

# SIHA Board Meeting - June 20, 2024

PRESENT: President Stewart Wilder, Vice President Terry Clark, Secretary Roland Miller (via Zoom), Treasurer Liesl Scherthanner, Directors in person: Gary Gadwa, Bernice Hartz, Caitlin Straubinger, Dave Pinner, Becky Obletz, via zoom: Ed Cannady, Paul Hill, Amelia Jones, Jenny MacNicol. Executive Director Lin Gray, Business Manager Erica Cole, Volunteer Recorder Laurii Gadwa, Redfish Coordinator Alicia, Forest Service Steve Frost, Jake Strohmeyer and Mike Fuller. Visitor Clare Verbose

President Stewart Wilder called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. He asked people to introduce themselves with Forest Service representatives joining.

Stewart asked if there were additions or questions for the agenda or if there were any additions, corrections to the meeting minutes that went out?

Gary Gadwa moved to approve the minutes. Becky Obletz seconded the motion. Passed unanimously

PRESIDENTS REPORT: Stewart Wilder: (See Report) Stewart dedicated the meeting to Ken Hartz who passed away recently. He would like to see SIHA consider a memorial to Ken. He stated this meeting is SIHA's official Annual Meeting. He thanked Mike Fuller and Kirk Flannigan for attending the CeSaw meeting. He stated SIHA has raised the \$186,000 in order to close the donation agreement. Monday the 24<sup>th</sup> is the scheduled closing date. The SIHA board is the sole board member of the CeSaw LLC. He recognized the board members who have worked on the project. He gave a shout out to Paul for his help in many different ways, especially when it came down to legal and setting up organizationally and those kinds of things and working with attorneys. He also thanked some of our advisors, Doug Obletz, Carter McNichol, and Andy Erstad, and our partners in the Forest Service. He sincerely wanted to thank the Jones family, Amy, Al, Ezra, and Judy for their hard work to get us over the finish line. He stated there will be the need for a groundbreaking event. Paul Hill asked about a press release. Lin Gray has worked on a draft of one. He wanted the board to be aware of the issue of Lin's housing situation. We're waiting to find out if she can get some sort of bridge place to live until we have housing set up at Obsidian. He thanked Gary for allowing Lin to have a landing place until something happens, but it may mean additional funding to help Lin with her housing situation

BOARD VACANCIES: Roland Miller, Liesl Scherthanner, Gary Gadwa, Pal Hill and Amy Jones are up for reelection. These are three-year terms.

Terry Clark moved to renew the above stated persons to the board. Gary Gadwa Seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Bernice Hartz moved to elect Stewart Wilder as President; Terry Clark as Vice President; Roland Miller Secretary; Liesl Schernthanner as Treasurer and Gary Gadwa to the Executive Committee. Caitlin Straubinger seconded the motion. Motion passed Unanimously.

Terry reported on the board search. Lexie Praggastis declined. He has 5 names but none seem ready to join the board at this time. The committee needs to get together again and review the list of potential contacts.

SNRA LIAISON'S REPORT: Mike Fuller introduced himself. He complimented SIHA on all the things they do and said he appreciated the partnership. He stated the Forest Service staffing was up by 30 positions in the last two years but the trail crew was down. They are looking at financing levels for the future. They are kind of waiting on some national direction, but they haven't been able to really move forward with any hiring actions for over two months. The Forest Service is going to have to make some tough decisions internally about which positions they hire and refill as they become vacant.

He stated it will be an active fire season, more so on the south end of the forest. You know, our fire staffing is not good here in Stanley. Currently they are having a real hard time recruiting folks up here.

There are 4 acres the forest service is developing into workforce housing. They are planning 80 units with 40 to 50 available at a reduced rate for workforce housing. It is a public/private partnership. Fire staffing has a 20% vacancy. Ed Canady asked about the opening of wildlife closures for travel. Mike said no decision has been made at this time. Steve Frost said he talked to Kirk about the closures. They have been talking to Fish & Game to understand the reasons for acquiring the closures originally. They are trying to decide whether to change the special order or wait for a bigger travel plan effort. There are some spots on the Fairfield District where closures that have been in place since the 70s that may or may not make sense, at least for the purposes that they were originally established. Ed stated he hoped there would be an opportunity for public input.

Steve Frost said the paving at Redfish should happen today and be done by the 28<sup>th</sup>. There is currently access to the Redfish Center through the backside. Terry Clark asked about signage. Steve stated that signage was also to be done on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

Gary Gadwa asked about the next phase of internal trails? Steve said they are looking to the National Forest Foundation to do fundraising. \$1.5 million is needed for the internal trail phase. He thinks that might be a little low as it was a couple of years ago that they came up with those prices. So hopefully, collaborating with NFF, will identify some funding sources, with parts of recreation, trails funding, that kind of stuff. The goal is to try and do it all together as one project, but if they can't fund it, it may be broken up into stages. If everything works, they are talking about the summer of 2025 but probably wouldn't do anything on the ground until 2026. The boardwalk is not part of it.

Bernice Hartz asked if it was to be based on what was known as the Orion trail? Steve thought so.

The parking issue was discussed with concerns about signage at the Redfish Center parking area as day use, dog beach, etc. Bernice stressed the need for truck, bus and 5<sup>th</sup> wheel parking.

Steve stated that the signs have already been made. He recognized that parking at the Redfish Complex was difficult and much in demand. He appreciated the feedback and would try to make sure the engineers know about the need for directions for visitor center use, dog beach, to hopefully get people moved into where they need to be.

Terry Clark said the Sawtooth Coalition was interested in helping with the funding effort.

Concerning Road work, Mike Fuller said they were in Nip & Tuck now and heading to Alturas next. Trying to do four or five every year of those heavily used by residents, non-residents and visitors.

Terry Clark asked about the road into the Stanley Museum. Mike said the Forest Service gave the road to the County when the four acres were transferred. Laurii Gadwa stated the county tried to give it to the city but they declined it. Nobody wants it and the city is in deep conversation with the county over the issue. Someone asked if the Forest had a grader would it be too much to swing over to the Museum road.

Stewart asked if there was anything from the Caribou/Targhee. No.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT: Lin Gray. (See Report) Lin thanked the folks who joined for Cleanup Day last Wednesday. There was a small crowd, but we got some of the main highway sections done. Also thanked those who came for the Museum work day. A section of the fence was fixed, The ShoBan interpretive signs were put up and work was done to put everything in place for the summer season. The signs that Michael restored are back up in place, and it's exciting to see those in much better condition than they've been for many decades.

She thanked Gary for his help with the water systems, and Michael for his help with the interpretive signs he's been putting up in the museum. There are a couple more to install at the Visitor Center now that we have access.

She reported the Tour de Force, which is a car show out of Ketchum, is going to be on site July 18th with their Huckleberry drive, where they bring a bunch of their fancy cars and park them and then people look at them. And with that process, they are very interested in getting the road just inside the museum grounds fixed so that those vehicles can safely drive there. SIHA is going to be using a portion of the donated funds they will give to us to do that work. There will be some improvements made sometime in the next month. But it is not going to include the whole road and the culvert. Lin asked the board to keep that in mind as they see work happening on the museum road. Paul Hill asked if Lin had any figure on the donation, they're going to give us for using the facility? Lin thinks they'll have about 180 people and said SIHA would love a donation of \$10 to \$20 per person. However, if the road isn't fixed, the cars won't

be able to use the museum road and parking. Lin thinks it'll be great exposure for SIHA. She mentioned the Sawtooth Coalition is asking if SIHA would be willing to do a fiscal sponsorship for a grant that they are working on with the National Forest Foundation. They reached out last week and said they were ready to move forward with the grant. SIHA doesn't have a sponsorship agreement in place. Yesterday, Lin circulated a fiscal sponsorship agreement. She knows it was last minute timing but hopes everyone had a chance to review the document. It lays out what it means for SIHA to be the fiscal sponsor of the coalition. The coalition is working on getting their 501c3, but they don't have it yet. Until they do, they can't take grant funds from the National Forest Foundation or anybody else. SIHA would be a kind of bridge until that happens. Paul Hill asked what kind of compensation can SIHA recoup for being the fiscal sponsor. Lin felt Erica's time and any minor supplies could be reimbursed. This is not something that's necessarily done in the past, so the thinking is Erica would track her time, and SIHA would cover those basic expenses and include that reimbursement into the agreement. Paul Hill assumed it would be for a short period only. Lin said the agreement had a 6-month review, but she estimated it would be for the duration of the grant. Terry Clark estimated one year. Paul asked about the dollar amount of the grant and for what it would be used. Lin said it was in the \$20,000 to \$25,000 range. Terry said it was to pay a facilitator. Erica Cole explained how she thought she would handle it as the business manager. Paul stated it would be subject to Erica and Lin being comfortable that they can accommodate. He understands the agreement can be terminated at any point by either of the parties. Lin said she brought it up because the board needs to be aware and be comfortable moving forward with this proposal. She felt Erica and she can iron out the details and have conversations to make sure that everybody's on the same page. SIHA would be sponsoring the organization (Sawtooth Coalition) which is not yet a nonprofit. That's why the money must pass through our organization, which is a 501c3.

Gary Gadwa made a motion to accept this financial sponsorship agreement and leave it up to Lin and Erica to finalize the details. Bernice Hartz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Lin announced a crew welcome party tomorrow evening at 5.30. She said the end of the season party will have to be pushed earlier due to the fact some naturalists will be leaving the first and second weeks of August. So currently she has scheduled it for August 5<sup>th</sup> or the evening of August 8<sup>th</sup>.

Gary Gadwa asked about CHC Foundation funding. Lin said her understanding in the past was that SIHA was just outside the range as it must benefit Custer County, so right now, she is considering roof replacement because they like to donate for things and operations or projects.

Gary asked about a new coalition of sorts that's popped up in the Sawtooths. Steve Frost said that is the Sawtooth Recreation and Conservation Alliance. It is mostly private landowners and motorsports/trail based. The Forest Service had some concerns about where they wanted to get involved in some projects. There is no Forest Service agreement at this time. Terry Clark stated they are an advocacy group for recreation and private land. The consensus was to wait and see what the group takes on as a project.

FINANCE REPORT: Liesl Schernthanner. (See Report) Liesl stated it's not uncommon for us to be in the red at this time of year. There will probably be an effect on income due to the Redfish Center being temporarily closed for construction, but there are good products available for visitors at the other sales locations that should help offset the lost sales at RVC. She was impressed with the displays at the ranger station and headquarters. Liesl also noted that grants will be coming in soon. Gary Gadwa asked if all the ordering had been done for the year. Erica answered it was pretty much done, there was a little left in the budget she was holding back. She has learned to be proactive. She didn't know the t-shirts and hats were going to be so popular and may have to reorder. She had to place three orders last year. She saves shipping and gets better discounts on larger orders.

Terry Clark moved to accept the financial report. Gary Gadwa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OUTLET UPDATE: Erica Cole. (See Report) Erica current update is that the recreation resource management of America will be distributing and actually already have distributed our trail maps at the Campgrounds. She mentioned that because of shipping and product she did have to increase prices on a number of different products. She hopes it won't make a big impact on sales. She increased the price of the baseball hat to match that of local businesses as before she was underpricing it yet was still making a profit. Now she feels much more competitive with Redfish Lake Lodge, River 1, and Mountain Village. There was an increase on the trail map the first day at the museum and no one even noticed. She took them to Stanley Chamber to have them sell them through the summer again. However, when she was selling the maps wholesale to local businesses, she kept them at \$2.50 per map instead of \$4 per map. Bernice Hartz offered to help with the wholesale sales.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE: Caitlin Straubinger. Caitlin reported as of yesterday, there were 29 memberships at about \$6,300, 38 donors at about \$8,500. Four bricks were sold making membership donations and bricks income total at \$15,353. It's relatively comparable to last year at the same time, just a little bit lower. Last year's Idaho Gives was \$4,340. This year is \$3900.

Gary Gadwa stated the pathway to Sawtooth Valley history is getting full. We probably need to look at permissions on another pathway.

CREW UPDATE: Alicia. (See Report) She stated that obviously they are not at the visitor center this year where normally training would happen. Instead, they have been meeting at the Rangers Station, at the museum, and outdoors. Training is about done. Portal staffing started on the 7th, and they are opening the Ranger Station on the weekends. Numbers for trailhead have been really similar, with about the same numbers as last year for roving, even without programs, we still are kind of hitting the mark. 587 people came to the visitor center in the first week last year, which we're missing out on this year. The numbers overall look lower for now, depending on what happens in the summer, she hopes it will pick up and there will be good numbers at presentations. There are three naturalists, one naturalist volunteer couple that are both serving as one naturalist over their time, two museum specialists, herself and her husband.

**PRESERVATION COMMITTEE:** Becky Obletz completed the video update and editing of the Brian Conner interview. It just needs to be uploaded to the website. She encouraged everyone to check it out online. She's hit a dead end with Cliff Hansen. She reached out to him on his email, but got no response. She has a scheduled interview with Mary Granjean on July 12th. She will probably do a little bit at the lake and then in front of the lodge itself.

Caitlin is going to interview Brian Olson whose parents owned Redfish during the 50s. Brian was ages 6 to 12 during that time. His son, Ryan, is not sure how much he'll remember, but she is going to try and see what happens.

Gary said Arlene Funderberg could be having some health issues, so she needs to be interviewed soon.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE UPDATE:** Stewart Wilder. The executive committee voted last week to set up a brokerage account with the Dale Evans bank. Amy Jones informed the committee that the challenge grant for the Center for the Sawtooths will be coming in the form of stock. Stewart said it was a good thing to have something like this set up for the future. Amy Jones stated there are myriad ways to donate. And SIHA needs to put on the website different ways of giving. She said she thinks it is a good idea that the second stocks hit that account they're sold for cash because SIHA is not an investor. Paul Hill commented that as soon as the transaction closes next week, an email should be sent out, particularly to the non-board donors informing them of the closure.

**CENTER FOR THE SAWTOOTHs:** Terry Clark said there was a meeting at the site with the Forest Service to be sure everyone is on the same page. Stewart thanked Terry for being the liaison with the Forest on this process. Ed Canady made the comment that a greater story that needs to be told and it's part of this whole process so that people coming into the valley understand the history of how the SNRA came to be. He thought that really resonated with Kirk. The story as to why the easements are in place and that kind of thing. His vision was maybe even having a display on the other side of the highway with a carve out where people could actually go and get a visual of what could have been with the Obsidian development that was terminated. Ed felt those kinds of things help give people the right education. He felt SIHA should encourage the Forest Service to put up a large billboard that says the Swiss Village that wasn't and the restaurant that we used to go to all the time.

Becky Obletz asked if there were plans for a workday anytime soon. A dumpster will be ordered soon. Discussion included that volunteers could help reduce labor costs, however care needed to be taken to dismantle things in a conservation sensitive way and recycle if possible. There is to potential to salvage some stuff

Ed Canady stated that once SIHA assumed ownership, it also assumed liability for anyone who might go into those buildings and get injured. He asked if SHIA should restrict public access once ownership is transferred. It was mentioned there was a lot of stuff in the one building that is not locked, and that it should be secured. Paul said SIHA is set up now that the liability insurance policy will automatically attach to Obsidian after the land property transfer.

Clare Verbose has a question about timeline. She felt it was important to get work started this summer with the idea that it would be capable of housing some of the naturalists next year.

Lin stated to the Forest Service personnel present not to take SIHA off the housing list yet. There is electrical, sewer and water to figure out so housing could be a way off.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.