

Everett Branch Council Meeting Minutes

Everett Branch Committee, June 24th, 2025

6:00 p.m. Virtual via Zoom

Meeting called to order by Nick Mayo, Everett Branch Chair

Participants:

Nick Mayo, Everett Branch Chair
Robert White, Everett Branch Chair Elect
Matt Hansen, Everett Branch Director
Lydia Gillis, Everett Branch Vice Chair
Billy Anthony, Everett Treasurer
Jared De Aragon, Everett E&I Director
Janelle Schank, Everett Treasurer
Rodica Manole, Climbing Chair
Bernadette Lamarca, Social Chair
Erin Shannon-Starup, LOTM Co-Chair
Dan Renfrow, LOTM Co-Chair
Matt Suprenant, Scrambling Chair
Alex Bertelsen, Hiking & Backpacking Chair Prospective

Motion

The Committee approved the meeting minutes from April 29th, 2025.

Introduction

This meeting's priority was to review Robert's 2026 Operational Strategy presentation. To watch the full presentation, view the recording from the meeting [here](#). Main points are summarized below:

2026 Operational Strategies

As a non-profit, we still have organizational costs, and so need to bring a business mindset into our operational strategy.

Mountaineers Strategic Priorities: Lead, Engage Advocate

- **Lead** - Innovation in Outdoor Education
 - Anyone inspired to learn outdoor skills has that opportunity with The Mountaineers.
- **Engage** - a Vibrant Community of Outdoor Enthusiasts
 - Every individual can find inspiration and belonging in the outdoors through Mountaineers community, programs, and books.
- **Advocate** - On Behalf of the Natural World
 - Our community makes a meaningful, enduring impact in protecting our planet and the outdoor experience.

2026 Strategies: Innovate, Engage, Sustain

Innovate

- Expand our youth programs to foster lifelong connections with the outdoors
- Deepen our culture of giving back by providing new opportunities to contribute
- New courses, clinics, skill labs, and activities
- Identify high-demand topics and generate courses to meet those demands and generate revenue
 - Examples: Climbing Committee's dry tooling & crack clinics

Engage

- Foster a vibrant community of skilled volunteer educators to meet the needs of a growing number of outdoor enthusiasts
- Invest in new and existing spaces to offer expanded educational opportunities and community connections
- Increase Membership
 - Branch Membership Retention - 1st year members were retained only 50-60% of the time in 2024, all others let their memberships lapse. 2nd year members retained 80-90% of the time.
 - Much harder to recruit new members than to encourage existing ones to renew.
 - **Examine if membership lapses correlate to graduation rate across all programs.**
- Leader Roadmap
 - Create a roadmap to help newcomers understand which skills/courses are required in order to take on leadership/volunteer roles within the program.
 - Do committee charters need to be updated if a leader roadmap is developed?
 - **This leader roadmap framework may have already been developed by LDC or Brian Booth** — this will be discussed at the BLC Retreat in July.
 - Org-level staff may not have enough bandwidth to take this on, but it does need to become a high priority in order to solve the root issue of not having enough leaders, then leading to having to reduce course sizes, and not generating enough revenue.
 - Take a look at what red tape exists for members looking to become leaders, examine why it exists, and whether or not it could be removed without sacrificing safety.
- Succession Planning
 - Develop another roadmap for standardizing notice to step down.
 - It's best for each person to find their own successor, and start well in advance since it is a long, laborious process, and is much more difficult for one person to find multiple successors for other positions.

Sustain

- Increase Revenue
 - The organization is currently not as financially solvent as it should/could be. Branch-level decisions affect the organization as a whole.
 - The Mountaineers currently researches costs of similar courses in the area to use as a guide for setting prices. Prices are typically lower than for-profit companies, and adjustments are made for median household incomes for each branch.
 - Regarding price increases, there has been some resistance from existing members comparing this year's pricing to years past. However, those numbers are not made public, and incoming students are not privy to that information, and are only comparing prices to other organizations.
 - If constraints are placed on courses, figure out alternatives to remove those constraints
- Decrease Expenses
 - Identify top 5 expenses
 - Approach partnering companies/organizations to see if a discount would be possible
 - Consider giving money back to those organizations we partner with regularly, rather than ones that don't support us or have decreased their support in recent years
 - Consider ways to reduce food expenses — potlucks rather than pizza/catered meals for some events, or only partial catering
- Donations
 - Employer donation matching
 - Certificates of appreciation for companies like Microsoft who are making donations

Committee Statutes and Updates

Treasurer Update

Looking at the budget workbook, Scrambling is very close to being finished. The deadline for budgets is July 1st. If there are any questions, Billy will address them at the Treasurer's meeting.

Update from Board

Information from Rich was distributed regarding the budget gap for this year and what actions are being taken to reel things back in.

Sea Kayaking

Several students have now graduated from the Sea Kayak Basic Course, with more student paddles scheduled for the coming months. "Kayak Tuesdays" skills practice activities are being held at Lake Goodwin.

Eight paddlers completed Incident Management training taught by Body Boat Blade in Anacortes.

The Summer "Shindig" camp and paddle gathering is coming up on July 18-20 in Newhalem.

Climbing

BCC coursework is complete, pending graduation climbs completion. LOR's last field trip is June 28-30, and is also pending graduation climbs. IGC coursework is complete, and pending students' experience climbs. The 2026 Climbing budget will be finalized by 6/28.

First Aid

76 students graduated from FA courses this year. The Committee is still working to find a FA Chair replacement.

Scrambling

The Scramble Reunion is set for August 8-10 at the Baker Lodge, with lots of fun trips planned and a good amount of sign ups. Students are getting lots of scrambles in this season. 17 have completed at least one.

Equity & Belonging

Jared will be present at the quarterly Climbing Committee meetings starting in September.

Youth Programs

There are three youth events so far: one day hike, and two climbs. There is also an evening hike outreach opportunity planned for July.

Lookout & Trail Maintenance

LOTM is partnering with Washington Parks, and planning work on the Pilchuck Lookout on July 10th; Tim Bliss and Tom Zamzow will be leading this Ranger-led stewardship activity.

Snohomish County Parks has asked us to consult along with WTA on a closed section of Lord Hill on July 10th. We will be reviewing options to reroute Red Barn trail.

June 7th NTD trail maintenance with Darrington Ranger district on the Neiderprum (Whitehorse appr.) trail was successful in clearing logs off trail, brushing, and benching. Many of the participants, including Everett scrambling students, mentioned they really enjoyed the work. One comment in particular stuck out, “this is better than the gym”. Several large blocking logs were removed via crosscut saws from the Meadow Mt trail, and treadwork repair was completed May 24th.

LOTM Co-Chairs made a successful early-season ascent to Three Fingers lookout to inventory damage from winter and plan maintenance for late summer. The trip report can be found on [WTA](#).

Next Steps and Meetings

The next Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 30th at 6pm.