

## Kanata Nordic Ski Club Annual General Meeting

by Zoom Video Conference

Monday May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024 convened at 7:06PM

### 1. Welcome/Record Attendees

**Directors in attendance:** Nigel Wallis (Pres.), Chris Lindsay (V.P.), Marsha Kelly (Treasurer), Amy Thomas (Secretary), Roger Colbeck (OWWT), Eugene Vigneron (Trails Coordinator), Andy Weekes (Racing Coordinator), Megan McAllister (Racing Coordinator), Heather Boswell (Teen Skate Coordinator), Wendy Barron (Events Co-Ordinator), Andre Tonneau (Facilities), Maureen Smith (Jackrabbit Coordinator)

**Members in attendance:** Vien Lee, Peder Soras, Arthur Andreasses, Tom Duxbury, Marlene Alt, Nathalie Mousseau, McAllister Family, Harris Kirby, Ardeth Kirkham, Blair Carroll, Raam Gunasakaran, David Bentley, Holly Brown, Bentley Abbott, Mike Laska, Rich Russell, Kurt Herman, Robert Galdins, Jean-Jo Bellamy, Amy Fraser, Scott Pegrum, Harris Kirby, Chris Teron, Blair Carroll, Seppo Sahrakorpi, Amanda Maclean, Laurie Pinkney, Hege Andreassen, Karen Bartlett, Ralph Quapp, Todd & Victoria Jodoin, Paul Schanzer

The meeting began with a video presentation to reflect the season on the trails and an introduction from Chair and President of the Kanata Nordic Ski Club Board of Directors, Nigel Wallis. It was confirmed quorum was represented.

The Chair advised the meeting was being recorded and transcribed and asked participants to use their full name for attendance.

Participants were advised to raise questions through chat or by raising their hands including at the end of each section.

It was noted the motions are planned for the end of the meeting.

### 2. Adoption of Agenda

The President tabled the 2023-24 AGM meeting agenda and brought forward a motion to accept the agenda which was seconded by Chris Lindsay.

### 3. Review of AGM Minutes of Monday May 15, 2023

Minutes from the 2023-24 AGM were briefly reviewed by Nigel who raised a motion to approve that was accepted by the members.

### 4. President's Report: Nigel Wallis

- Partners were recognized along with community and sport organizations. These included Wesley Clover Parks, the National Capital Commission, the City of Ottawa, the Urban Winter Trails Alliance, Cross-Country Ski Ontario, and Nordiq Canada.
- Sponsors including Fresh Air Experience who has been supporting the Club for a decade now and Kunststadt Sports racing sponsorship were recognized for their contributions.
- The President also thanked sponsors of the Ottawa West Winter Trail for their support. Notably, Teresa Kavanagh, Councillor for Bay Ward, Kichesippi Beer Company.

- AGM attendees were reminded that for the Board and volunteers, the season starts at the end of the AGM as we plan for the next season.
- Ontario Clubs were required to adopt new Nordiq Canada and Safesport compliance was labor intensive. We may see this continue to expand into other programming beyond racing.
- Work is underway to make the Club a year-round community and the President noted the Board would welcome ideas for events and activities.
- The fall also brings with it landscaping and trail preparation for the season.
- This season was sub-optimal for conditions but we were able to salvage the season with our grooming capability.
- Magic of Lights expansion will continue to be a challenge.
- Winter with the new infrastructure (tent, pilot lights) were successful and we introduced social events and clinics to add value.
- There were lessons learned from the 401 tent that will be considered as decisions are made in subsequent seasons.
- Thanked all volunteers for their commitment and contributions while noting that volunteer recruitment continues to be a challenge, including in some key roles.

#### 2023-24 Year in Review: Autumn

- Registration started and programs launched including Racing, Teen Skate dryland and Adult Fit for Skiing program.
- Member discounts available through Fresh Air Experience and Kunststadt Sports.
- Fall Fun Run took place.
- Both the Kanata Nordic ski wear store and the new Spirit Wear store were launched.
- Preparations underway for an expanded and ambitious OWWT and Kanata Nordic Ski Club trail network.

#### 2023-24 Year in Review: Winter

- Learn to Ski programs including adults and Rabbits programs launched.
- Rust remover clinics and waxing clinics were well received.
- Kanata had its biggest year ever for Racing.
- Corkstown Classic event went ahead in February.
- The OWWT continues to be very popular.

#### 2022-23 Year in Review: Spring

- Maintenance including equipment, closure of cabins and spring wrap-up on the trails but also a year in review for the Board members.

### 5. Volunteer Coordinator Report: Wendy Barron

- Thanks were expressed to all members who volunteered their time including the trail work volunteers, facilities work and general members.
- There is a sense of community that is fostered through the events and sets the Club apart from the free trail networks and everyone is encouraged to volunteer.
- Events were summarized from the season including the Fall Fun Run which was very successful, the Club Loppet, the new rust remover programs and the waxing demonstrations, Friday night

socials as well as the end of season volunteer appreciation event which included an easter egg hunt and a raffle.

- Key departures were announced including Keomany Ker, Maureen Smith and Marlene Alt, all of whom made the decision to step down this year. Their contributions were significant.

**6. Treasurer Report: Marsha Kelly**

- The Treasurer shared the Statement of Financial Position which reflects a healthy balance sheet with a forecasted decrease for next year based on significant grant funding received this year and reviewed the 2023-24 expenses.
- The statement of operations shows the decreases in trail user fees which could be attributed to the increase in free trails in the area and the Club has also restricted weekend access – parking is an impediment to open up the access.
- Revenue is healthy but lower due to changes in grant amounts.

**7. Membership Report: Nigel Wallis**

- The President summarized the report noting participation is starting to fall but that this seems to be consistent across Ontario clubs.
- Memberships show where we had anticipated loss of families, we are seeing loss of adult couples so need to look at how to attract and retain this category of members.
- The density of membership base shows Richmond as an area we could target to solicit members, Carleton Place is also promising.
- Closer to the Club, we see less in Stittsville and Fernbank where we may want to target recruitment next season.
- Barrhaven could also be targeted due to ease of getting to the Club.
- There is potential to grow West of Ottawa, word of mouth is the best marketing tool.

**8. Learn to Ski Programs Report: Nigel Wallis for Maureen Smith**

- There was a reduction in registrations and continues to be challenges recruiting leaders.
- Rabbits are still at a high level of participation and we want to keep them in the programs through the years, as well as their families.
- The Club continues to think about how to address this for next season through more recruitment and coaching supports.
- Others elements including Magic of Lights remains a logistical challenge as does parking.

**9. Teen Skate Update: Nigel Wallis for Heather Boswell & David Bentley**

- Teen Skate starts in the Fall and again we can't expand the program with the number of coaches available but it is very successful year over year.
- Nigel thanked both Heather and David Bentley for their dedication and enthusiasm.

Overall lessons learned and opportunities were summarized as commonalities with all learn to ski/development programming.

There is high demand that cannot be met with the current resources.

#### **10. Racing Report: Andy Weekes & Megan McAllister**

- Andy highlighted the success of the racing this season despite the challenging snow conditions and summarized the races that our athletes took part in this year, supported by corporate sponsor – Kunststadt Kanata.
- Photos provided a visual overview of the athletes and also how little snow we had for part of the season. The success of the Corkstown Classic for example was due in large part to the brigade of shoveling volunteers!
- We sent a record 26 athletes to the provincial race and had podium finishes. Andy highlighted Aiden Kirkham and Helen McCulligh, who each were called up to ski for Canada this past season.

#### **11. Community Programs and Rental Coordinator Report: Marlene Alt**

- Marlene thanked the President for the overview of her work for the past 16 years.
- Marlene summarized the services offered at the Rental Shop within limited hours and thanked the volunteers who staff the shop and serve as ambassadors for the Club. The shop is revenue neutral and rental revenue helps to support procurement of new equipment.
- The "We all Belong on the Trails" programs are organized with community groups who may not have access or resources otherwise to participate: Black Ottawa Connect, Ottawa Community Immigration Services, Women in the Wild were able to have sessions. Others had to be cancelled due to the snow conditions.
- The program has one paid leader and seven volunteers. Marlene summarized the grant income for 2023-24 and provided an overview of expenses to enhance the We all Belong program.
- Survey responses are overwhelmingly positive and support continuing the program.
- Marlene and two leaders went to Kelowna for a three-day workshop on inclusivity in instruction.
- School programs are a growth area, but would need to be resourced and there could be a need for more equipment. Rentals during the week could be explored. Soldier On and We All Belong could be expanded if there were resources to support.
- Relocating the rental shop either near the Ottawa West Winter Trail or the 401 could provide more options - parking remains an issue at 411.

#### **12. Ottawa West Winter Trail (OWWT) Report: Roger Colbeck**

- The structure was reviewed, it is a free, 21km community use trail maintained by Kanata Nordic with a number of volunteers which is financially self-supporting but it should be noted there are significant costs to grooming the extra trails.
- OWWT is 1 of 6 members of the Ottawa urban trail alliance.
- There were no major trail network changes this year but some pilot trails were formalized into the network and groomed more frequently.
- There were issues with trail coverage due to a bridge installation in the Crystal Beach area, and were unable to groom east to Carling but managed to work with the Britannia Winter Trail to groom part of this section, still experienced a decrease in skiers in this part of the trail.
- There is opportunity to groom more frequently along the DND section.
- The base of asphalt means the trails can be groomed earlier in the season.
- It does bring new members into the Club as people become exposed to it and realize what is available in the community.

- Roger reviewed the structure of the grooming teams and thanked Tom Duxbury in particular who stepped in during his absence.
- Social media trail updates along with Nordic Pulse trail information is well received
- The grants were discussed as well as the related expenses for which they were applied along with other funding sources.
- Focus next year will be on parking as this is an access as well as a safety issue and social events could be held, signage and maps would be helpful but recognize that volunteer resources would be needed to support activities.
- Private sponsorship should be actively pursued.
- Nigel noted that prior to moving to WC, KN groomed the area in the 2003 timeframe!

### **13. Facilities Report: Nigel Wallis**

- Nigel shared an update on the trenched hydro access to the 401 grooming station meaning we will have electrical access and noted we also now have lights at the Glen
- The new tent was installed at the 401 site and we will continue to expand at 401 especially with the Magic of Lights impacting timing and access to trails as well as the cabin.
- Mike Laska and Jeremy Kelly installed lights for skiing along the 411 network and this will expand next year.

### **14. Trails Coordinator Report: Eugene Vigneron**

- The unprecedented warm weather meant there were only 81 days of groomed trails and reminded the members of the grooming effort and commitment to trail quality.
- Eugene recognized the efforts of Mike Duivenvoorden as grooming coordinator for the season as there is a lot of planning coordination required for the three teams.
- The map illustrated the network including the new trail 105 at the equestrian site and volunteers are key to the preparation, improvement and maintenance of the trails.
- The snowshoe network has also been developed with thanks for Pat Kirkham in particular.
- New purchases were added to the current fleet and help the groomers be as responsive as possible to conditions and snowfall, and it was noted that a motion will be brought to the AGM at this meeting for a Kubota groomer.
- Thanks were extended to all the maintenance and trail volunteers.

### **15. Open Floor for Questions and Motion to accept all reports as presented: Nigel Wallis**

- Motion to accept all 2023-24 reports as presented, 100% accepted via poll.

### **16. 2024 AGM Motion: Eugene Vigneron**

- Eugene brought forward a motion to approve an Expenditure of up to \$45K for a trail grooming front blade for the existing Kubota tractor.
- Seconded by Amy Thomas and David Bentley.
- Rich Russell was invited to provide input as the rationale for the purchase was shared.
- While the amount is quite high, the efficiencies to be gained as well as the ease of use and compatibility with our existing equipment.
- The Treasurer recognized the burden that this would ease of shovellers
- Motion was approved by a majority via poll and membership will continue to be informed.

**17. Executive Board and Vacant Positions 2024-25: Nigel Wallis**

- New executive members were recognized (Andre Tonneau, Peter Soras) and new members were solicited.
- Motion to accept the Slate of Candidates for the Board as represented was approved by 100% accepted via poll.

**18. Adjournment**

- Final comments to recognize participants, parents, members, volunteers and all those who contribute to making the Club so successful.
  - Motion to adjourn/ Nigel Wallis / Passed by consensus at 8:42pm.
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