

IDITAROD TRAIL COMMITTEE, INC.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
February 24, 2006

The meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by President Richard Burmeister.

Members present: Richard Burmeister, John Handeland (via telephone), Lee Larson (via telephone), Mark Moderow, Michael Owens, Jim Palin (via telephone), Dan Seavey, Rick Swenson (via telephone)

Members absent: Sam Maxwell and Joe Redington, Sr.

The President noted that Joe Redington Sr.'s absence was excused, that he is on the trail.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Dan Seavey noted that there is not a spot for Musher Concerns on the agenda. He suggested that as item #8.

Mark Moderow noted that the Board had voted to have a written IOFC report for each Board meeting.

Seavey stated that there needs to be a place on the agenda for concerns of the mushers. He noted that he doesn't want to have to beg for a spot on the agenda.

Jim Palin noted the only musher comments that should come to the Board are those that are not resolved by the staff.

Mike Owens noted that as the Mushers' Rep, Seavey has an obligation to bring concerns to the Board of Directors.

Owens/Seavey moved to adopt the proposed agenda with the amendment to add an item for Musher Concerns. Motion passed.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 2

Seavey/Owens moved to adopt the minutes of the December meeting of the Board of Directors. Motion passed.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Burmeister reported that he had appointed a Vet Committee composed of Jim Palin, Ramy Brooks, DeeDee Jonrowe, Stuart Nelson, Jr., DVM, Bob Sept, DVM, and Susan Whiton, DVM. Jonrowe is the chair of the committee.

Nelson reported that this should be a positive committee.

Burmeister reported that he has appointed two people to the Nominating Committee, David Pike and Mike Owens. He still has one person to nominate.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Hooley provided a written report.

Palin/Moderow moved to accept Hooley's report.

In response to a question about whether the chart is for net cash flow, Hooley noted it is reflective of the ongoing operation and how various levels will affect the cash flow target for June.

Hooley explained there needs to be between 40 and 45 thousand Iditarod Insider subscribers if we are to meet this projection. He noted that there are about 400 subscribers so far.

Hooley reported that the press conference at 3:00 p.m. will address a lot of different issues and encouraged Board members to stay around for it.

Hooley explained that a \$200,000 budget increase in sponsorships from the outside company had been budgeted but only \$40,000 was realized. He said the company had agreed to forego the monthly fee the rest of the year. He explained that they do have some leads and the relationship will continue to allow those leads to be followed for 2007.

Seavey asked if the Board could be provided with updates for each Board meeting and Hooley said that would happen.

Hooley noted that the OLN programming schedule is included in his report.

Palin/Moderow motion to accept Hooley's report was passed.

Palin/Seavey moved to accept the remaining staff reports unless there are additional comments or questions.

REPORT FROM THE DEVELOPEMENT DIRECTOR

Greg Bill stated he had nothing to report that wasn't in his written report.

REPORT FROM THE RACE DIRECTOR OF TRAIL LOGISTICS AND COMPETITION

Nordman reported the Anchorage start is acceptable for getting the teams safely to the BLM.

He explained the race will not be going to Eagle River. He asked whether we considered doing anything for the Eagle River VFW, noting that 60% of their annual revenue comes on the day when the race goes through.

Seavey suggested having concessions at the BLM.

Moderow noted that handlers will be needed at the BLM to assist the teams that beat their trucks there.

Nordman noted snow conditions in Wasilla are not suitable for the re-start to be in Wasilla. So the re-start will be in Willow. He said Terry Boyle left Thursday at noon and said the trail is good from Willow to Finger Lake.

He said Roger Ashcraft is headed to Pontilla with two groomers, which are doing a good job. He will call Nordman back to let him know whether we need to get the Iron Dog involved in the grooming.

He said that today Ashcraft will go through Rainy Pass and down through Dalzell Gorge where 29 McGrath people are working on recovery of Richard Strick Jr. He said blasting was done on the avalanche on Thursday. He explained that Ptarmigan is not an option for the Iditarod. He said when the trail leaves Rohn, it's patchy but still good all the way to McGrath.

Mike Owens asked about outhouses. Nordman noted that two are built. One is at Cripple and one will be flown to Ruby this week.

Seavey thanked Nordman for keeping the Board posted. Nordman noted that Andy Willis has been a big help too.

Nordman noted that he went to the memorial in McGrath for Richard Strick Jr.

Owens asked about going around Norton Bay. Nordman noted that he sent extra stakes to Unalakleet to mark that trail.

He said that from Safety to Nome, the mushers will use the back trail behind Cape Nome.

He said he is still trying to deal with the groomer issue with the BLM.

He noted that Rhodi Karella Davidson will not be a judge this race as planned.

Seavey asked if the Pass is safe. Nordman explained it is safe and Moderow added that it will always have objective danger. We can only make it as safe as possible.

Nordman introduced Andy Willis and welcomed him on board.

REPORT OF THE RACE LOGISTICS COORDINATOR

Andy Willis reported that 1510 bales of straw and 80 bales of hay (to Rainy Pass) had been sent out. He said the Heat is at NAC and 1290 boxes will be shipped out. He said the Air Force is now in McGrath flying out the food drops.

Seavey welcomed Andy Willis.

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR

Chas St. George reported that a number of networks will be reporting on the Iditarod including a French production on the Iditarod Air Force, the Discovery Channel, USA (a program called The Dream Job), A & E and an Australian Production Group that will be doing a cool project on winter tourism.

REPORT OF THE RACE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

Joanne Potts reported that we are having a problem with Nome housing for the mushers, as well as for others. She explained that many places have housed mushers before are taking in people for pay this year because so many of the places that have offered rooms to rent etc. are no longer doing so.

Owens noted this is an issue. He said the number of available rooms to rent in Nome is down by 100.

Swenson said he heard on the news that the Iditarod was thinking about starting the race in Fairbanks. Burmeister noted that the re-start will be in Willow.

Palin/Seavey motion to accept additional staff reports passed.

Owens/Moderow moved to have mushers carry a plumbers' candle to McGrath where they will be lit to honor Richard Strick Jr. Motion passed.

Owens asked what we can do for Strick's family. Nordman noted that everyone is asking that right now.

Moderow noted that to facilitate the avalanche work we essentially acquired a new sponsor. An explosive company, Alaska Pacific Powder, jumped through major hoops and waived the insurance at a major cost. He suggested they deserve sponsor recognition and the thanks from this Board.

Nordman noted that having Moderow with them when they flew out to Rainy was invaluable.

RE-START

Owens/Seavey moved to relocate the re-start to Willow.

Palin asked to amend the motion to include “for the safety of the dogs.”

Seavey suggested including “and the participants.”

Moderow noted that we’re going to keep on going through this but we have an obligation to do more than hope for weather. Over the next year, he suggested we should do some detailed planning on the re-start. He said the people of Wasilla and Knik deserve some idea of how this is going to be done.

Burmeister noted that the April meeting will be in the Wasilla area and we need to look at and review the re-start.

Seavey noted that it would be a courtesy to the mushers to announce the location of the re-start earlier. He stated it is difficult to plan food drops when the location is only announced 10 days ahead.

Swenson commented there are variables we can’t predict. He said the weather has as much impact on the planning for the location of the re-start.

Owens/Seavey motion as amended passed unanimously.

JR. IDITAROD

Potts reported that 23 mushers will be starting the Jr. Iditarod on Saturday, a record number of teams. She explained that because of weather conditions, the race will start in Willow. The teams will go from there to Eagle Song Lodge then to Yentna Station Roadhouse and after a 10 hour layover, will return by the same route.

Owens asked about the coverage of the Jr. Iditarod. Hooley noted that part of our production crew will be there.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Owens/Seavey moved to go into executive session to discuss a letter Dr. Nelson received from the Yukon Quest and questions brought up by board members Mike Owens and John Handeland regarding liability concerns. Motion passed.

DIRECTORS’ COMMENTS

John Handeland: He noted that he is heading to Washington, D.C. and will return on Thursday.

Lee Larsen: He said he had no comment and was sorry he couldn't be present at the meeting.

Jim Palin: He said we need to discuss the cabin that Perrins wants to build at Pontilla.

Hooley noted that Steve Perrins has asked this Board to consider a letter of support for him to construct a new cabin in the area.

Moderow noted there used to be a wall tent used as a hunting camp and for the mushers. He noted that Perrins has said the people could use the cabin when it is built. It could be used for someone in trouble but we need to know it is being built for a commercial venture.

Seavey noted that he went on record as opposing the permit until the corridor is designated as a 1000-foot historic corridor.

Moderow/Owens moved to authorize the staff to file a conditional statement of support so long as it does not prejudice the establishment of a 1000-foot right away corridor. Motion passed. Seavey opposed.

Nordman suggested that Hooley run the letter by Mark Moderow.

BACK TO DIRECTORS' COMMENTS

Jim Palin: He noted there is a lot of room for improvement with the teleconferences communications..

Rick Swenson: No longer on teleconference

Mark Moderow: Pray for snow!

Mike Owens: He expressed his gratitude for the time and energy put in by staff during this last week. He said he is eager to get into the Pay per View and wants information to give to the people to push this in Nome. He welcomed Andy Willis to the staff.

Dan Seavey: He asked if we are on track with Emmitt Peters' award presentation this spring.

Hooley noted that Burmeister will attend the ceremony with Peters and we will support him with a presentation piece.

Seavey thanked ITC for connecting to the Historic Inc. website. He thanked Nordman for the contacts to use to send out the historic signs to the communities. He noted that the Seppala grant has been paid out. He also noted that the rules committee is working on the

2007 race rules and is planning a weekend retreat in April. He stated that the staff needs to be commended for a job well done.

Richard Burmeister: He thanked everyone for the past couple of weeks and said keep the wind to our backs and the trails well marked!

ADJOURNMENT

Owens/Moderow moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.