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**March 8, 2018 — Meeting Minutes**

**Foothills Branch Council Meeting, March 8, 2018**

**6:30 PM, in-person meeting, Newport Way Library, Bellevue, WA**

**Those in Attendance**

Present: Cheryl Talbert (Chair, Chair Hiking/Backpacking), Russ Immel (Vice-Chair, Chair Snowshoe), Erin Weinkauf (Secretary, Chair Communications), Chris Soverel (Treasurer), Dick Lambe (Branch Director), Paul Thomsen (Safety Officer), Richard Bell (At Large № 1, Chair Scrambling, Chair Leadership), Amanda Albright (At Large № 2, Bylaws Task Force), Ryan Dubberly (At Large № 3, Chair Navigation), Steve LeBrun (At Large № 4, Chair Events), Danielle Graham (At Large № 5), Jerry White (Chair Backcountry Ski), Samantha Sanders (Chair Trail Running), Fran Troje (Bylaws Task Force), Alan Davey, Bonnie Eiber, Kit Eiber, Tom Harvey, and Travis Prescott. Not Present: Patti Polinsky (Meany Sports), Barbara Folmer (Chair First Aid). Vacant Positions: At Large Member № 6, Chair Trail Maintenance.

**Issues and Decisions**

Meeting called to order 6:30 PM

**Approval of Meeting Agenda and Minutes**

Call for additions to the agenda?

Richard requested adding discussion of a 2018 Outdoor Leadership course to the agenda.

* Motion to approve agenda for March 8, 2018 meeting put forward with the modification

Vote: Motion approved unanimously

Hardcopy of minutes distributed to everyone.

* Motion: To approve the minutes of January 4, 2018 meeting.

Vote: Motion approved unanimously without modification

* “Around the table” introductions.

**Old Business**

* Committee updates on milestones, resource/support needs, any significant financial variances from budget
	+ Hiking/Backpacking – B3 course is 10 students short of 75 expected enrollment due to competition from backpacking courses from other branches (Tacoma, Olympia, Seattle). Foothills Trail Mix was just launched, an inclusive program focused on diversity and aimed at the social hiker (Amanda’s lead).
	+ Scrambling – Intensive Alpine Scramble Leader Training course has 11 students, of which 7 are women, with emphasis on inclusivity and diversity. The Compressed Alpine Scrambling course registration opened March 1 with 13 of 20 spots filled and course might be opened to 24 spots, depending on leader availability. There’s good buzz and people like what we’re doing. It’s possible the 2019 course could have a capacity of 48, but there’s not enough WFA and Nav openings for students, so they’re getting directed to take NOLS Wilderness Medicine course.
	+ Snowshoeing – In the second year offering the Backcountry Snowshoeing Skills course, we’ve increased enrollment 100% over last year’s course, from 8 to 17 students. Winter storms and high avalanche conditions have cancelled several field trips on multiple weekends in a row, but we’re doing make-ups. The long-range challenge for the program is how do we sustain growth? Travis will be taking on the Backcountry course next season as a course leader, and Tom is helping out with the Basic course. We’ll be offering a New Snowshoe Leader seminar starting in the fall to develop future trip leaders and volunteers for the program. A formal ask to the council, especially Richard, is help with development of the leader seminar and to coordinate with Seattle’s snowshoe leader program.
	+ Backcountry Skiing – The AIARE program was a success, and we just finished the Ski and Snowboard Mountaineering course last weekend with possibly new leaders coming up. Next year is going to be Jerry’s last year as program chair (after 12 years). Not certain about the status of AIARE instructor training yet but it looks good, about 6 have signed up. The Glacier Travel course is coming up in April, which is full. The committee is on good footing.
	+ Trail Running – The recent leader seminar produced 3 certified leaders and about 9 in development. We’re doing about a trail run every week. There’s a speaking event coming up, Injury Prevention, which could be of interest to many. The focus will be on leader development at the upcoming committee meeting and our next leader seminar.
	+ Navigation – Winter Navigation was held in January and was a success with 25 students. Ryan was able to attend the Nav Summit, and the big take away is everyone wants to see more digital content. The first session of the Staying Found course is full. We have a permit for Tiger Mtn, and Green Trails licensed the use of their map. A new course, Digital Trip Planning and Navigation, is almost full, and Ryan is working on a DNR lead for Rattlesnake Mtn for a Wilderness Nav course. Bob Boyd has offered to survey the course at no cost.
	+ First Aid – (Cheryl reporting for Barbara) The committee has an admin, Nancy Lee, to help with WFA and 3 sessions are planned for the year with emphasis on supporting scrambling and snowshoeing students.
* Officer reports
	+ Safety – Recent Safety summit provided contacts for Paul.
	+ Branch Director – A big focus on the board is the gala on April 14, which is a big fundraiser for the club.
	+ Treasurer – Update on 2018 mid-flight review and results. The club is going to release a little more information to help committees, also at the request of other treasurers, too. The branch story is a good story because our student counts are up and revenues are almost double what we budgeted, so they’re releasing more money to fund our initiatives. Discussion of 2019 revenue and expense budgeting (fiscal year starts October 1), see the template in email. Return it by March 21. Definition of strategic investments: not a direct operation expense and non-reoccurring. Example: launching a new course with a lot of startup costs. Leader development would fall into regular operating budgets. The good news is we’re going to have longer to spend our strategic reserve so we should be thoughtful and not feel pressure to spend it. Get your expense reports in in a timely fashion.
* Update: Branch Leadership Counsel discussion of 3-person minimum party size (Cheryl). This has languished for some time (6 months) with BLC. First of all, there is no club-level policy that requires a minimum of 3 people on an activity. There is no board policy that states that. It originated from the climber’s code as a guideline to have communication with the outside world if one person is hurt and someone stays with them while the other goes for help. With modern technology, the logic is that a call for help or communication can be achieved without a minimum party size of 3. The BLC has left it up to activity summits to decide the minimum party size standard.
* Update: Bellevue Program Center facilities discussions (Cheryl). The REI Headquarters initiative is still moving forward. Review of the results of our branch facilities needs survey by quarter. Jan-Mar is the busiest quarter (42 evenings). The data was forwarded to the REI folks and a conference call followed to discuss how we would fit into their plans. How is the space going to be allocated? No objection to our requirement to have first right of access to the facilities, probably through an online room manager. They’re talking with a number of organizations and groups, also. We’ll check back in a few months for an update from them. There’s no guarantee this will work out, so it would do us well to keep other options open. Next steps would be to explore the rental-lease options available to us.
* Update: Volunteer needs assessment included with the facilities needs survey (Cheryl). Not as urgent but still important for 5-year planning for the number of volunteers we’ll need to support our programs. I’ve got a new spreadsheet that I’ll be sending out after the meeting. Fill it out and return it by end of April.

**New Business**

* Committee discussion/review of their 2019 strategic investment proposals
	+ Backcountry Ski – AIARE Pro 1 course ($10,000). Instructors need to recertify by 2020 to keep the program going.
	+ Scrambling – Gear needs: PLBs for check-out, additional radios for instructors, ice axes (<$2,000 max). Scramble leader development ($350/person) for students in the Intensive Alpine Scramble Leader Training course.
	+ Snowshoeing – Gear needs: Beacon, shovel, probe, PLB, 2 BCA radios (about $1,000 ask). Snowshoe leader development to send another individual to AIARE 2 (50% rebate = $250) and give leaders financial incentive to complete the necessary courses (50% rebate = $350/person)
	+ Trail Running – Running weekend races, leader development and coaches.
	+ Navigation – Wilderness Navigation course startup costs.
	+ Hiking/Backpacking – WFA certification for leaders. PLBs are a possible consideration.
* Branch level strategic investment – facility space!
* Discussion of eLearning status and lack of progress with eLearning development within The Mountaineers.
* Scoping discussion: eLearning. What are the priorities? Where are the redundancies? Where are the opportunities in our courses? What do we want to accomplish?
	+ General purpose Outdoor Leadership Basic Skills (Leadership 101, typical soft skills, a few hours)
	+ Activity specific rules and requirements (e.g. Seattle New Snowshoe Leader seminar); best delivered in-person
	+ Digital Trip Planning and Navigation (applies to multiple activities)
	+ Specific redundant topics (e.g. The Ten Essentials)
* Fundamentals of Outdoor Leadership Seminar (Richard)
	+ Is there enough interest and demand from leaders to offer the one-day workshop this spring?

**Looking Ahead**

* Next meeting May 3, 6:30 PM at Eastside Fire & Rescue HQ
* Dinner with Mountaineers CEO Tom Vogel – Monday, March 19, 5:30 PM, WildFin American Grill – Issaquah
* PLEASE post activity and field trip photos and upcoming activities-courses on the Foothills Mountaineers FB page and contribute items to the newsletter and activities/events email!

**Meeting Adjourned 9:00 PM**

Submitted by secretary Russ Immel June 5, 2018, approved June X, 2018 without modification