



**Bridger Bowl Membership Meeting
Spring 2025 Meeting Minutes
May 28, 2025, 7:00 p.m.
Hilton Garden Inn, Bozeman**

BOARD MEMBERS AND BRIDGER BOWL MANAGEMENT

Present: Dave Weaver, Chair; Jake Werner, Vice Chair; Dan Oliver, Secretary; Dennis Steinhauer, Treasurer; Board Members: Jennifer Stark, Holly Tarlow, Todd Goertzen. Hiram Towle, General Manager; Austin Schuerg, Accountant; Julie Bennett, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dave Weaver welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm. Dave introduced the individuals comprising the Board of Directors. He recognized staff, asked them to stand and thanked them for their efforts. Dave advised a quorum was present.

REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the Fall 2024 membership meeting were provided to all members in attendance. Dave requested a motion to approve the minutes. Pat Hoffman moved to approve the minutes from the November 19, 2024, meeting. Bob Mannisto seconded the motion. With no additional discussion, members voted: All in favor, none opposed; minutes approved.

BOARD CHAIR (PRESIDENT'S) REPORT

Dave shared the results of the recent bylaws changes which were voted on by membership via mail ballot. 330 ballots were returned from 722 voting members exceeding the 10% required for a quorum. The amended and restated bylaws including the object statement were approved by 96% of voters. The second item, to remove the object statement from the bylaws, was approved by 71% of voters. Going forward the bylaws will be the amended and restated bylaws without the object statement included. Dave reminded everyone of the new mission and vision statements adopted last year which will continue to guide Bridger Bowl.

This is Dave's last meeting as a board member with his 3rd term of service coming to an end. He commented on the work being done on the Master Development Planning (MDP) process and thanked Todd, Joe, Hiram and staff for their exceptional work. During the public meetings this winter and through the online portal, over 900 comments were received providing great value and guidance.

Dave extended appreciation to the three General Managers he worked with during his board tenure, Randy Elliott, Bob Petitt and Hiram Towle. Each provided great leadership to Bridger Bowl. He thanked current and past board members for all they have done and extended gratitude to the membership for their participation in recent projects to develop the mission and vision statements, the bylaws review process and the MDP.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Austin Schuerg presented the financial report beginning with the preliminary year-end balance sheet. Comparing 2024 to 2025, total assets increased from \$53.7mm to \$60.9mm. Items noted include a \$400,000 decrease in accounts receivable from receiving a workers compensation refund on a retrospectively rated policy for strong safety performance. US Treasuries total \$27.8mm and are laddered with maturities through 2027 based on cash needs. Inventory decreased from \$710k to \$380k, most of which is tied to the write off of Entabeni RFID cardstock. Bridger is changing off of the Entabeni software system at fiscal year end and had to write off the cardstock. Austin advised the new ticketing system is a flat fee per year instead of a percentage of sales. Total liabilities increased from \$1.76mm to \$1.84mm. He detailed accrued liabilities consisting of payroll and associated costs, the auditable portion of their general liability insurance policy and the property tax accrual.

A list of capital expenditures for the prior season was presented. The larger items were \$635k for the parking lot expansion and road reroute; \$312k for the mountain wide sales and access control change software; \$190k for facilities improvements; \$131k for lift improvements/capital maintenance and \$127k for vehicle replacements and additions.

The income statement reflects total income of \$23.9mm with total expenditures of \$18.4mm resulting in projected net income of \$7.1mm. Net income exceeded the budgeted \$2.8mm due to several factors: actual skier visits of 364k exceeded the budgeted skier visits of 320k; day ticket skier visits of 125k beat the budgeted figure of 107k. There were also significant labor savings due to a workers compensation dividend and rate decrease, several open employment positions and adjusting to business levels at season end.

A graph was shown with skier visits from the year 2000 to 2025 with the makeup of season pass purchases versus day ticket purchases for each year detailed. Beginning in 2008, season pass purchases exceeded day ticket purchases and that has continued each year since with the gap widening.

A chart of revenue per skier visit from 2019-20 through 2024-25 was shown. For this past season, Bridger's revenue per skier visit totaled \$74.11. Lift access revenue per skier visit totaled \$56.54 compared to the national average of \$75, and the Rocky Mountain Region average is \$85.

The 2025-26 budget was then presented. It is conservatively based on 326,000 skier visits and incorporates targeted revenue per visit. A projected \$400,000 revenue loss is expected from the transition to new RFID cards, which are now provided free of charge versus the \$10 fee under the prior system. Labor costs are budgeted to increase 8.2%, reflecting expanded staffing to meet demand, a \$0.50 increase in base wage to \$19.00/hour, and additional raises for returning seasonal staff. The budget also includes a 2-3% price increase on products and plans for \$2.8 million in capital spending. A "Revenues to Expenditures" graphic was displayed showing trends from 2016 through the 2026 budget, including total operating costs, fixed costs, depreciation, labor, and revenues.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Dave introduced General Manager Hiram Towle who provided employee statistics from the season. Bridger was fully staffed this season with a total of 578 employees. 65% of employees from the prior season returned, which is very important as the institutional knowledge and skills are incredibly valuable. He noted 20% of the employees have been with Bridger for 20 or more years. Hiram highlighted some season recaps for the 70th year of Bridger Bowl. The area was open for 121 days and had the 2nd largest number of skier visits in history at 363,944. The largest single day was 6,356 skiers.

Industry stats were presented from a national report of data compiled by NSAA (National Ski Area Association) from areas across the country. There were 61.5 million skier visits across 492 ski areas operating in the U.S. However, peak day numbers are flat, and lessons are declining nationally. Lessons did decline some at Bridger this year too. Bridger is addressing this by expanding the beginner terrain in the MDP to provide a better learning environment. Some of the reasons for the lesson decline are barriers to entry into the sport (cost, time) and baby boomers aging out of skiing. Nationally, 49% of skiers are season pass holders but 61% of Bridger Bowl skiers are pass holders, reflecting that we are a local ski area.

Bus ridership continues to rise with 36,923 bus riders this past season. Bridger had 342" of snow for the season. People really enjoyed the new Red Chair web cam and watching the new snow pile up.

Upcoming capital projects were presented including a new phone system, ticketing system, Bridger lift upgrade, vehicle replacements, a new snowcat, another phase of PA system upgrade, rental and demo fleet purchases and lodge upgrades. However, some items may not be purchased depending on tariff impacts.

A question was asked regarding why a new ticketing RFID system has been purchased. Hiram explained that Bridger outgrew the Entebeni software system and it was not an open architecture that allowed for needed integration with other systems.

He thanked everyone for an amazing 70th ski season.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Holly Tarlow presented an update from the committee. She, Ian Jones and Jen Stark have done a tremendous amount of work to update policies and procedures this past year. The bylaws update project was completed. Board policies are continuing to be developed including guidelines for membership. She reminded everyone they are always looking for future board candidates. If interested, individuals can email the board at governance@bod.bridgerbowl.com. The board is working to better train new and current board members including a full day retreat that will occur in August.

LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Drew Maier, of the Dirt Concern, provided an update on the design for new mountain biking trails on Bridger Bowl and Crosscut property, with connection to Forest Service trails. He presented results of a survey they conducted wherein bikers want purpose-built trails and reduced user conflicts while maintaining and developing access. Three new sections of connecting trails will be built this summer by three different Montana trail building firms for a total of 8 miles of new trails. He presented a map showing the new trails. The trail will begin on Crosscut property and cross onto Bridger Bowl property; 2 sections are multi-use for runners, hikers and bikers. The 3rd section of trail (3 miles) is a downhill only flow trail and is dedicated to bike traffic only. The hope is these new trails will pull bike traffic from other trails in the Bridgers to reduce user conflict. E-bikers will be allowed on the trails. Construction cost will be \$300,000. They have \$175,000 in funding now. Bridger Bowl is providing a \$50,000 matching grant to help raise the rest of the funds needed. These trails will be a free community resource.

Todd Goertzen presented an update on the work of the Long Range Planning Committee. The Master Development Plan (MDP) update has been a large and significant process. The SE Group (consultant) continues to be engaged, guiding work on the plan. The final edits should be complete and submitted to

the Forest Service in approximately 6 weeks. Acceptance by the Forest Service can take 6 to 12 months. The public response to the draft of MDP was impressive and helpful and produced 93 pages of comments.

Once the MDP is accepted by the Forest Service, management, with board support, will develop priorities for projects. The expanded beginner area will likely be the first priority.

NEW BUSINESS

Dave called for new business or questions from members. Forest Ledger presented a petition for uphill access at Bridger. He stated he has 350 signatures on the petition. It will be circulated to the board. Matt Jewett brought up a question regarding Bridger being a 501(c)(4) non-profit entity versus a 501(c)(3) and the opportunities that becoming a 501(c)(3) could provide such as fundraising and providing year-round full-time employees the ability to have student loans forgiven. The board is starting to discuss and explore the pro's and con's of each type of entity.

OLD BUSINESS

Dave called for old business. There was none.

BOARD NOMINATIONS

Dave Weaver and Todd Goertzen have completed 3 terms on the board, the maximum number allowed. Dennis Steinhauer has completed 1 term and is not seeking re-election. There are three open board positions for the coming year.

Hilary Carls, Kevin Sylvester and Morgan Klaas were presented by the board for consideration. Dave called for nominations from the floor three times. There were none. Each candidate provided a presentation to the membership.

NEW MEMBERS

Dan Oliver presented the following membership applications for ratification: Jeana Antle, Nicholas Argyrakis, Darby Ask, Joseph Bernhardt, Jillian Bertelli, Christian Black, Ethan Bowen, Allyson Brekke, Hannah Brew, Noah Brown, Jason Busch, Wesley Care, Douglas Chandler, Cary Costello, Meredith Cross, Jonathan Dahmer, Bill Dempsey, John DiCola, Richard Dyer, Dalton Gomez, Kateri Gomez, Nate Good, Moriah Greenstein, Steve Guzik, Jim Hanson, Niko Hinz, Oanh Huynh, Amara Gamache, Michela Adrian, Haley Jackson, Bryce Johnson, Christopher Jones, JonMark Jordan, Forest Ledger, Anthony Licata, Samantha Lipperd, Laura Littman, Ashley Mackay, William Magajna, Mary McClain, Colin Mensch, Bob Phillips, Elizabeth Phillips, Sarah Riordan, Riley Rose, Ryan Rucker, Jon Schmidt, Sofia Shomento, Zeth Stone, Nate Sweet, Christian Uehlein, Elaine Uehlein, Valerie Val Samii, Hannah Vozel, Finn WellsMinthorn, Brandon Whitehead, Jim Driver, Evan Weiss, Hayden Pritchard, William Beck.

Erin O'Connor moved to ratify the new members; Ryan Thompson seconded the motion. Vote taken, all in favor; motion carried, and memberships approved. Raffle items for those attendance included \$100 Bridger Bowl gift cards, Travis Anderson prints, and a waxing kit.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Dave welcomed a motion to adjourn the meeting. Erin O'Connor moved to adjourn; Lindsay Korth seconded the motion. Vote taken, all in favor; Dave adjourned the meeting at 8:58 p.m.

DAVID WEAVER, CHAIR

DANIEL OLIVER, SECRETARY