

SAWTOOTH INTERPRETIVE & HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
MINUTES
2/15/2024

Attendance: Vice President Terry Clark, Treasurer Liesl Scherthanner, Directors: Susan Kim, Becky Obletz, Dave Pinney, Business Manager Erica Cole, Executive Director Lin Grey. Via Video: Secretary Roland Miller, Directors: Gary Gadwa, Paul Hill, Bernice Hartz, Amelia Jones, Caitlin Straubinger, C/T Liaison Kathy Atchley and SNRA Liaison Sarin Lomascolo.

Vice President Terry Clark called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. There was a roll call with the above persons present.

Terry asked if anybody had any comments they wanted to make on the agenda or the minutes of the previous meeting? Hearing none, a motion was made to approve the minutes.

Liesl Scherthanner moved to accept the minutes as presented. Susan Kim seconds. The motion passed unanimously.

President's report. (See attached) Stewart said it did not need to be read aloud as everyone had been sent a copy.

Stewart asked that if you have any questions on it, please contact him through email. He will schedule a meeting late February to talk about the Obsidian project once everything is a go. Becky would like an update. Stewart wrote that we would have another meeting of everybody to make sure everybody's on board before we sign off on all the papers. Obsidian is on the agenda, and it can be discussed then.

SNRA Report: Sarin Lomascolo -Partnership Coordinator

Sarin Lomascolo passed along some things from Kirk. The SNRA has 15 offers out for the temp to perm hiring. Office and housing space will be tight because there will be a fair amount of people working this summer.

Lin asked her to explain what temp to perm (temporary vs. permanent) means. She said those job types are across all programs and are mostly seasonal positions that will maybe become permanent. Her understanding is that they're from across the board and all different areas, depending on how many different program areas they can hire. There were seasonal positions that are mainly just the summer season. Those are usually more like a six-month position. The permanent positions get more benefits by being permanent, like health care and things like that. But then they also can have a longer season as well, six to eight months, but then they can come back each year. They're turning a lot of the temporary positions into permanent temporary positions.

Sarin switched to the other updates of staffing that would be of interest to the board. The Sawtooth Supervisor's office is hiring Jessica Sheik as a forest public affairs officer. She helps with social media. Lin and Sarin have met and talked with Jessica before. Steve Frost is being hired as the new Sawtooth National Forest Partnership Coordinator; he will cover the whole forest. Alison Kennedy is the new private lands administrator and she's already in the office. Zach Lewis is new and working remotely (from Juneau, Alaska) as the SNRA environmental coordinator. He's helping with several projects. Andrew Addy is now the Sawtooth Fire and Fuel Staff Officer position. That position is also out of the supervisor's office. Caitlin Frolly (who many

on the board probably know) is on trails and wilderness and is going to detail into Tom Winters position for a few months.

The forest leadership team is going to meet at the Redfish Visitor Center June 4th and 5th. Hopefully, they will get a chance to see all the work up there. Lin is planning to ask the Forest Service to survey the Valley Creek permit, which is the Stanley Museum.

Sarin gave a shout out to Erica. She thinks that SNRA Pocket Naturalist is a great example of how SNRA and SIHA can collaborate and work together on a beautiful product that highlights the SNRA.

Gary Gadwa asked if the next phase for Redfish is on or behind schedule. Sarin thinks it is on schedule. Lin said it really depends on the winter and when they can start in the spring and that will probably determine when and if they remain on schedule. Terry said the next phase in the internal trails, and Sarin said that will take some time to figure out. The Redfish internal trails would be another project and she doesn't think they have any funding for it at this time.

C/T Report: Kathleen Atchley

Kathleen Atchley reported that it's been very slow. They haven't had much snow but overnight did get full and a half inch of good snow. This is good because the Ashton dog derby is on Friday and Saturday. It may help bring people into town. Jay Pances is acting PIL for Sarah Wheeler, who was on a detail.

She thanked Erica for all her efforts getting these squares and tablets. She sent the inventory list to Teton Basin and Palisades and told them to make the orders directly to Erica and to do it sooner than later.

Executive Directors Report – (See attached): Lin Gray

Lin spoke with the mayor earlier this week regarding the annexation of the property surrounding the museum into the City of Stanley. He indicated that if we were unable to get the museum surveyed this summer, they would move forward and annex everything, because his experience with the Forest Service has been getting property surveyed can take up to four years. Because of that, Lin has spoken to Sarah about it already, she also mentioned it to Elizabeth Bjerke, who is in special uses. It's on everybody's radar to try to make sure that it gets on the survey team's summer work plan, but Lin may be reaching out to some of you to triple check with Kirk if you happen to be meeting with him. Lin wants to push it through so that we can make that happen this season.

Paul Hill asked what the effect would be if the annexation included the museum property.

Lin said the museum would be in city limits, so we need to pay an option tax. We would also need to follow building codes and get building permits. It would be an additional layer of oversight that we'd have to go through on any building modifications or repairs we do on the museum property. Given that we already need to consult with the Forest Service and sometimes with the State Historic Preservation Office, it adds a layer of approval. This would be in addition to the Forest Service's approval process, and we would continue to work within the Forest Service special use permit we hold. If the museum property does get surveyed, then we can share the survey points with the city and the city can exclude it, but at this point, because it's never been surveyed, the city is not comfortable coming up with those points.

Gary just wanted to also reiterate we are in fact opposing that annexation, right?

Lin said yes. She submitted a letter to the mayor and the clerk last month, maybe December, pointing that out that because of the timing and the fact that getting the Forest Service to complete a survey can stretch out for years, or it has in the past according to the mayor, getting the survey completed is a priority for SIHA.

Lin mentioned the Sawtooth Coalition. She had a conversation with Terry and Stewart, and it made the most sense for her to be the person attending those meetings on behalf of SIHA. Lin has a grasp of all the current SIHA projects. Lin prefers to be the person to say yes, we can commit to additional work regarding the coalition with a clear understanding of SIHA's existing obligations. SIHA board members wouldn't generally understand the volume of projects we are involved in as opposed to a board member representing SIHA on the coalition committing us to more work than we might be able to handle.

Lin has been working on hiring. We have one naturalist and one historic specialist hired now. She's had a couple declines, partially because of the wage level. So, the compensation is still not what it needs to be. We do have more applicants who we can make offers to-. Lin's hopeful that we will fill those positions.

We need to fill the coordinator position. We have one applicant there and another museum position. If anyone has people in their lives who are connected to colleges in some way, those direct connections sometimes bear better fruit than just throwing things out to the universe.

Because we have fewer naturalists it would be good if the local board members, if ever needed, could step in at the Redfish Center or the Museum.

Gary asked about the volunteer situation. Is there trailer space or RV space that we could potentially have more than one volunteer? Lin said currently, the Forest Service has every bed and RV space accounted for in their plan of hiring for the season. That is always fluid until late in the hiring season. We have one RV couple who are going to be joining us, but at this point, it doesn't look like the Forest Service has space for a second RV for SIHA.

Lin included in her report a draft letter that she's going to submit to Kirk for our special use permit re-issuing for the museum. If anyone has read that and has any feedback, let Lin know. She thinks it's going to be a chore and wants to start that process now so that we can get the survey of the site done before annexation occurs. There are some questions about reissuing the special use permit and whether it requires NEPA and other evaluations. At the moment, Elizabeth Yorkie is taking that on, but it may transfer to Tom Winter.

Roland Miller asked if it looks like the Forest Service isn't going to get the museum grounds survey done this summer, is it possible that we pay for our own survey? He understands it's expensive, but between the added red tape and having to pay sales tax over the long run, it might be worth it. Lin said it would still have to be approved by the survey office, the Forest Service Surveyors. So, they would have to agree to it and approve the company that does the work. It's also possible that the city would add the museum survey to theirs. They have to survey anyway. If the Forest Service said yes, then the city might be able to fold it into their survey. Paul said I think Roland's got a good point, because if it does get annexed, trying to undo it would be a difficulty. Looking down the road backing the city survey might be the best solution.

Laurii Gadwa, speaking for the city, said because we're going to have to survey anyway, I don't see any reason why if it costs a little bit for SIHA, I think we could get approval for that. Lin said the Forest Service does have to identify the property pins, no one else can, so unless the FS is not involved the survey cannot be completed.

Terry was impressed that the Ranger Station will be open on weekends in June.

Lin will reach out to Kirk about the use of the Redfish Center on the June dates because at this moment, she doesn't think the water's going to be turned on and doesn't don't know what the road access is like. She doesn't know if he really understands the potential implications.

Bernice Hartz said she was really excited about having individuals working at the Ranger Station on the weekends. She thinks it'll be a good training option and enable seven day a week availability to the Forest Service facility.

Lin said Kirk needs to know who does all the Redfish cleaning and if we don't have access and he expects the building to look nice on the fourth, then there might be a couple issues. Lin said she will make sure that he understands the state of the building. And if we were not in there, it won't be open till the 27th of June. On some level, having the Forest Service leadership team at RFLVC might be a really great experience for them to see it.

Finance report – Liesl Scherthanner (See attached)

Liesl sent it in two parts this time. She noted that the QuickBooks report comes out a little bit cleaner, so hopefully, the Excel spreadsheet works for everyone. The year end numbers didn't include December, so we got final numbers for that. The bottom line is much better than what was predicted, largely due to the payback of the Museum roof, which was expected the previous year.

Paul asked if the increase in legal/professional fees was associated with Obsidian. Liesl replied not all of it, some of it is legal and professional fees, so it's not all legal fees, and so some of it is Shoshone-Bannock project related.

Susan Kim moved to approve the financial report as presented. Becky Obletz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously

Outlets update: Erica Cole (see attached)

Erica received all five Galaxy tablets yesterday, and her next step is to purchase all the equipment that goes with it and then take a road trip to visit all the Caribou/Targhee outlets. One tablet is for the Ketchum Ranger District, and once we have that set up, she'll take a trip to Ketchum to set things up. They should have it within the next two weeks.

Gary asked why the January 2024 sale is markedly lower than January 2023.

Erica explained that it is the lack of snow, plain and simple. She noted that every time she goes into or walks past the Mountain Village Merc there is nobody in town. She said that on Saturday, for the Snowmobilers Ball, it was the most people she'd seen in town all winter. Mountain Village did have a couple hundred dollars' worth of sales this past weekend. We just need people. And that goes for all the outlets in Idaho.

Lin stated you can really see that in the BCRD ski passes, last year, that number was way higher.

Terry asked if there was any progress on trying to get our sales area more prominent at Mountain Village. Erica didn't know if we should push that subject or not. Erica can also talk to Laurii about that further to see what can be done.

The Pocket Naturalist Guide is for sale at Headquarters, Stanley Ranger Station, Mountain Village Merc. We raised the price at Mountain Village Merc to \$12.95 versus the \$9.95 outlets just to see what happens.

Membership update - Caitlin Straubinger

Catlin shared a 2023 recap.

We ended the year with 126 membership gifts totaling \$20,000 and 174 donations totaling almost \$31,000. And both of those numbers are up from 2022. So, we continue to grow, which is wonderful. Year to date in 2024, we've received nine membership gifts, five donations, and sold three bricks. We are looking good on track, again up from 2023 at the same time. And our next meeting is right before Idaho gives, April 29th through May 2nd or 3rd. We will talk about that again at the April meeting.

Preservation Committee Update – Susan Kim

Things are going well. We've had two of the oral history presentations at the library, and they were very well attended. Our third one is tonight. Everyone is encouraged to come back or just stick around today. In any case, there's been a lot of interest.

Tonight's is Shirley Athy. Her father was a civil engineer and worked on the roads. She spent her summers here in 39 to the early 40s. She's very well spoken.

March 5th is Tom Kovalicky and in April the Braun family. Then we're probably going to take a break for the summer. Susan will keep editing and Becky will join her. She has a goal of editing one every month.

Gary thanked Sue for all her work editing. Liesl stated she missed the last one because she was out of town, but thought it was neat with the extra benefit having the people that were interviewed join in especially when they're 100 years old.

Executive Committee: - Terry Clark: Next item on the agenda is a board vacancy. We have one board opening. Amy has contacted Michelle and Lexi Bergastus and she's focusing her efforts right now on Lexi, the younger one. The next step is (if she is interested) to get a resume from her and circulate that among the board members. If Lexi declines, we need to get the community back to look at our list and reprioritize.

Center for the Sawtooths – Terry Not much has moved in since before the holidays.

Paul stated we have been working on a second nonprofit. The donors were not happy with that structure. We went back to the drawing board and instead of having a separate nonprofit we are working on an LLC where SIHA is the sole holder. They are more comfortable with that.

The change is that SIHA will have an LLC underneath it. They'd like a document created by either their lawyers or ours to make sure that when the transfer happens that the tax breaks are set up the correct way. We're waiting on the lawyers again right now unfortunately, and that will take as long as it takes. To Paul's knowledge, that's sort of the last piece of the puzzle before a final signing closing would occur. The concern with the original structure was that it would have had a separate nonprofit that was an affiliate of SHIA, but it would have a separate board composed mostly of SHIA board members. Because of the concern raised, we restructured the LLC and it has no board of directors. SIHA completely controls this new LLC, which would take on the name of Center for the Sawtooths.

Paul agrees with Lin and thinks the only thing that's left is that Tom Pigastas, the attorney for the family, has said they'd like a document that essentially confirms that this new LLC Center for the Sawtooths would be bound by all the rights and obligations of SIHA under the donation agreement. If in fact that's all that's to be added, it's simple. We're waiting on the lawyers to make sure. If that's the case, then we should be very close to closing. I think Stewart would wisely like to have a board meeting later this month that would be an opportunity to go over everything once again, not in so much detail—particularly the pledges and potential donations and existing donations. This is to make sure everybody understands where we are financially in terms of pledges and donations and what we're looking at over the next year to two years in terms of budgeted expenses.

Becky stated it is critical that if we are wanting something to happen, we must push, not pull. Terry feels we have made a real effort here and gone overboard on our effort. He thinks that we lose some power at a certain point in the sense that if this continues to delay, maybe we should step back, not say we're done with it, but step back and see if they really have this interest to pursue it. That then puts us in a more powerful position. Right now, we've been doing everything. Becky feels that needs to be discussed at this later meeting in February.

Paul said he thinks that's exactly the topic that Stewart would like to fully air in a session that he would be involved with, because the points you raised are extremely valid and the board needs to be comfortable that this is going to go and that the Joneses will be very enthusiastic about going forward with it.

Liesl said, like as Stewart said in his letter, it is an amazing opportunity, you know, that probably won't come around again, a chunk of property in this Sawtooth Valley, so there's a huge potential, and it's worth being excited about it.

Becky said she totally agrees with that but thinks that we may need to step back in the transfer process to SIHA, take a different approach, because frankly, if they really want to donate that property, they are the people who need to help make it happen. Becky doesn't know what more they want from SIHA.

Terry said one of the things we need to do as soon as we know we're going forward, assuming we are, is have a meeting with the new Forest Service private lands person and make sure they're completely in the loop on what we're proposing and doing. Kirk can help with that connection.

Liesl explained that, technically, the way we're setting it up is that our donations are in a dedicated CeSaw fund, and they don't count until after closing. We are expecting \$120,000 total in donations.

You can see that there's been little expense over time. SIHA has paid \$15,000 to the project, which we have used largely in the initial testing of the ground back in 2021. And then the rest of the expenses have largely been legal fees.

We're not in the hole terribly thanks to the \$15,000 we put in, but we want to get to closing so we can start using some of the dedicated funds that come in.

Round Table/Open Topics: None

Susan Kim moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:02am. Gary Gadwa and several others seconded the motion. Passed Unanimously.