

Sovereign Lake Nordic Club
Annual General Meeting
November 21, 2023
200-3400 30th Ave, Vernon BC



In attendance: Board of Directors, new Board members, General Manager, Biathlon Coach, and approximately 40 members.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Cyndy Flores, Board of Directors Chair, at 6:36 PM.

1. Welcome (Cyndy Flores)

Cyndy welcomed all attendees to the meeting, confirmed that quorum had been reached, and thanked the Okanagan Valley College of Massage Therapy for providing the venue. Operating within SilverStar Provincial Park, Cyndy acknowledged that the Sovereign Lake Nordic Club (SLNC) is situated on the ancestral, traditional and unceded territory of the Sylix and Secwépemc Nations, and that SLNC is grateful to have the opportunity to collaborate, play and work on these lands.

Motion: To approve the agenda as presented: **Motion approved.**

Motion: To approve the Minutes of the 2022 AGM: **Motion approved.**

2. Chair's Report (Cyndy Flores)

Cyndy recapped some of the significant activities undertaken by the board of directors over the past year, including effecting changes in key staff, and their activities related to developing and executing the strategic plan. Cyndy also acknowledged the extraordinary work of the large number of enthusiastic volunteers observed throughout all weather and seasons.

3. Financial Report (Hugh Seaton)

Hugh thanked the Finance Committee members (Bill Miller, Wendy Shannon, Candace Bourque) for their work over the past year. Two reports were provided to attendees prior to the meeting; the Treasurer's Report and the External Financial Statement. Highlights included:

- The club enjoyed record sales last season of \$1.33M, however this was \$50k short of target. High inflation, additional staffing costs, along with expenditures in excess of plan in areas of overtime, and staff and volunteer recognition resulted in a net profit of \$42k for the year (down from \$144k average over the past three years). In response to a concern raised by a member on overspending, Wendy Shannon (the club's new General Manager) advised that measures have been put in place to tightly control expenditures this year.
- Since 2020-21, season's pass sales have decreased slightly to 2800 from 3,187. Program costs (now \$369k) have increased by a factor of 3.7 since that period. To support the early stages of this growth while Programs proceeds to achieve a revenue neutral model, the club transferred \$66.8k to the Programs budget.
- Other highlights from the presentation were that lodge sales returned to pre-pandemic levels at \$117k, and an analysis showed that grooming costs are ~20% of club expenditures (\$245k). Net assets remain stable at \$1.11M.

- A member expressed concerns that the fees for registering for some programs, which had seen high price increases, were unfairly being used to reduce registration fees for other programs. While the club generally uses a \$10/hour pricing model, it was agreed more analysis could be done.
- **ACTION:** Treasurer to review appropriateness of registration fees against attributable costs.

4. General Manager Report (Wendy Shannon)

Wendy thanked attendees (and the broader community) for all the generous offers of support following the announcement of becoming the General Manager. Wendy reviewed the present staffing at the club that features coaches Eric (Biathlon), Darren (cross country), Dierdra (Skill Development Programs, and administrator), head groomer Edward who has significantly reduced equipment downtime due to his experience as a mechanic, and Gareth who has taken on the Operations Manager role. Wendy also expressed her thanks for all the work done by volunteers. Cyndy expressed her thanks to Eric for stepping up to support the club's needs while hiring was conducted in the summer.

While the club will be pursuing further Programs enrollment, the club is presently looking at enhancing the quality of programs as they grow. Programs are offered to encourage lifelong enjoyment of cross-country skiing, and the club welcomes visitors of all ages and abilities.

This season, the club will host the Western Canada Cup and Sovereign-2-Silver Star events.

5. Lodge Renewal (Malcolm Devine)

Plans for renewing the existing day lodge are progressing (this will involve either a new structure or renovation/expansion of the existing lodge; no decision has been taken yet). Malcolm reminded attendees that we will renew the lodge in partnership with BC Parks. BC Parks has committed funding to support the project.

Completed actions include:

- Structural assessment of lodge (structure is sound, though some maintenance is required)
- Economic impact study
- Fundraising feasibility study (partial)
- Space needs assessment
- Member engagement (part 1)
- On-going dialogue with BC Parks
- Agreement with charitable partner for tax receipt purposes

Plans for 2023-24 include:

- Complete fundraising feasibility study
- Develop preliminary design options and cost estimates
- Review design options with members and staff
- Decision on design
- Complete Memorandum Of Understanding with BC Parks
- Finalize "Case for Support"
- Complete fundraising plan and launch "silent phase"
- Recruit/build fundraising team and launch public campaign
- Submit applications to granting agencies, foundations

6. Financial Forecast (Hugh Seaton)

The summary of the 2023-24 budget includes:

- Targets of \$1.39 M in revenues (equivalent to 2022-23), \$1.14M in expenditures (which is \$90k lower than last year) with a strong focus on holding the line on expenditures, and a target net operating profit of \$188k.

The Capital budget for 2023-24 includes:

- \$5k computer equipment
- \$34.1k rental equipment (skis, boots, poles, snowshoes)
- \$22.4k environmental sustainability (EV chargers, electrical upgrades, battery-powered equipment)
- \$25k towards the lodge renewal project.

Financial risk management includes on-going monitoring and a mid-year assessment, maintaining a target year-end operating profit, and multi-year capital planning.

7. Strategy Plan (Dave Dennier)

The Board actively pursued feedback on the strategic plan presented at the 2022 AGM. Member feedback was obtained through emails, survey results, and six in-person focus groups. Based on this feedback a 2024-28 strategic plan was shared with the AGM notice of meeting. The strategy document was pared down to four pages, and highlighted the 13 priorities listed below.

1. Lodge renewal
2. Development of a multi-use paved trail
3. Purchase a new (or near-new) trail groomer by 2028
4. Advance Program offerings
5. Implement a 3-year financial planning cycle
6. Centrally coordinate effective fundraising activities
7. Establish a volunteer recruitment, retention, and reward program
8. Establish a multi-year competitive event calendar
9. Establish a calendar for community-oriented social activities
10. Commit to excellence in internal and external communications
11. Commit to excellence in organizational excellence through continuous improvement
12. Establish a committee that formalizes collaborative strategic partnerships
13. Become an industry leader in environmental sustainability.

To share progress on each priority with Members, the board plans on posting Terms of Reference, annual committee plans, and quarterly progress reports on the SLNC website.

Attendees at the AGM were encouraged to join committees and task forces that would be working on the priorities and were also requested to submit their comments to: Board@sovereignlake.com.

8. Elections Committee Report (Stephanie Oxenham)

Six positions were available and six candidates were nominated, so all six have joined the Board by acclamation.

- New Board members: Dianna Embleton, Taschi Klaschka, Alexander Klein, and Leif Lennie. The new Board members were given an opportunity to briefly introduce themselves.
- Returning Board members: Sue Cairns, and Tara Fulop.

- Board members starting the second year of their 2-year term: Cyndy Flores, Bill Miller, Marshall Moleschi, and Dave Dennier.

9. Q and A

Questions were raised during the course of the presentations, and no further questions were raised.

10 Adjournment

Cyndy thanked out-going Board members Malcolm Devine, Hugh Seaton, Dren Maluku, and Sabre Cherkowski for their contributions to the Club.

Meeting adjourned at 8.13 PM.

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