

Avalanche Budget Call Minutes

8.22.2018

Attendance: Tom Vogl, Peter Hendrickson, Bill Ashby, Becca Polglase, Cheryl Talbert, Loren McWethy, Elaina Jorgensen, Petra Damm, Ryan Kitchen, Jacob Lopilato, Bonnie Eiber

I. New avy leader progression (Loren and avy leaders)

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1TocyqoBR8zfxG_coQSuJUqkSp8XvipPCJOV-irI_NZI/edit

Loren - For years, AIARE & greater avalanche community has been working on professional/recreational avalanche split. Skill sets are different between groups. For all intents and purposes, Mountaineers volunteers are acting in a professional capacity. Some of the split is coming from the AAA. Before it came out, we didn't have a seat at the table. The Mountaineers has historically had 3 paid AIARE providers: Everett, Seattle & Foothills. Everett and Seattle have now merged their programs, so we now have 2 providers. Everyone who is an instructor has to take a Pro 1, and everyone who is becoming an instructor has to take a Pro 1. AIARE is not flexible about The Mountaineers taking Pro 1. AIARE changes make a lot of sense and will result in us delivering higher quality programs. The costs represent a 1-year bump to get our existing instructors up to speed; subsequent years will still have increased cost from past years, but not as steep as year 1. We've served increasing numbers of students, and the waitlists continue to grow.

We have until February(ish) 2020 to get our instructors through Pro 1, or they lose their instructor status and we're back to square one.

Ratios required to run a Mountaineers course:

The maximum group size is 6 students to one certified AIARE instructor. For every 3 AIARE instructors, you need one course leader. We now have 4 course leaders.

Difference between AIARE 2 and Pro 1: Pro 1 is more about managing risk in an operational setting. AIARE 2 sets you up to lead a group. AIARE 1 sets you up to be a competent participant.

AIARE 1 + Avalanche Rescue + Pro 1 + Instructor Course = AIARE instructor. In order to teach an AIARE "recreational track" course, you need to be an instructor.

AIARE has a Pro 1 "Bridge Class" which is a test out. We originally thought that would work for most of our folks, but once we saw it, we realized our people wouldn't be successful.

In Everett & Seattle, we have just enough instructors. For a while we had too many, but with attrition, we're back to just enough. If we don't continue to invest in the people we have, we're going to lose them, and if we don't invest in the next generation, we won't have anyone to fill in in the future.

Elaina - this is where The Mountaineers is going - national certification.

Becca - open questions for me in my role: How does Europe handle this in their clubs? When we think about reinvesting in our leaders, right now the budget for all other leader development (including climbing, sea kayaking, skiing) is approximately the same as what has been submitted just for avalanche, which is a critically important, but much smaller program. Is this the right thing to do? Is there a way to spread the costs over a few years? Is there a way to open it to fewer instructors per year without sacrificing our programs?

Loren - the US is following Canada's lead - Canada are the leaders in this, not Europe

II. Proposed FY19 training and other activities to meet new AIARE standards (Loren and avy leaders)

III. FY19 budget guidance/context + proposed avy budgets from Seattle, Foothills and Everett (Tom)

Loren - be sure to look carefully at the budget and notice that there is significant growth in revenue to match the additional expense

Ryan - We've been talking about Pro 1 as an expense, but its worth mentioning that we've gone from the cowboy time period where anyone could take the right courses & teach without any validation of skill set, but Pro 1 adds rigor to the program, and verifies that instructors are qualified to instruct. We're teaching at a national standard, and we're putting qualified people in the field taking folks out, guiding them in dangerous terrain.

IV. Discuss next steps, including timeline, people accountable, etc (Becca to facilitate)

Loren - make negotiation with AIARE expeditiously (Tom)

Becca f/u with Loren on where courses live

Becca set up a Basecamp for Avalanche summit & upload documents

Tom has a call with Richard from AIARE Tuesday 8/28 10:30am PST

Timeline - resolution in 1-2 weeks - we will do everything we can to make that happen

Cheryl - we need to put together a communication plan by the end of this week. Loren and Bonnie will craft communication to their folks.