

# BRIDGER BOWL

**Bridger Bowl Association  
Spring 2022 Meeting Minutes  
May 26, 2022, 7:00 p.m.  
Hilton Garden Inn, Bozeman**

## BOARD MEMBERS AND BRIDGER BOWL MANAGEMENT

Present: Pat Hoffman, President; Todd Goertzen, Executive Vice President; Dave Weaver, Associate Vice President; Jake Werner, Secretary; Board Members: Joe Seymour, Mark Manseau, Jennifer Stark, Dan Oliver, Holly Tarlow; Austin Schuerg, Treasurer; Lindsay Korth, Business Operations Manager, Jason Prasek, Mountain Operations Manager; Julie Bennett, Recording Secretary

## CALL TO ORDER

President Pat Hoffman called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

## MINUTES

The minutes from the Fall 2021 Association meeting were provided to all members in attendance. Pat requested a motion to approve the minutes. A correction to the minutes to reflect that Jake Werner adjourned the Fall meeting instead of Mark Manseau was brought forth. Steve Delaney moved to approve the minutes from the November 16, 2021, meeting with the correction; Diane Allen seconded the motion. With no additional discussion, members voted: All in favor, none opposed; minutes approved.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Austin Schuerg introduced himself and extended retirement congratulations to former treasurer and longtime Bridger Bowl employee Dave Ballinger. Preliminary (pre-audit) financial results as of fiscal year end 04-30-2022 were presented. Cash position increased to \$21.3 million. Austin explained some pre-paid expense items including purchase of a batch of RFID cards and insurance.

Gross Revenues were almost \$1M better than budget. The 2021-22 season was the highest year ever for tickets and season pass sales at \$14,473,342. Net income of \$4,451,730 exceeded budget by \$749,000. Growth trends were presented. Despite opening 10 days later than anticipated and an exceptionally low snowpack year, there were 283,000 skier visits. The record is 292,000 skier visits.

Like many businesses, Bridger has experienced an increase in labor costs over the past 2 years, which is expected to continue. The average starting wage is \$18.11 per hour. Operating costs continue to increase as well.

Initiatives to accommodate growth include extensive cash management planning for existing infrastructure maintenance, mountain access repairs and maintenance and replacement of equipment. Bridger is leveraging software for efficiency and better management of processes: AvidExchange accounts payable platform has been implemented; Paycom will be used for payroll and human resources management; the Aloha system is being centralized for food service; network and security improvements including increased WIFI and internet speeds and capacity are being undertaken; RFID and Point of Sale system improvements are being designed.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Pat Hoffman welcomed everyone, thanked them for attending and introduced the board members. General Manager Bob Petitt retired from Bridger Bowl at the end of April. Pat recognized his efforts and contributions to the area. Lindsay Korth, Business Operations Manager and Jason Prasek, Mountain Manager will jointly manage Bridger Bowl until a permanent general manager is hired.

Base area planning was discussed, and Pat explained the tabling of the Jim Bridger Lodge replacement project. Fiscally responsible planning for future projects continues to be a strong focus of the board including space to accommodate growth. Pat explained the strategy of maintaining significant cash balances to plan for dramatically increasing costs and having adequate resources for unplanned expenses as well as capital needs.

Pat recognized outgoing board member Mark Manseau who has served 8 years on the board and thanked him for his service and dedication. Mark is currently chairing the committee for the hiring process to replace the general manager.

## MANAGER'S REPORT

Lindsay Korth, Business Operations Manager, thanked everyone for a great season. She recognized employee Bonnie Hickey for winning the Hero of Sustainability Golden Eagle award at the National Ski Area Association (NSAA) conference held in Nashville.

Lindsay shared several statistics from the season: Bridger Bowl sold over 16,000 season passes (75% of which were sold to Montana residents); the average number of days utilized by all season passholders was 10.6. 47,000 day tickets were sold.

Season passes for the upcoming year go on sale June 1. The price of a mid-week pass has decreased for the 2022-23 season to \$400. Closing weekend will be included for the Local's pass this year instead of being blacked out. The Family Discount has been restructured and will be 15%. Day tickets will increase from \$69 to \$70.

Current and retired staff were asked to stand and be recognized. Lindsay noted several departments and department heads for their efforts. Jim Walker and Andy Van led food service to have record sales despite short staffing. Tony Brown become the Snowsports Director, replacing Shannon Griffin. Erin O'Connor and her team did a great job communicating with the public. Dayna Bergin headed up the new Guest Services department. Kyle Cremer and staff had record sales in retail/rental which will get a new Point of Sale system this summer. Erik Pidgeon and his crew kept busy with the parking lots. Jeff Abelin and the IT employees continue to excel in the background.

Jason Prasek, Mountain Manager, spoke to a challenging year with low snowpack which overall skied quite well. The dredging and repair work to the pond the prior summer paid dividends this year providing increased capacity for snowmaking. Ski patrol was busy with a variety of medical incidents and large weekend crowds but less, although at times more challenging, avalanche control work. There were 452 shots used for avalanche control which is the lowest since Schlasman's lift was installed in 2008. 1,800 is the most ever used with the average season being 1,100 shots.

David Rosengren is the new vehicle maintenance supervisor. During the season the motor grader broke down and was unavailable for 6 weeks. The department deployed the backup loader and snowplow truck and were able to take care of most snow plowing with few storms hitting the mountain.

Joe O'Brien and the Lift Maintenance Department did a great job this winter. Bridger experienced no significant downtime on any lifts. They will be busy with normal off-season work and installing a new drive and controls on the Pierre's Knob lift this summer.

Eric Brewster and the Lift Operations Department put in a lot of work shoveling and patching thin spots on ramps and in lift maze areas in addition to their usual responsibilities. The department foreman and assistant foreman are moving on but there are qualified up and coming staff to replace them.

The Alpine Cabin water issue was explained by Jason. Likely because of the continuing drought the water level (well re-charge rate) couldn't keep up with demand by mid-winter. This necessitated closing the bathrooms so the kitchen could remain open and serve food. To solve the issue, a new 1500 gallon holding tank will be installed this summer to hold water in storage from the well to be used during each day.

Jason advised the summer crew will also be working on bomb tram upgrades for avalanche control work.

#### SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

Bonnie Hickey, Sustainability Director, provided an overview of topics from her attendance at the National Ski Area Association (NSAA) Convention. Sustainability, climate resiliency, wildfire preparedness and renewable energy resources were all a focus. The U.S. Forest Service and 2 insurance carriers for ski areas presented on wildfire mitigation efforts. Bridger Bowl developed a wildfire preparedness plan which is now being shared nationally with other ski areas as a template. Bonnie spoke to the mitigation efforts Bridger Bowl will deploy in the event of wildfire.

The solar array at Deer Park Chalet generated 62,000 kilowatt hours of electricity this year which equals the Co2 emissions of 48,000 pounds of coal. Electric consumption at Bridger has dropped 6%. An expanded composting program is in place. In food service almost 100% of their serving ware is now compostable products. Pepsi is providing compostable drink cups. Bridger has a focus on guest education, including the many ski PE groups that come to the mountain, to provide information on how to effectively compost and recycle. 31,000 pounds of waste was composted this season equaling 13 metric tons of Co2 consumption. Bridger has reduced their paper usage by 62% compared to their base line season. Other initiatives include sale of reusable cans of drinking water (instead of plastic bottles), fry oil is being recycled, and the ski shop is using plant-based wax. Busing returned for the 2021-22 season. Ridership on buses is increasing including mid-week service. This year 5,000 car trips mid-week were diverted. 18,000 total rides were provided correlating to 7,000 pounds of coal equivalent usage saved due to busing.

Bonnie is sitting on 2 stakeholder committees with Northwestern Energy, one of which is to develop a green tariff opt-in plan. Bridger Bowl was a sponsor of Gallatin Valley Earth Day and did seminars and activities all month long for the community regarding sustainability. An intern will be working on an interpretive sign project at Bridger Bowl to explain the watershed and the importance of the snowpack in the Bridgers. The sign should be in place for the upcoming season.

Bridger Bowl provided 2,000 pounds of food to the Gallatin Valley Foodbank. 35,000 pounds cumulatively have been donated since tracking began.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Long Range Planning** – Joe Seymour spoke to the Bridger Bowl 20-year master plan draft development which forms the basis of the Forest Service Special Use Permit. Bridger is currently working with the SE Group to develop a focused draft for analysis and input. Joe explained the process to consider a new lift within the current permit area is approximately a 3-year evaluation with the Forest Service. An overview of the process to expand the special use permit was provided. The Custer-Gallatin National Forest Management Plan was released in January 2022. Much of the East side of the Bridger range is designated as recreation intensive. Most of the West side is recommended as non-recreational emphasis designation so there are no future recreation opportunities for developed skiing.

Joe noted there are many options to consider in looking at expanding the permit boundaries. The boundaries can also be left as is which would result in the permit being renewed as it currently stands. A new special use permit is required to expand snowmaking inside the current area.

Members asked for the 2015 master plan update to be posted to the Bridger Bowl website.

## BOARD NOMINATIONS

Jake Werner explained the process to vet and identify potential board members. Current board members Todd Goertzen and Dave Weaver were each nominated to serve a third 3-year term. Dennis Steinhauer has been nominated to serve his first 3-year term on the board.

Pat Hoffman called for nominations from the floor. Brianna Schultz nominated Michelle Simard, David Johnson seconded her nomination. Pat called a second time for nominations from the floor. There were no additional nominations.

Each nominee provided a brief overview of themselves, their background, and reasons for wanting to serve on the board.

## NEW MEMBERS

Jake presented the following membership applications for ratification: Petra Boehmer, Tony Brown, Charles Campbell, Eric Chapman, Amy Coolidge, David Crawford, Greg Dennee, Dan Draper, Kevin Eby, Leo Freeman, Erin Gallinger, David Gianforte, Julie Gilfus-Kresser, Madai Guerrero, Eric Haferman, Sara Handl, Aaron Hansen, Amy Hansen, Chelsie Howe, Amanda Irlbeck, Alain Kennedy, Brian Kozar, Hunter Lacey, Brian Lockhart, Joshua Marcus, Alex Marienthal, Mike McClure, Alex McKelvey, Anson Morris, Kimberly Noble, Kai Oida, Kris Olenicki, Tom Olenicki, Raymond Porter, David Priestly, Adam Remillard, Erik Renna, Erin Renna, Robert Riese, John Rooney, Gomez Routhier, Mary Routhier, Phil Sgamma, William Sherman, Sidney Simard, Eddie Steinhauer, Tara Vandersloot, Eli Wilson, John Wise, Katie Zamabrano.

Shannon Griffin moved to ratify the new members; Dick Dowdell seconded the motion. Vote taken, all in favor; motion carried, and memberships approved.

## OLD BUSINESS

Question was asked as to the time frame to hire a new General Manager. Mark Manseau explained the time frame. The goal is to have someone hired mid-to end of August and on board for the fall. The closing date for applications that will receive full consideration is June 1.

## NEW BUSINESS

No new business

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Pat Hoffman welcomed a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kelly Wiseman moved to adjourn; Gary Andrews seconded the motion. Vote taken, all in favor; Pat adjourned the meeting at 9:01 p.m.

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PATRICK HOFFMAN, PRESIDENT

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JACOB WERNER, SECRETARY

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