, honorary and lifetime members ability to vote, changing USPS mail balloting to email balloting, rules for amending the bylaws regarding a 10% vote for bylaw changes, and voting processes. It was decided that this will require an additional meeting(s).

Results of Devils Hole Survey

Jon J read this from the previous meeting notes:

" 37 people replied to the survey which represents about half of the current BVSC members that were invited to participate in the survey.

Question #3 on the survey states: Please Indicate your level of support with the proposal. 12 members (32%) supported enthusiastically, 9 members (24%) support with concern, 3 members (5%) were neutral and 14 members (38%) do not support the DH proposal. We discussed the significance of "support with concerns" responses. If we combined with support enthusiastically, then a total of 21 people (55%) support and 14 (38%) do not support. If we split them into ½ support and ½ not in

support, then 16.5 (45%) support and 18.5 (50%) do not support. Either way, about half the club is in favor and half is not and the concerns need to be addressed.

Question #5 on the survey asks: If the DNR creates a cross-country ski course at DH how often can you help? 43.2% replied None, 32.4% replied Occasionally, 10.8% replied Twice a month, 10.8% replied Weekly and 2.7% replied Several times a week. It was noted that of the 21 people willing to help, 20 were in support of the proposal.

A further breakdown of the responses reveals that of those 12 members that Enthusiastically Support the DH proposal when they were asked how often they can help, one member replied None, 6 members replied Occasionally, 2 members replied Twice a month, 2 members replied weekly and only one of the Enthusiastic Supporters replied Several times a week. A further breakdown of the 9 members that replied Support with concerns reveals that 5 members replied they will help Occasionally, 2 members replied they will help Twice a month and 2 members replied they will help Weekly.

Question #4 asks: Do you support the BVSC providing partial funding for DNR to hire a part-time employee for grooming ski trails in the winter? This person would only work in December to March. 31.4% replied No, 68.6% replied yes. Jon Jurek felt this question was misleading since it does not specify where the grooming will take place and some members may have been misled to think this will be at After Hours. Jon Jurek also stated that this question was added to the survey after the meeting on September 9 and even though it was put in an email by Kathie for approval the timeline between the email and this question being added to the survey was too short for any discussion.

Question #6 asks What can you help with? Members could choose from a variety of 9 different categories 1) Planning a track 2) Creating a track 3) Grooming 4) Keeping the building clean 5) Maintaining the machines 6) Mowing the trails 7) Paying for gas or other needs 8) None 9) Other. 2 members did not respond to this question. The results are somewhat difficult to interpret since members could select more than one option. However, the largest groups were 29.4% (10 members) responded None and 14.7% (5 members) responded Paying for gas or other needs. One member replied they would help at AH. Other members said they would help with a variety of tasks.

Bob Cragin, Jon Thralow and Jon Jurek all would like to see a new ski club formed along with respective board members for the DH project and all three stated they will not assume Board member responsibilities for the DH. The primary concerns for this decision were the lack of volunteer help, the potential financial drain on the BVSC when entering into an agreement with the DNR for the DH and the personal time involved with running two ski areas. Kathie Culhane and Al Klein are in favor of the BVSC backing the DH project.”

Louise commented that 37 people responded to the survey but there are only 21 current paid members for 2022-2023. It was brought up that perhaps some of the difference was due to Lifetime members responding, but still the numbers don't add up. Kathie noted we had followed the spreadsheets labeled "BVSC members who can do the survey". Jon J commented that Question #4 was misleading since it did not specify where the grooming would take place at DH or AH and perhaps the respondents were misled into thinking this was for AH only. In discussions Cord had with Dan Kephart DNR, Dan mentioned this proposed hired person would be working on projects at the DNR's discretion. (*Cordell offered this additional explanation for his comment during the meeting: "Of course, to put this in context, our conversation about this was based on the assumption that 1) we would help provide funding for an additional winter DNR staff person for grooming, and 2) that there was a chance Devil's Hole project would go forward.") Cord also suggested exploring other avenues for volunteer help such as the local Lions Club.

MOU for moving the CABIN to a new skijoring (SJ) site west of the AH trail

Linda has prepared a MOU for moving the CABIN to a location west of the AH trailhead and developing a SJ trail. Linda feels this is a good solution for the CABIN since water is hard to find on the west side of the river which reduces the chances that the cabin could ever be used for overnight accommodations, no grooming equipment would have to be transported to an off-site location such

as the DH, the SJ trail would be adjacent to the AH trail, the new SJ parking lot could be used for overflow AH parking and the trail system has already been laid out by Cord. Cord commented there may still be some wet areas to deal with in the development. Jon J brought up three considerations. 1) Is moving the CABIN closer to AH trail head going to satisfy the anti-CABIN supporters? 2) Where is the volunteer help going to come from? 3) Are the list of 12 Questions Greg prepared on September 30, 2023 for the DH development which seek logical answers from the DNR going to be taken into consideration? Cord stated the BVSC has never made their own trails and the DNR has always done this. Greg set the record straight that he and Jim Rau cut the River Trail. Bob suggested a meeting with the DNR to discuss their capacities regarding trail development and grooming. Cord suggested we squeak back to the DNR about their reduction in trail work. Kathie suggested a committee for the DH to close the communication gap. Greg suggested a proposal for the DH and SJ.

Update on BVSC annual Newsletter

Nobody volunteered to coordinate the Newsletter. Jon J coordinated the Newsletter last year and worked with Karen Helenius. The new BVSC board will be making a decision on how to move forward.

Learn to Ski day

Jon J, Jon T, Greg, Louise, and Bob volunteered to help. No date was set. Kathie wants to organize a weekly learn to ski program. Bill Howard from Continental Ski and Bike in Duluth had previously mentioned donating skis to the BVSC for this purpose. Bob will follow up with Bill.

River View Loppet

Cord announced that Beth Manz will not be the race director this year. Jon J was the race director last year and will forward a Race Director's Guide he prepared. Al said he will be the race director but he will be delegating many tasks. There was some discussion about incorporating the River View Loppet into the Finn Sisu, a new ski race series. The race date was set for January 20, 2024.

Nomination and Election of Officers

Greg nominated Jon J for President but Jon declined and will be stepping down from the board after serving as the BVSC Secretary for the past 7 years. Louise nominated Linda as the new President. Linda accepted but stated she is not in favor of DH. Linda was voted in as the new BVSC President. Greg nominated Kathie as the new secretary. Kathie accepted and was voted in as Secretary. Al was nominated to continue as Treasurer. Al accepted and was voted in as Treasurer. Bob was nominated to continue as Vice President. Bob accepted and was voted to return to his previous position as Vice President. Jon Thralow was nominated for Member at Large. Jon accepted and was voted in to remain as Member at Large.

Devil's Hole vote by the new BVSC Board/Officers. The vote was based upon this statement:

"THE CURRENT BVSC BOARD IS NOT IN FAVOR OF DEVELOPING THE DEVIL'S HOLE PROJECT WITH THE CABIN"

Linda, President- No development

Bob, VP- No development

Jon T, Member at Large -No development

Kathie, Secretary- Abstained

Al, Treasurer- In favor of development

Misc

Al wants the KM marker signs utilized. Several years ago the DNR purchased and requested reimbursement for \$600 worth of signs that have not been utilized and remain in the DNR's possession somewhere. No decision was made on how to go about this.

There was no date set for the next annual meeting but there was discussion on holding monthly Board meetings.