

Sovereign Lake Nordic Society

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: January 19, 2026

Time: 4-6 pm

Location: Vernon Yacht club, Vernon, BC

Recorder: Cynthia Flores

Attendance

Present: C.Flores, D.Dennier, A.Klein, C. Williamson, M.Wolfe, M. Storey, B.Miller, L.Bot, M.Steinruck, W. Shannon

Regrets: none

1. Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 pm.

M.Storey

A land acknowledgement was provided, recognizing the unceded territory of the Syilx/Okanagan Peoples, on which Sovereign Lake Nordic operates.

Wendy

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion: To approve the agenda as presented.

Discussion: Noted that the Strategic Plan references a Volunteer Committee which does not currently exist and will need to be created. **Decision:** Agenda approved.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

Meeting: December 17, 2025

Decision: Minutes approved as circulated.

4. General Manager's Report (Wendy)

Operations Overview

- Strong Christmas period with excellent weather and high visitation.

- Revenue slightly below last year but still strong.
- High usage of rental equipment and toboggan area, which continues to attract new visitors.
- All programs are operational, including Masters, Jackrabbits, and Bunny programs.
- Grooming operations performing well despite a largely new grooming crew; learning curve acknowledged.

Staffing

- Ongoing staffing shortages in Ski School
- Additional lodge staff recruitment underway to support operational needs.

Ski S’Kool, Program

- Program is full with no remaining capacity.
- Instructors are paid staff; program revenues cover costs.
- Program is not a revenue generator but is not operating at a loss.
- Program serves as a strong community outreach and feeder opportunity for youth programs.
- External funding (e.g., Just for Kids, teacher grants) supports accessibility and transportation.

Health & Safety Committee

- Health & Safety Committee met on January 5, 2026.
- Focus on reviewing protocols, SDS documentation, incident reporting, and staff education.
- High seasonal staff turnover requires annual reorientation to safety processes.

5. Pass Checking, Revenue Leakage & Access Control

Discussion Summary

- Significant concern about unpaid trail usage and revenue leakage.
- Current pass design makes quick visual verification difficult.
- Staff and volunteers have begun regular on-trail pass checks with positive public response.
- Discussion of multiple strategies:
 - Pass checking at or near parking areas
 - Lower parking lot diversion for pass purchases
 - Increased signage and education
 - Annual color stickers or visual identifiers on passes
 - Improved software requirements (mandatory photos, clearer on-screen information)

Key Considerations

- Safety and legality of roadside checks
- Volunteer and staff capacity
- Connectivity of trails and limitations
- Provincial park context and user-pay messaging

Continue enhancing education and visibility for the remainder of the season and planning improvements for next season. The club is taking measures, such as actively conducting ticket checks and promoting visits to the lodge, to secure more ticket sales. We will continue to work on implementing parking lot pass checking/ purchasing as well as checking at various locations around Sovereign lake.

6. Signage & Communications

- Existing signage is often obscured by snow and blends with standard park signage.
 - Interest expressed in more visible, friendly, and “cheeky” messaging with QR codes (e.g., “Snow is free, grooming is not”).
 - Budget for signage has already been fully allocated for the year.
 - Temporary or volunteer-supported signage options discussed, with attention to park regulations.
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7. Review of Action Items from Previous Meeting

Legacy Lodge / Capital Development

- Early foundation work underway to prepare for future grant opportunities.
 - Lodge Committee has:
 - Created standardized internal approval processes
 - Developed a centralized directory of support letters and contacts
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8. Committee Reports

Programs Task Force

- Extensive consultation conducted with parents and coaches.
- Key findings:

- Strong appreciation for coaches and athlete experience
- Need for improved coordination, communication, and leadership clarity
- Financial strain on families (equipment, travel, gear turnover)
- Desire for stability and without any abrupt changes to programme personnel.

Motion: That the Board approve the Programs Committee Terms of Reference as presented and authorize the formation and filling of the committee to proceed.

Decision: Motion carried.

Next Steps Identified

- Establish the Programs Committee under the approved TOR.
- Conduct a focused workshop on program finances.

9. Programs Financial & Structural Review (Upcoming)

We will continue our Task Force and a review of our programs and club structure to support long-term sustainability. This review will include a workshop which will:

- Review program cost structures
- Assess coaching models
- Evaluate financial sustainability.

Motion: That the Board approve the convening of a Programs Workshop to review finances and bring forward recommendations for the Board consideration. **Result:** Motion carried by consensus.

10. Finance Report

Financial Highlights

- Year-to-date operating surplus reported, though partially skewed by SilverStar add-on pass accounting.
- SilverStar reconciliation completed; expect receivable to be paid imminently.
- Expenses remain well-controlled.
- Day ticket sales remain the primary financial risk variable for the remainder of the season.

Forecast

- Range-based forecast presented (low to high scenario).

- November and December day ticket shortfalls noted.
- January tracking close to budget midpoint.

11. Marketing & Reciprocal Opportunities

- Strong social media engagement credited for increased visitation.
- Increase in day pass purchases from skiers affected by poor conditions elsewhere.
- Reciprocal discounts with other Nordic areas expanding (e.g., Kimberley under consideration).

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned after completion of agenda items.

Action Items Summary

Action Item Responsibility Timeline

1 Create Volunteer Committee per Strategic Plan	Board / GM	This week Feb 20-24,
2 Explore annual pass visual identifier (stickers, For 2026–27 season 2 photos)	GM	2026
3 Refine pass checking approach near lower parking lot	GM / Operations	In-season
4 Increase education & visibility on user-pay		

Staff / Comms Immediate
requirement

5 Investigate temporary/QR-based signage options GM Short -term Establish Programs
Committee under approved

6 TOR Board Chair Immediate

Schedule programs financial & structural

7 workshop Task Force Within 2 weeks

Continue Legacy Lodge preparatory work for Lodge

8 Ongoing grants Committee

9. Complete the Community Gaming Grant GM End of March

Report (excluding the financials)