



2302 N. 30th
Tacoma, WA

www.tacomamountaineers.org

Mountaineers, Tacoma Branch Council Meeting
Minutes for 26 March 2020

- I. Call to order. The March 26, 2020, Tacoma Branch Mountaineers Council meeting was held virtually via Zoom conferencing (due to Mountaineers and Washington State stay-at-home directives). The meeting was called to order by Curtis Stock at 7:00 PM and is presented in the order per the agenda. Board members present: Curtis Stock, Natalia Martinez-Paz, and Mark Kerr.
Absent: Harley Sandoval (treasurer) and Sarah Holt (Program Center administrator).
- II. Welcome and introductions. Scott Schissel was in attendance at the invitation of the chair as the newly appointed Outdoor Division chair.
- III. Approval of Minutes. The minutes had been distributed after the previous meeting and there were no changes or corrections. The minutes were approved as distributed.
- IV. Information and discussion items.
 - a. COVID-19 – Impacts and Mitigation Efforts. Mountaineers guidelines are posted – no in-person meetings or activities through April 24. Per Natalia – this situation could last 12-18 months, based on information from her paid job. Near-term impacts to organization income stream and ability to pay staff – expect furloughs or other staff reductions.
 - i. Course Cancellations and Deferrals. Curtis recapped impacts to Tacoma programs that he is aware of so far.
 - Basic Climbing Course – CANCELLED
 - Intermediate Climbing – Rock Module – CANCELLED
 - Backpack Leader Seminar (March) – CANCELLED
 - Intro to Backpacking (April) – CANCELLED
 - Outdoor Leadership Seminar – CANCELLED
 - Basic Climbing – Second Year Skills Evaluation – CANCELLED
 - Tacoma Program Center Work Party (April) – CANCELLED
 - Alpine Scrambling Course – POSTPONED until 4/24
 - Emergency Trail Preparedness – MOVED to 5/21
 - Prospective Climb Leader Seminar – MOVED to 5/20

Scott reviewed some of the initial replanning from climbing community – 4 groups of 9 students. No opportunities to do the classic climbs (e.g. Rainier, Baker, etc.). Online training – example from Scott's UPS course – he demonstrates via video how to do a skill (e.g. ice axe arrest) and then the student uploads a video of them demonstrating the skill.

Curtis will reach out to Mountaineers e-Learning staff for more information/resources about putting instruction online.



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- ii. Trip Planning and Impacts. BOD/CEO directed current suspension of activities through April 24, but that is highly likely to change.
- iii. Other Activities.
 - 1. Do we need to develop a 'credit system' or hierarchy for students who need requirements to complete classes? If some/most coursework can be completed online but some needs to be deferred, how do we track that?
 - 2. If we can sneak in additional courses now might be the time to develop these opportunities
 - a. Backcountry skiing – who do we need to empower to make this happen? We need someone to lead the course – Scott will do the admin but we need strong skiers to teach.
 - b. Other opportunities are 'Sport' Courses, 'Triad' Courses, and an 'Intensive Rock' Module (Intermediate Climbing).
 - 3. How do we keep our community intact?
 - a. Zoom outreach & social engagement (Social Zoom about online curriculum development). Curtis plans to host an "open forum" session for committee chairs, possibly April 8.
 - b. Maybe lessons learned videos – sort of a 'Mountaineers accidents (and near misses) in the PNW' type of video offering – Curtis will explore options.
- b. Division & Committee Chair Assignments.
 - i. Welcomed Scott as the new Outdoor Division Chair. Scott will review the job description drafted by Curtis and reviewed by the council members.
 - ii. There are still several open vacancies and some new and pending vacancies:
 - 1. Avalanche Chair
 - a. Annie Graeter is stepping down. Meredith Mosman has been asked but has not accepted or declined. Natalia will reach out.
 - 2. Backcountry Skiing Chair
 - a. Scott has indicated that he will take this on from Nick Wilson.
 - 3. First Aid Chair
 - a. Nick Wilson is looking to transition this role. John Dinh might be a good person for this position. (Might be busy right now.) Curtis will ask him.
 - 4. Climbing Equivalency
 - a. Nick Wilson is looking to transition this role.
 - 5. Climbing Chair
 - a. Marty Babare is looking for a replacement for next year.
 - 6. Curtis intends to appoint Scott to the Council. There were no objections.
- c. 2020-2021 Budgeting. The Mountaineers organization is in the middle of building the FY21 budget but because of the COVID-19 craziness it is really impossible to forecast



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with any degree of certainty. Curtis reports that at last week's Branch Leadership Committee meeting the branch chairs recommended to proceed by extending the current FY20 budget and adjusting for known changes such as course cancellations. Since everything is in flux the numbers will more than likely get reduced – but it is hard to plan in the given climate.

- d. Branch Activity Committee Governance. Recent behavior complaint highlighted the need to have documented governance guidelines in place in order to be equitable to all involved. Committees are handling leadership and positions differently. Cleaning up the rosters, establishing charters, and creating a standardized list and more thoughtful leadership roles so that the governance is more clearly delineated are desired outcomes. Now might be a good time to tackle the paperwork on this – not only for each of the activities but also development of boiler-plate guidelines for The Red Book. It is a good starting place and not an all-encompassing solution. Criteria and process for removing committee members is an important element of governance and guidelines would make removal of more problematic people easier. Curtis will develop a draft.
 - e. Council Priorities/Goals. How do we keep an eye on our previous goals; keep the focus on keeping the organization intact during this time of COVID-19?
 - i. Vision 2020
 - ii. Broader stakeholder engagements
 - iii. Formalizing governance
 - iv. Surviving COVID-19 (How to build community and thrive?)
 1. Storytelling – humans' bond through story!
 - f. Succession planning. Curtis is looking for ideas and people. (More diversity from the outdoor activity side of the house. Sailing and/or Sea Kayaking?).
- V. Celebrations and Announcements.
- a. Scott graduated Intermediate Climbing Course
- VI. Action items. We reviewed the action items from the last meeting.
- a. Reach out to the Climbing and Outdoor divisions regarding at-large council members – Curtis has done this and will continue to recruit at-large council members. **DONE**
 - b. Form a sub-committee for Third Thursdays and general outreach. This will be deferred until we have constructed a master calendar for Tacoma Branch course starts, so that the public outreach can feed into upcoming course opportunities. – Natalia
 - c. Touch base with sailing and kayak committees regarding Outdoor Division. Curtis attended Sea Kayaking committee meeting on March 4. **DONE**
 - d. Inquire about the Peak Pins and other recognition programs – Curtis
 - e. What are branch responsibilities and roles for managing Irish Cabin properties? Curtis met with Geoff Lawrence about both Irish Cabin and the Tacoma Program Center. The Branch retains the primary responsibility for operating and maintenance of these properties, on behalf of the larger Mountaineers organization. Still not able to track how that responsibility is being executed through the budget process. Curtis is still working that aspect. **DONE**
 - f. Set up Basecamp account for branch council. After further discussion the team decided that a Google Docs account might be a better platform for our purposes. Natalia will set it up. – Natalia



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- g. Draft Job Description for Outdoor Division chair. Curtis drafted a job description and distributed to the council for review. No changes recommended. **DONE**
 - h. Provide an overview on funding flows and budget. Curtis is still working on this. – Curtis
 - i. Propose dinner with Tom Vogl on or after April 18. Deferred until in-person gathering suspension is lifted. -- Curtis
 - j. Develop a master calendar of branch courses – when they start and how long they run – Natalia
 - k. Reach out to Dilek (Bulut) regarding e-Learning options available and resources to help develop new content. – Curtis
 - l. Investigate possibility of a virtual lessons learned session from recent accident on Chair Peak (2/22/20). – Curtis
 - m. Plan/schedule COVID-19 open forum for Tacoma Branch committee chairs. -- Curtis
 - n. Provide list of new committee chairs to Curtis. – Scott
 - o. Follow up with Meredith regarding Avalanche Education Committee. – Natalia
 - p. Follow up with John Dinh regarding chair of Wilderness First Aid Committee. – Curtis
 - q. Develop draft committee governance guidelines, for potential inclusion into the Red Book. -- Curtis
- VII. Good of the Order. None
- VIII. Next meeting dates: Thursday, May 7; Thursday June 18.
- IX. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm.

Submitted by:
Mark Kerr