



Board Meeting Attendees

Date: September 10, 2013

Location: Home of John Swanson

Board Members in Attendance		Forest Service Representatives	
X	Randall Osterhuber	X	Denny Hogan
	Bob Moore		
X	Jason Oelkers		
X	Mark Bunge		
X	Dave Paradysz	Forecasters	
X	Todd Offenbacher		Brandon Schwartz
X	Jeremy Jacobson	X	Andy Anderson
X	Don Triplet		
X	Chip Morrill	Observers	
X	Holly Yocum		Steve Reynaud
X	Dave Fiore	X	Travis Feist
Board Advisors in Attendance			
X	Debbie Broback		
	Cameron Bordner		
X	John Swanson		

	Justin Broglio	
	Larry Heywood	
	Program Manager	Guests
X	Jenny Hatch	Jonathan Laine



Sierra Avalanche Center - Regular Board Meeting

September 10, 2013 – Time: 5:30pm

Location – Home of John Swanson, Truckee

AGENDA – Items may not be heard in the order they are listed:

A. **CALL TO ORDER** - Establish quorum/Introduction of guests – 6:45 PM

B. **AGENDA AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL** (2 min)

Motion: Dave F. 2nd: Jeremy Vote: Yea

C. **APPROVAL OF MARCH MEETING MINUTES** (2 min)

Motion: Dave P. 2nd: Chip Vote: Yea

D. **PUBLIC COMMENT** (5 min)

Jonathan Laine, invited by Randall, attended the meeting to learn more about SAC and potential board membership. Jonathan is an ER physician (colleague of John Swanson), former board member of the Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team, and experienced backcountry skier.

E. **CORRESPONDENCE** (10 min)

John Swanson discussed Care Flight's acquisition of new long-range Barryvox beacon and RECCO receiver. Looking to acquire 2nd set to equip helicopters in both Truckee and Gardnerville. This will help in backcountry search and rescue efforts, particularly in large avalanches. Wanted to make SAC aware. Discussion of the logistics of Andy or Brandon supporting search and rescue efforts. They could participate on National Forest land or if request came through Forest Service. Potentially good PR for SAC.

F. FOREST SERVICE REPORT – Dennis Hogan (30 min)

- a. Two things need to happen before start of 2013/14 season:
 - i. Need to revise winter operating plan for coming year. Dennis to provide copy for review/revision.
 - ii. Collection agreement from last year between Forest Service and (c)(3) is good for five years, but a few details need to be updated: Don replacing Justin as president (need Don's contact info); board must decide how much and when to pay Forest Service for forecasters.
- b. Discussion of budget planning and collection schedule.
 - i. The payment schedule has varied in previous years. Last year, half of the total (\$38,560 out of \$77,200) was collected on Sept 15, with the balance collected over two installments in January and March. The January/March payment amounts vary depending on available Forest Service funding at that time (FS may offset some of the forecasters' salaries), but SAC must be prepared to pay the full amount (~\$77,200) if FS funding dries up.
 - ii. Forest Service Region 4 funding increased 10% this year, but there is some question about what other regions (Region 5, Tahoe Basin) will be able to provide this winter due to the active fire season. Last year, Forest Service paid 60% of forecasters' salaries, up significantly from the historical average of ~10%.
 - iii. There is a current balance of \$10,585 in the FS account, which was preserved rather than refunded to SAC in order to pay for early-season work by forecasters. Additionally, the Cal State Parks OHV grant will provide \$15,050 to the Forest Service to support course planning and early season grant work by the forecasters beginning October 6. Forecasting typically begins mid-November depending on conditions.
- c. Forecasters' Update – Andy Anderson
 - i. Cal State OHV grant -- Andy is working on signs; needs board input on design. Brandon is in discussion with Travis about teaching courses.
 - ii. During off-season, forecasters have been in discussion with other avalanche centers to standardize operations and information delivery. Focus is on safety procedures this year because of Utah forecaster's death last season and danger of forecasters working alone. Centers can't function without solo travel – would cut forecasting days/range in half. SAC is

ahead of the curve. Forecasters and observers travel in safe terrain, check-in routinely with dispatcher, carry Forest Service radio and cell phone, and have emergency protocol in place. Desire for board members to accompany forecasters and observers in field. Board members must sign volunteer agreement to travel with forecasters. Copies of agreement will be brought to next board meeting.

iii. Update on internal communications. Expand use of SAC's Google Calendar and Google Docs to coordinate schedules and information. SAC email roster updated, distribution lists explained. Jenny to post roster in Google Docs with contact info for directors, advisors, forecasters; everyone should check and update their contact info.

G. TREASURER'S REPORT – Randall Osterhuber (10 min)

- a. Randall provided copies of annual financial report (see Appendix A). Will also be emailed to group and posted on SAC website. Official SAC fiscal tax year runs January 1 through December 31, but operating season is Sept 1 through August 31, so end of year finances are based on position as of August 31.
- b. Highlights: Total of all accounts is just under \$200,000. We raised \$96,000 in for 2012 operating season, but also had record expenses of \$100,000, which was twice as high as the 2011 season, primarily due to hiring a manager. Endowment account (managed by TTCF) earned \$3,600 and currently stands at \$39,000.
- c. SAC ski days remain SAC's primary fundraiser. They brought in \$200,000 over the past 4 years. In our efforts to diversify and develop new funding streams, we must keep in mind that ski days are job #1 and not dilute our efforts to organize and promote those.
- d. Don reminded board that we need to post the annual report on the website. In the future we may divide it between the SAC budget and Forest Service budget.

H. COMMITTEE REPORTS (20 min)

- a. Executive Comm. – Don Triplett (see Appendix B)
 - i. Recap of strategic planning session. Biggest open question coming out of the planning session was about a potential growth plan -- if/how to expand.
 - ii. On fundraising, we need to develop tactics for approaching large donors, expand direct-response fundraising w/ CRM, consider a fundraising consultant. Each board member should take responsibility for developing and executing a fundraiser (e.g. Coffee Bar, Full Belly Deli). Work with retailer to develop details and make it a "win-win" for SAC and retailer. Possibilities include gear stores, gear manufacturers, Whole Foods,

Woodward, Any Mountain (Vail stores), etc. Holly is coordinating with Mellow Fellow about possible fundraiser.

iii. Other ideas: refine the forecast, more staff to allow greater coverage and potential multi-zone forecast, work with Woodward, make sure we have current processes dialed before expanding.

iv. Potential SAC video – look at what exists from other sources and build on that. Maybe add a video page to the current website.

b. Randy – El Dorado Nordic Ski Patrol contacted Randy about SAC helping promote and register participants for a backcountry skills class that the EDNSP is conducting. SAC would make \$49/registrant. Board agreed to pursue.

I. **STAFF REPORT** (30 min) Program Manager Report - Jenny Hatch

- a. **Events.** Tentative yes given to SAC presence at Sherpa Cinema premier November 24. Need volunteers for Powderwhore film tour Oct 14 at Alpenglou, Oct 15 at Sports Exchange, Oct 18 in Truckee. Members will coordinate via email Todd is doing a presentation on the South Shore Friday 9/13 with \$10 donations to benefit SAC and Safe Climbing. Lake Mary dinner September 15. Google Calendar will be used to show events and coordinate volunteering.
- b. Discussion of signature event at Sugar Bowl. Description in plan provided by Jenny. Greg Hill and Jeremy Jones are willing to attend. Potential concerns about location (will people travel to Sugar Bowl?) and whether we will raise enough money to make it worth the time spent organizing. In future years it may be better to do an event in the Bay Area since there are more potential high-dollar donors there, but too late to organize and promote it this year. Agreed to try a small event at Sugar Bowl this year as a “trial run” and practice for next year.
- c. Outdoor Research is offering an “event-in-a-box” with Randonee racing, training, gear display, etc. to benefit SAC. Cost would be \$15-\$20. Squaw could host. Need to clarify SAC staffing responsibility.
- d. Update on Cal Parks OHV Grant. Grant was approved for a total of \$42,435. \$5,500 will cover indirect SAC costs. \$15,000 to the Forest Service for forecaster time and equipment. Board needs to approve the grant agreement, and review and approve plan for marketing the program.
 - i. Jenny is writing a great to the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation for an additional \$5,000 (matching funds for the OHV grant) to pay for 3 additional signs at snowmobile backcountry access points.
- e. Vail Echo Grants for lift tickets – last year we asked for 1,500 tickets. Were given 750 and sold almost all of them. This year ask for a little more than 750. Vail also

asked us to write a grant to provide avi education in the schools -- \$6,000 to conduct 6 assemblies/presentations. Board agreed that we should pursue this.

- f. We are comparing our insurance coverage to what other centers carry. Need liability insurance for events, workers comp. OHV education program would not be insured through Forest Service. If the classes happen on FS land, may need a permit and proof of insurance.
- g. Jason and Jenny have been discussing ways to improve sponsorship visibility. Jason suggests 4 sections. Jenny to send written draft of plan.
 - i. Donation page. Clean design (see Access Fund site), with various sponsorship levels.
 - ii. A membership program. \$35 (amount TBD) makes you an annual “member” of SAC. Members might get things like a SAC sticker, Backcountry Magazine, local gear discounts, email blasts, etc.
 - iii. Partner levels. Only show highest level donors on site. \$10,000 gets sponsor name on daily advisory. \$5k - \$9.9k gets sponsor logo on the SAC site and a link to sponsor site. \$1k-\$4.9k gets a link to sponsor site. No longer show individual donors.
 - iv. Endowment – promote the endowment on the site (see UT center).
- h. Draft rack card coming for review. We need to track location of booth supplies for events (N Lake vs. S Lake). Whoever is staffing next event is responsible for obtaining supplies.
- i. Andy and Mark discuss CRM. Andy researched CRM software options over the summer in consultation with Mark, Jenny, and Jeremy. Will allow better tracking, management, and communication with donors to increase direct-response fundraising. Software is free. Unanimous vote to approve funds for Andy to set up software. Mark to draft guidelines for donor outreach and privacy. Begin sending out periodic SAC newsletter (electronically).

J. ADJOURNMENT - Next Meeting Date – October 8, Incline Village Library

APPENDIX A: Financial Report

Sierra Avalanche Center

Winter 2013 Financial Report

September 1, 2012 – August 31, 2013



August 31, 2013

\$96,719 (gross) was raised during Winter 2013, a 53 percent increase over Winter 2012. But due to record expenses, SAC finished the season with a net income of -\$3,948.

"Ski Day" ticket sales accounted for 58 percent of the season's gross earnings, donations (online and through the mail) accounted for 32 percent, and autumn/spring fundraising events 8 percent. \$5400 was donated to SAC in memory of Alpine Meadows ski patrolman Bill Foster.

Of the \$100,668 (2.2x the previous year) in annual expenses, 28 percent were for forecaster salaries, 26 percent for program development (primarily salary), and 14 percent for field observations. Combined, advertising, SAC logo wear, travel/training, and website server fees accounted for 17 percent of annual expenses.

In early August 2012, SAC executed a new Collection Agreement with the USFS obligating the avalanche center to payments of more than \$77,000 during Winter 2013. Funding later in the year from the USFS (Regions 4, 5, and the LTBMU) covered more than half that amount. At season's end, SAC was responsible for forecaster salary payments of \$27,975. \$10,585 remains in the Collection Agreement account.

On May 20, 2013, \$10,000 was transferred from the SAC checking account to the Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation-managed "SAC Endowment Fund." During the year, the fund netted \$3,612. Account balance on June 30, 2013 was \$39,614.

Respectfully Submitted,

Randall Osterhuber
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**Sierra Avalanche Center
Balance Sheet**

As of August 31, 2013

August 31, 2013

ASSETS

Current Assets

Fund

Bank of the West	149,454.83
PayPal	1.00
Truckee Tahoe Comm Foundation	39,613.88
Collection Agreement Fund	10,585.13

Total Current Assets **\$ 199,654.84**

**Sierra Avalanche Center
Profit & Loss**

September 1, 2012 through August 31, 2013

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income

Autumn fundraiser	8,163.47
Deposit	
Ski lift ticket sales	56,001.60
Deposit - Other	719.92
Total Deposit	<u>56,721.52</u>

Donation

Donation thru mail	4,087.80
Online donation thru PayPal	17,555.22
Donation - Other	8,947.00
Total Donation	<u>30,590.02</u>

Interest/Dividends	773.93
Realized Gains	470.29

Total Income 96,719.23

Gross Profit 96,719.23

Expense	
Administrative fees	219.89
Advertising	7,007.18
Board of Directors meeting	835.29
Brochures	680.00
Business development	43.76
Chamber of Commerce	110.00
Checks	61.92
Field Observations	14,040.00
Filing Fees	20.00
Forecaster equipment	1,000.00
Insurance	2,477.00
Investment fees	99.54
Leased Forest Service Employees	38,560.00
Non-profit status fee	
Tax status filing fee	
Tax preparation	805.90
Total Tax status filing fee	<u>805.90</u>
Non-profit status fee - Other	25.00
Total Non-profit status fee	<u>830.90</u>
Office Supplies	18.40
Post office box rental	72.00
Pro Development Workshop	-545.00
Program development	20,400.93
SAC Logo wear	4,593.97
Snowmobile equipment	504.45
TD Chamber of Commerce	250.00
Travel/Training	4,202.50
Unrealized Gains	-2,367.61
Website server fee	1,552.42
Total Expense	<u>100,667.54</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>-3,948.31</u>
Net Income	<u>-3,948.31</u>

APPENDIX B: SAC President's Report

Sept 2013

1. Strategic Meeting Overview~

- Review of Intent, Accomplishments, Effectiveness, Goals, Vision
- Fundraising Action Items
 - Develop “Pitch” – What is our need for funding? This informs the rack card that we are developing and should be used for tabling and outreach
 - Develop advocates for the fundraising cause
 - CRM (customer relation management) software
 - Donor development through research and information
 - Develop strategy to entertain and court potential donors
 - Investigate potential for consultant work to find new sources of funding
- Future growth of SAC – prioritize the list and create a need for the funding
 - Refinement of Advisory
 - Right people in the right areas
 - More staff in specific placement
 - Multiple zone forecast
- Program development areas to explore
 - Education and Outreach
 - Freeride team athletes and parents
 - New backcountry users
 - Snow mobiliers – Education on their terms from their perspective
- Intent for growth
 - Dial in our systems prior to helping other centers and expanding our reach
- Develop a **Vision statement** ~ The who we are statement
 - “Backcountry users are educated and have access to current snow pack advisory information in order to make safe decisions.
- Revise our Mission statement ~ Looking for clean elegant statement
 - The mission of SAC includes disseminating current snow pack istability information to the general public; providing educational information, knowledge, and understanding of avalanches to recreational users and groups; and facilitating communication in the region to reduce the impact of avalanches on recreation, industry, and transportation through a partnership with the US Forest Service.
 - **Revised**
 - **Sierra Avalanche Center functions as a partnership between a non-profit (SAC) and the US Forest Service dedicated to safe winter backcountry travel by providing current snow pack stability information and educational information and knowledge of avalanche conditions to the general public of back country users.**

2. Fundraising Models and Seasonal Kickoff outreach

a. Community outreach and fundraising - Make it enticing and worth the effort.

Create win / win relationships with partners

i. Restaurant promotion - create a signature item or combination that donates a \$1 to SAC for every purchase.

1. Restaurants can pass along money monthly, make matching contributions for placement on website and additional sponsorship placement beyond standard giving recognition through program announcement and final wrap up

2. Ideas for promotion – Participating shop decides on item specifics, priced to make them a profit and include a donation of \$1 to SAC.

a. Avy special - ie. Sandwich special for a deli –

b. SAC lunch - Breakfast or Lunch special – ie. Wrap and cookie or bar for the pack

c. Punch card for the item- Once complete name and phone of person is entered into a season long drawing for a grand prize

d. Offer promotion package of website marketing and newsletter blast to our population. Followed up by program recognition

ii. SAC Avy Bucks~ A seasonal giving campaign – Sport shops / local businesses give customers an opportunity to add \$1 or more to their bill.

1. We need to promote this. - Radio announcements, website, newsletter to 1000's of recipients

Promotion corner recognizing partners for programs may incorporate new structure of donors

Charge board members with responsibility to act on behalf of SAC- Take a program on for your community. Develop a new outlet, facilitate a fundraising campaign, or spearhead a program. Donate your time and what you have to offer to bring SAC out of the bag and into focus within our community.

How can we connect what we do to people and partners that want what we do?

Have we covered all the basics? Is everything accomplished that we said was needed to move ahead at last year's meeting.

- Annual Budget
- Proper documentation
- Registration with non profit registry?

Education Advocacy and Outreach-

Ideas- Video project for avalanche center use and distribution

Useable for partners, resorts, media, etc...