

Bellingham Mountaineers Branch Committee Meeting Minutes - Unapproved

Date/Time: May 20, 2023 6:00 PM

Location: Zoom

Attending: AJ S., Tim S., Meredith L, James P, Krista S., Dana R., Audrey G.

Welcome/Introductions:

- Reminder that meeting is open and public; be respectful and concise
- Intros
- Agenda review
- Meeting minutes from last meeting approved - motioned by James, second by Tim

Updates

- Branch Chair (AJ Schuehle) - see new items below
- Secretary (Dana) - no update.
- Climbing Committee (Varun) - Varun not present so Tim shared that Snow 1 for the basic course last weekend was successful, and with great weather! Snow 2 is coming up in 2 weeks. Last lecture coming up. Looking for volunteers to help with Crevasse Rescue practice. Richard plans to run some practice sessions. Intermediate course on pause till June. Confusion around Crag Course - link is on the .org site but no notification was sent out? Starting to get basic course climbs posted.
- Hiking Committee (Hiking, Uphill Training Series) (Ben) - Uphill training series last hike this week. Good turnout this year! Discussing with hike leaders what to do for the rest of the year since last year no additional hikes were posted. May defer back to regular Pine & Cedar hikes through the summer, if anything for the social aspect. Just need to ensure they get promoted via Cassidy.
- Communications (Cassidy) - not present, AJ shared that they are working together for planning the Communications Committee to set standards for managing social media groups, pages, liability, content, etc. Rescheduling meeting from last week to this week hopefully.
- Safety (James) - Working diligently on absorbing information from trip reports and investigating a potential close call reported by a student from Rock 2.
- Diversity, Equality, & Inclusion (Meredith) - No E&I meeting this month so there has been no progress on planning women's climbs at Mt. Erie. Official CoC climb night series starts next month (June) and should be publicized in the newsletter and social media.
- Board of Directors (Tim Schafermeyer) - Board meeting discussing SHSA Prevention Committee
- Treasurer (Krista) - Awaiting some monthly reporting from HQ.
- Code of Conduct Committee (James/Dana) - Upcoming small group meeting with Becca P. and SHSA committee members, plan to voice following requests:

- Required background checks for domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment/stalking, or sexual misconduct for all leaders (potential to expand to requiring for all to volunteer instructors, basic course students) – need a recommendation for this service
- Establishment of a dismissal policy and fixing the “grace period” loophole – expulsions should not have a grace period, membership lapses may have a grace period
- Reporting made easier: link should be directly embedded in the website landing page
- Clear communication regarding the investigation process – very clearly explained steps (timeline, confidentiality, possible outcomes, etc.)
- Third-party review for physical violence, sexual misconduct, discrimination, or harassment with rapid review process – complaints should not go to 3 individuals without advocate/response training, who are coincidentally the 3 most powerful people in the org. Grievances should also not be investigated by volunteer club members (to avoid bias AND liability) – need a recommendation for this service

Old Business (next steps/follow up)

- Status of open positions - currently urgently need Branch Chair Elect, need to start recruiting for a few other positions per the branch leadership tools, will work with Cassidy to get recruitment/position descriptions in the newsletter
- Status of [Branch Charter](#)
 - adding E&I rep from branch to organization council and conservation/stewardship chair to report to organization council require a branch charter amendment
 - Concerns about quorum numbers to conduct official business if we add headcount to the committee
 - Agree that we want to formalize DEI Committee (potentially also the conservation/stewardship role) to have a voting role on the council, working on the mechanism to do so.
- Status of Trail Running activity committee - AJ provided an outline of what the council needs to formalize the committee. Alanna is looking for volunteers to join her official mentored lead runs.
- Crag course and climbs update - move to Climbing Committee
- [Yearly Planning Guide](#) Review - AJ made a couple of updates in a 2024 edition, need a separate meeting to go over the document
- Communications Committee Charter project - AJ will meet with crew to formalize next steps
- Formalize inclusion of E&I Representative and Conservation & Stewardship Coordinator on Executive Committee via Branch Charter revision - AJ will send out Charter to comments/questions/review

New Business (action/decision needed)

- Social Event - opportunity to host event with Climbing Self Rescue book author Ian Nicholson proposed for June 6, looking for a venue that can accommodate group demo activities
- Summer Potluck Planning - AJ will solicit help for coordinating potluck planning. Audrey discussed event/party planning with Heather/Dana. Minda wants to do another rope cycling event!

- Social Media moderation and group rules discussion - postponed to next meeting after Comms Committee meets
- Instructor Outdoor Education Guidelines - Audrey developed a set of instructor guidelines that we have shared with both instructors and students at the beginning of several field trips (Rock 1, Rock 2) to set expectations between students and instructors for teaching. Dana would like to see these formalized as a tool for the branch. Need to distribute the guidelines to the council for question/comment/review and will vote to approve next branch meeting.

Action Items:

- Reach out to Basic Course at next lecture for volunteers (branch chair etc) (maybe AJ can attend)
- AJ to add volunteer opportunities to newsletter such as hike leaders
- AJ to send an email to BMLI asking for a volunteer to help as summer potluck “ringleader” to coordinate among students and check on status of materials in the storage unit - Audrey to follow up with Heather/(Dana??) on coordinating
- AJ will add summer potlucks to Google Calendar
- AJ ask Cassidy to add Ben to newsletter for call for content email distro list
- BCCC to summarize and report on small group meeting with Becca P. and SHSA Prevention committee members for next branch committee meeting
- Dana to distribute Instructor Outdoor Education Guidelines to the branch executive leadership for question/comment/review before next branch meeting when we will vote to approve
- AJ to meet with Cassidy and Comms team for possible committee creation (?) next steps
- AJ to schedule a separate meeting to discuss Yearly Planning Guide