

**Keweenaw Nordic Ski Club
Board Meeting
February 2, 2021**

Attendance: Jay Green, Mark Roberts, John Diebel, Wayne Stordahl, Susan Stiffler, Jason Martin, Crissy Gerhart, Mark Klein, and Nate Laakonen. Keith Meyers joined the meeting at 7:20 p.m. Guests: Mary Babcock (Hancock City Manager), Craig Hughes (Swedetown Trails), Connie Julien, Barbara Wheeler, and Horst Schmidt

Jay convened the meeting on Zoom at 7:05 p.m.

The agenda was rearranged to accommodate the participation of Mary Babcock. We discussed the 60-acre land issue and FEMA funding before any other items were discussed. After that, the meeting was conducted according to the agenda.

60-Acres:

Jay introduced the topic of exploring the purchase of the Harrington Ridge (approximately 60 acre) property that is for sale. He has talked to Matt Arko 3 times and Will Lytle has also discussed this with Matt. Matt is not currently actively trying to sell it and is no longer listing it for sale, but he is interested in selling. He was asking \$2000 per acre, but we do not know how negotiable he is on that price. He has expressed an interest in helping if the parcel remains open to public use.

The plat book shows the property to be about 80 some acres, but a few acres out of the northwest corner has been sold. Also, the lands along the water west of highway M203 is not part of the sale and a settling pit area east of M203 is not included. Basically, the land being offered is east of M203 including the steep hillside and much of Mud Lake, over to the east property line. It is bordered on the north by Pebbles, Inc. (Tomasi) land, on the south by the City of Hancock (Lakeview Cemetery) and on the east by Tomasi (40 acres) and Joyce Misner (40 acres). The boundaries would need to be surveyed. There is no access other than our ski trails or through Tomasi's lands to the east and most of the timber was logged off a few years ago.

Mary Babcock stated that the City of Hancock is interested via the Recreation Committee, but the City is also interested in establishing a trail connection between the Hancock beach/campground area across M203 to the "sledding hill" and the bike/hike trail into Swedetown gorge. Thus, there might be two projects that should be coordinated so that they do not compete for funding. She stated that if only one project can be done at a time, the M203 crossing can wait. She asks how KNESC expects to fund the 60-acre purchase, mentioning that this could be through Portage Health Foundation funding which requires partners (possibly including the City, KLT Hancock Township, etc.). Or DNR land acquisition funding could be pursued which must be done through a government entity such as the City. Jay stated that we are not far enough along to know how the funding will be done. Mary stated that the M203 crossing project will be done in stages and can be scheduled to avoid conflicting for funding if we pursue

the 60-acre parcel. She will contact Kevin Store at Portage Health to see if such projects are in the scope of the current funding and if they are willing to help with recreational land opportunities such as this.

John asked what other uses can be made of this land if purchased and Mark Klein and Nate stated that single track bike trails would be a good fit along the ridge. John & Jay stated that an observation platform could be placed on the ridge for views of the canal. Nate asked about access across the NE corner and several people stated that Tomasi has been willing to grant access. Mark Roberts suggested that Tomasi has the same problem accessing his lands across this corner, so a trading of access rights should be easy to arrange.

KNSC can start working on an application for funding support through the Portage Health Foundation once Mary reports back on how receptive they are to funding recreational land purchases. Mary stated that the City is supportive and will work with us if we decide to pursue the purchase. The City is submitting a letter of inquiry to the Portage Health Foundation for its recreation grant opportunity.

Mary noted the work being done to develop a crossing over M-203 to the old sledding hill. Signage and paint would be needed like at McLain State Park. Mark Klein indicated that a single track along the ridge would be nice. The Chain Drive would be able to utilize this access. Mark Klein suggested stair access from M-203 on the City property. Nate asked about connecting between the 40-acres and the 60-acres. Crissy suggested purchasing an easement at that point. Mark Roberts noted Paul Tomasi's potential interest in access from the west as a potential trade. John asked Mary Babcock if Will Lytle left comments. Mary noted that the City's goal is to get a pathway from the beach to Maasto Hiihto. We need to make sure that the Portage Health Foundation has an interest and if they would allow for acquisitions.

On FEMA, Mary noted that the project was approved two weeks ago, and they are ironing out minor details. OHM is working on the plan and hope to bid it in April or May. 75% of the funds will come within 60 days. The state will pay the required match. The state contribution is why it will have to go out for bid. Jay asked Mary if with her permission can KNSC go to OHM and make sure this makes sense to us. Mary indicated that the City would share the scope document. John discussed the potential alternate route and how we worked with OHM. Mary indicated the City will involve us at all steps and indicated that OHM could come to your next meeting to explain the project. John noted there has been no discussion on width which he said needs to be 14'. This needs to be communicated.

Agenda: No changes

Minutes: Jay noted two minor changes: spelling of Gitzen's and Saykly's. On the fifth bullet point, add stores to summary. John moved approval of the minutes with a second from Mark Roberts. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Comments: Horst Schmidt note the establishment of the County Recreation Authority.

Groomer's Report: Jay noted that the trails have been excellent. Nate noted that the bike trails are in great shape with a lot of activity. Mark Klein indicated that coordination has been good

with the ski trails. Mark Roberts indicated there have been no problems with the trails and they are in fabulous shape. Wayne raised concern about bikers letting skiers know they are going to pass. Jay noted that this is something trail etiquette could address. Craig Hughes noted that interaction has been good between bikers and skiers and recommended coughing as a signal (warning) before you pass.

Treasurer's Report: John reported that there is \$89,000 in the bank. Pass sales continue to look good. 50 more passes were printed, and they are almost out of them again. MTU usually gets 1,000 and they have gone through all of them. Craig Hughes noted that 90% of Swedetown's passes have sold all last season is what has sold this season to date. John noted that he paid the tax bill on the 40-acres and will now get with the Board of Review on our non-profit status. \$1,170 was transferred to KNSC from the Red Jacket Cycling Club which were the proceeds from the 2019 Chain Drive event which the club hosted. John has provided Wickley their invoice, but still waiting on a check. The surplus will be up \$5,000 this year. We are in good shape financially. Mark Roberts moved acceptance of the Treasurer's report. Wayne provided a second. The motion was approved unanimously.

Barnelopet: The forecasted weather is a major concern. Wayne noted that he has all the trail Marshals he needs. Need people for registration. The weather is predicted to be below zero. This will not help with volunteers. Jay asked Wayne if he would like to consider another date. John noted the Ski Tiger competition next weekend. Craig noted the Bear Chase on March 13th. Glide N Gorge is on February 27th. Jay indicated it is Wayne's call. The decision was made to reschedule to February 21st. Jay indicated that he attached Portage Health Foundation as a sponsor and will add the new date. Jay will get it on Keweenaw Trails tonight and John will get it on Facebook.

Glide N Gorge: Jay got prices. He noted that Keith sent out a good summary. Photos will be submitted one per participant. Budget: Food will be \$2.00/bag for 120 bags totaling \$240. Prizes for the photo contest will total \$250. Free will donations are estimated at \$1,000. Keith supported the budget and John did as well. Need to address putting food bags together, the rules, manpower to execute, and the drawing. Some food options/pricing discussed through Walmart: Capri juice 22 cents each, Mott juice 50 cents each. Econo: water 14 cents each. Drawing: one photo per person posted on Facebook or emailed in. Need to have participants sign a release both for the photographer and the person in the photo. Four will be randomly drawn from registrations. Four top pictures as judged by the board with six honorable mentions. Picture winners cannot receive door prizes. Bagging up of food will take 2 to 3 people. Keith volunteered himself and his wife Julie. Need people for registration and getting signed releases. Coming back to food, meat sticks and cheese sticks: Gitzen's one of each 16 count boxes 90 cents each; classic beef sticks 70 cents each; Slim Jim's 25 cents each; Walmart string cheese 45 cents each; Vollwerths is over double the price. John suggested string cheese, meat product and juice. He is waiting on Aimee J's, but estimates about 36 cents each. Jay noted that Gitzen's on cookies: Keebler and Mrs. Fields are 90 cents individually wrapped; Saykkly's from Jim's would be 89 cents each. Bags: 200 bags were \$56 for the Luminary Ski. Jay will check on brown lunch bags. Walmart has miniature candies/granola bars. Old Dutch chips through

Gitzen's are 35 cents per bag. Keith expressed support for Jay spending \$2.50 to \$3.00 per bag at his discretion. There was a discussion about having tents for distribution. Crissy asked about the farmers market tents. John said to check with Deb Mann. It was also noted that Down Wind has tents as well. Jay will check with Arnie at Down Wind. Maps: there will be the standard route with two others for competent skiers (River Trail and the Sidewinder/Dam Hill loop. A color scheme was discussed for the standard route. Jay has spray paint. John and Mark will ski to set the lathe. Jay/Keith/Julie will bag food. Wayne and John will cover registration at noon. Instructions/map with skiing and selfie focus. 120 finisher snack bags. Reviewed the instructions developed Crissy and Susan. Covered the organizations to approach for gift certificates that we will pay for. Jay/John - \$100 from Down Wind; Jay - \$75 from Ginos, \$50 from Bonfire, \$25 from Kangas; Mark - \$25 from Milly's; \$15 certificates were discussed from KC Bonkers, 5th and Elm, and Cyberia.

Website: John suggested to Susan she change the website on Banelopet.

Portalettes: The portalettes have been delivered. John will confirm they will stay for one month.

Retro Ski: The Retro Ski will be moved to the 20th at 1:30. Jay noted that there had been an inquiry from Virginia on the Retro Ski.

FEMA: No additional discussion

Business Sponsors: Keith will call Steph on the status of the Wickley payment.

Keweenaw Trails Website: KNSC will become the owner of record of Keweenaw Trails, and we will bill the other ski areas. We are taking this over from Dean Woodbeck.

4-Seasons Trail: No report

Appraisal of 60-acres: The board discussed authorizing \$600 for an appraisal by Tim Seaton. The current price is \$2,000/acre. Crissy suggested a contingency offer. Mark Roberts suggested we get the appraisal first and moved that KNSC get an appraisal at a cost of up to \$600. Crissy provided the second. On a roll call vote, there was unanimous approval of the motion.

Miscellaneous: Nate indicated that he would like to be on the visioning committee. John cautioned that our 2020 tax filing may require a form 990-EZ and require accounting support.

Next special meeting will be on February 16 via Zoom at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.