



Branch Leadership Committee
Meeting Minutes for March 25, 2026
6:00pm to 7:30pm via Zoom

Meeting Information

Zoom Meeting [Link](#)

Branch Leadership Members

- Michael Abernathy (BHAM)
- Scott Braswell (EVE)
- Travis Vermeer (FH)
- Mel White (KIT)
- Katja Hurt (OLY)
- Danny Casady (TAC)
- Amy Stafford (TAC - Elect)
- Kelsey Hoffman (SEA)
- Chelsea Mullins (SEA - Elect)
- Colin Chapman & Cheryl Talbert (GA)
- Tess Wendel (Safety)
- Michelle Song (Staff)
- Becca Polgase (Staff)
- Amanda Piro (VP of Branches)
- TJ King (VP of Branches Elect)

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions – Amanda
2. Review and approval of the meeting agenda for March 25, 2025
Motion to Approve: Scott; Second: Danny; Approved
3. Review and approval of the meeting [minutes](#) for February 18, 2026
Motion to Approve: Mel; Second: Katya; Approved
4. Activity Charters & Standards
 - [Urban Walks Standards](#) Second Reading / Discussion - Motion to Approve: Travis; Second: Kelsey; Second Reading Approved
 - [Backpacking Standards](#) Second Reading / Discussion - Motion to Approve: Mel; Second: Michael; Second Reading Approved
 - Added “appropriate for the planned route” to navigation prerequisites
 - Discussed T2 vs. T3 terrain distinctions and leader preparedness
 - Key Element 3 needs alignment with updated navigation language



- Staff to reinforce T2 distinction with backpacking council
 - BLC comments made directly in Google doc for review
 - [Backpacking Council Charter](#) Second Reading / Discussion - Second Reading NOT Approved; tabled to April meeting.
 - Recommended removing elected officer language (likely template carryover); staff to follow up with council
 - Recommended changing 100% consensus requirement to two-thirds majority
 - Hiking council governance doc shared as a reference example
 - [Scrambling Standards](#) First Reading / Discussion - Motion to Approve: Nick; Second: Mel; First Reading Approved
 - Good differentiation between winter scrambles and regular snow scrambles
 - Changed “low tech glacier travel” to “non-technical glacier travel”
 - Avalanche safety gap: standards lack guidance on acceptable avalanche conditions (unlike glacier travel section); ask for committee to add avalanche terrain guidance similar to glacier travel section
 - Discussed whether beacon/probe/shovel should be required for winter scrambles
 - AIARE rescue now part of Level 1 Module 3; need clarity on competency vs. course requirements
 - Consider defining acceptable avalanche conditions rather than adding training requirements
 - BLC comments made directly in Google doc for review
 - [Sea Kayaking Standards](#) First Reading / Discussion - Motion to Approve: Nick; Second: Mel; First Reading Approved
 - Gatherings with sea kayaking activities must list the kayaking portion as a separate trip with a roster
 - Participants must be members or registered guests with prerequisites and signed waivers
 - Finalize document by removing italicized / proposed text and notes for final reading
 - Updated Activity Council & Standards [Spreadsheet](#)
5. [Branch Reports](#) – Mountaineer Branch Chairs:
Please fill out your Branch Report ahead of the meeting in the [BLC Branch Reports google doc](#).
- Open leadership positions
 - Relevant Updates
 - Status of Branch Charters

Key Notes

- Branch reports abbreviated due to time; refer to shared branch report document for full details



- Seattle:
 - Safety/behavior intersection: branch safety rep wants feedback loop on whether behavior report referrals are followed up on - Amanda will connect with Tess & invite her to the April BLC meeting
 - Climbing committee in difficult transition; current chair stepping down unexpectedly; previous chair returning with limited bandwidth - will need a new chair quickly & would appreciate any BLC support or advice
- Tacoma
 - Jeff Patterson (former Seattle scramble chair) is handing management of the Rainier 100 award badge list to a Tacoma scramble leader, since no one in Seattle is willing to take it over
 - Ask for Seattle to confirm they are okay with Tacoma administering this Seattle-based award badge - Danny to send an email to Kelsey so it is documented

6. Committee & Organizational Reports

- Safety – Tess
- Global Adventures – Cindy
- Operations – Becca / Michelle
 - Please share gala details with your branch committees: ticket sales are lower than hoped & Rose asked BLC to share the info broadly across branches, family, friends, etc.
 - Michelle will share the branch leadership spreadsheet on Basecamp – **please review your branch's officers and update contact info**
 - General call to fill out Mountaineer of the Week questionnaire to spotlight volunteer leaders; useful for recruitment and succession planning - feel free to share with your branch committees as well as the pipeline needs support
 - Reminder: Bi-monthly treasurers meeting (next on April 16); branch chairs also welcome to attend; encouraged members to share the meeting info with their treasurers
 - Spring Board Retreat (Saturday March 28) – RSVP link posted in base camp; we'd love for BLC to attend if available

7. Adjourn

- Amanda's final meeting as VP of Branches; thank you to all BLC members for your support and stewardship. TJ King will be the incoming VP of Branches (pending board confirmation at spring retreat). Amanda will remain available during transition for the next couple of months. Thank you all!
- Next BLC Meeting: April 15, 2026