

The Birchleggings Club, Inc.

Our Purpose: To contribute support of the American Birkebeiner Cross Country Ski Race and promote healthy lifestyles by encouraging participation in physical activities.

Board of Directors Meeting

September 23, 2022

Meeting held at the Mosquito Brook Hut on the American Birkebeiner Trail

Board members attending: Paul Thompson, President; Bob Britz, Vice-President; Dave Balsiger, Treasurer; Steve Carmazon, Acting Secretary; Connie Meek; Gale Otterholt,

Board members absent: Ralph Bovard, Ed Eroee, Webmaster; Jim Tenorio, Secretary

Guests attending:

Birchleggings Club members:

John Kotar, Club Founder and Past President

Nina Albanese-Kotar, from Eau Claire, WI

Kevin Rogers, from Osceola, WI

Dan Hayden, from Eau Claire, WI

Jerry and Judy Curnow, from Frederic, WI

Ted May, from Bayfield, WI,

Gus Virkus, from St Louis Park, MN

Brian Smith, from Hayward, WI

Mindy Ahler, from Edina, MN

Sue Scheer, Board Member- American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation (ABSF)

Andrew Wall, Development Director-American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation (ABSF)

The meeting and speaker presentation were video recorded by Mindy Ahler. The links to the recordings are posted on the Birchleggings Club Website: <https://www.birchleggings.com/>

Call to Order

President Paul Thompson called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

Welcome

Self introductions were made by each person in attendance. Paul welcomed our special guests Birkie, and Birchleggings Club Founder, John Kotar, along with his wife, Birchlegger Nina Albanese-Kotar.

Special thanks are owed to Birchlegger Jeff Tumbleson, who found, and delivered the grill from the SC Johnson outdoor family center at OO, to ABSF board Member, Susan Scheer, who graciously served as the grill master for the hamburgers, brats, & hotdogs we enjoyed, post-meeting, and to all the Board Members who contributed food, such as Paul Thompson & Mindy Ahler, Connie Meek, Dave Balsiger, Gale Otterholt, Bob Britz, and others.

Treasurer's Report

Dave announced that this next term will be his last three-year term that he will be our treasurer.

We will search now to identify a Birchlegger with experience in statistics and analysis, along

with finance, to fill this position that Dave has carried out so well. He has been serving as treasurer since the club started, which was long before we had a board of directors. If you are such a person, or know of a Birchlegger who is, please contact a board member!

Dave Balsiger, Bob Britz, and Steve Carmazon are at the end of their present terms and will be up for re-election this fall.

Dave Balsiger reported that we are financially solvent.

It was moved and seconded to continue our donation to:

1. CXC in the amount of \$1000. The “Nordic Rocks for Schools” program of the Central Cross-Country Ski Association assists schools in obtaining Nordic ski equipment for their physical education classes and...
2. The Wisconsin Nordic Network in the amount of \$500 to provide Korteloppet entry-fee scholarships for high school skier athletes.

The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote.

Working Group Reports

Membership- Steve Carmazon: Steve gave his report on membership, saying that all 150 Petroglyph skier ornaments, have their attached fishing line hanger, a descriptive note, and are in the 150 manilla bubble-mailing envelopes, awaiting our upcoming Birkie-Bucks discount card before mailing.

He also discussed encouraging Birchleggers to ski the open track Birkie, on Wednesday, of Birkie week, and volunteering at our expo booth, or at a feed station for Friday’s Korteloppet, or Saturday’s Birkie; they’ll have the time of their life!

Fundraising: Bob Britz: Bob gave his update on our fundraising campaign-- the Birkie Bucks Card. The card has discount offers from multiple merchants in the region. The card will be included with Birchleggings Club membership renewals. As of today the card was only lacking two more retailers coming on board. The spots are expected to be filled soon. The cards will soon be ready for proofreading by the retailer participants, before final printing and distribution. Our goal is to get the cards in the hands of at least 500 Birchleggers, ASAP, and there’s ongoing discussion on the final details on how to do that, and who will get one.

Steve Carmazon proposed an idea to have a framed image of the Birchleggings Club QR code posted in the Mosquito Brook hut. Persons using the hut would then have an instant link to the club website if they wanted more information about the club. No action was taken on the idea.

Birkie Green: Paul Thompson: Paul unveiled a new poster created by Blair Flickinger of the ABSF that promotes the Birchleggings Club as “More than just a purple bib.” Birkie Green continues to be a core principle of the ABSF and the Birchleggings Club is supporting the efforts to drive sustainability in four areas:

1. Waste Reduction and the introduction of composting.
2. Electrifying tools and machinery.
3. Offsetting the Birkie’s carbon production using local offsets when possible.
4. Committing to sustainably-sourced Birkie merchandise whenever possible.

One way the Birchleggings Club supports these efforts is with a unique project called Birkie Bib Bags (BBB). The collection of used and unused Birkie Bibs to be sewn into re-usable shopping bags. Paul displayed and dispensed about 30 converted Birkie bibs and asked skiers to volunteer to sew old race bibs into the new bags. These bags will spread the Birkie Brand while serving a practical purpose. Bags will be sold for \$10 with proceeds going to the Birkie Green Fund to help purchase an electric snowmobile for the American Birkebeiner filming of the lead male and female skiers.

Other Business/Discussion: Dave mentioned that our Birchleggings Club merchandise will from now on be available thru the ABSF downtown-Hayward and online stores, freeing Dave from that responsibility. The ABSF will not sell items with our old logo, so we also need to get rid of our slowly-dwindling supply of merchandise with the old logo. Ideas were presented for making the old items incentives/giveaways with the purchase of a new-logoed item.

Also discussed were the upcoming events including the Birkie Trail Run, our annual participation in the Birkie Expo, and the Birchleggings Club post-Birkie breakfast the Sunday after Birkie Number 49.

Paul Thompson, Mindy Ahler, and Steve Carmazon will be representing the Birchleggings Club during the annual Birkie Trail Run tomorrow (Saturday) at the outdoor expo tent and volunteering at the Trail Run itself.

Next Meeting:

Date: Monday November 28, 2022
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Virtual / "Zoom" online meeting

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:15 p.m.

Guest Speaker: After the official meeting ended, our special guest speaker was Andrew Wall, Development Director, for ABSF. Andrew gave an update on the progress of Mount Telemark Village. A link to the recording of his presentation is posted on the Birchleggings Club website: <https://www.birchleggings.com/>

Andrew summarized the phases of the Mount Telemark Village project and also relayed news of Birkie-related happenings.

Phase 1- Nearly complete:

- Land purchase
- Lodge removal
- Establishing the land conservancy.

Phase 2: Improvements are under way. Some already under construction, some in planning:

- Additions and improvements to the ski-trail system
- 5k paved roller-ski & walking trail
- Fitness park
- Mountain bike park
- Observation tower at the summit of Mount Telemark

- Continued operation of the sledding hill
- Revitalization of the skating pond

Phase 3- In planning and fundraising stages:

- Community Center building plans in final revision
- Naming rights are available for parts of the center

Other developments:

- Negotiations are progressing well for the ABSF bid to host the 2024 World Cup Races. They would be held in conjunction with the 50th Birkie Anniversary. The 50k World Cup race event would be started prior to the elite/first wave of the 2024 American Birkebeiner.

There was some discussion of how the Birchleggings Club can be involved with the Mount Telemark Village Community Center building, and the possible sponsorship of one of the rooms therein. There are a number of people/groups wanting and willing to have naming rights for various rooms in that building, which is still in the planning/ architectural stages.

After Andrew spoke, there was time allowed for Q&A. After the meeting, we enjoyed a zero-waste picnic and some time to socialize with ourselves and the new members who joined our gathering with an interest in getting involved.

Submitted for your approval,
Steve Carmazon (recording)
Jim Tenorio (editing and formatting)