

IDITAROD TRAIL COMMITTEE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
May 27, 2016
Lakefront Anchorage Hotel

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Andy Baker at 9:09 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Andy Baker, Aaron Burmeister, Stan Foo, John Handeland (via phone), Mike Jonrowe and Mike Owens (via phone.)

Members absent: Paul Gebhardt (excused), Danny Seybert (excused), and Rick Swenson (excused)

Others Present: Stan Hooley, CEO; Willie Karidis, COO; Mark Nordman, Race Director/Race Marshal; Stu Nelson, DVM, Chief Veterinarian; Don Patterson, Finance Director; Joanne Potts, Recording Secretary; Tegan Hanlon, Anchorage Dispatch Reporter

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Baker asked to move the CEO report down to 11.2, along with Adoption of the Budget.

Jonrowe/Burmeister moved to approve the amended agenda. Motion passed.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF APRIL 29, 2016

Jonrowe noted that the motion beginning on page 1 of the minutes “Jonrowe/Entire Board moved...) rather than Jonrowe/Handeland moved...”

Jonrowe/Foo moved to adopt the minutes as corrected. Motion Passed Unanimously.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Baker had no report.

COO REPORT – WILLIE KARIDIS

Karidis submitted a written report.

He noted that the Fred Meyer Community Rewards program has been launched which creates the opportunity for fans to contribute to the Iditarod.

He walked the board members through an explanation of the Iditarod Tough brand and included a presentation at the back of the board packet which includes a series of logos, color palette and sample logoed gear. He explained that the real money in merchandising is with forming financial partnerships with national brands. Iditarod Tough will give Iditarod the option to approach national gear and clothing companies in an effort to form new partnerships.

Burmeister suggested using the outline of Alaska. Karidis agreed to look into that.

Board agreed that having an Iditarod Tough brand was a great idea.

He has submitted a Rasmuson Tier I grant for a new roof for headquarters but he hasn't heard back from them yet.

He noted that the new Runner will be revitalized soon and distributed over the web. It will be more of an information piece with articles on volunteers, checkpoints, mushers, articles that will get members and fans excited about the Iditarod.

He submitted a grant to Keen Footwear for \$10K to help with trail work labor. He is looking for potential grants such as Patagonia and North Face and will be aggressively applying for them.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Postponed until the Approval of the Budget.

RACE DIRECTOR/RACE MARSHAL'S REPORT

Mark Nordman submitted a written report.

He explained that he has not heard back from the BLM regarding the User Fee for 2017.

He explained that Crowley had bought Ace Fuel and Iditarod is looking forward to working more with Crowley in the future.

There is still an issue with the burn around Minchumina and the trail that Iditarod could use if the race could not go through the Alaska Range. He said Dave Cruz has expressed an interest in working on that trail. He explained that it would be good to make a trip out to Minchumina, noting that there is a reason that people live there and all are not anxious to have the trail go through there.

CHIEF VETERINARIAN'S REPORT

Dr. Nelson submitted a written report.

Nelson explained that he is wrapping up the 2016 race and preparing for 2017. The invites to over 200 veterinarians for 2017 will go out soon.

He explained that the research project looking into shoulder injuries, outlined in his written report, has been in the works for over a year. It will be based out of the University of Georgia and will be a well done research project. He noted that mushers will have the option of participating in this study.

RULES COMMITTEE REPORT

Baker explained that Paul Gebhardt, chair of the Rules Committee, was not able to attend this meeting and had asked Mark Nordman to discuss the rules and the changes for 2017.

Nordman noted that all the changes the Rules Committee was recommending were noted in red in the copy in the board packet.

He explained that there had been a long discussion on trailers. Some mushers had been concerned about the appearance of carrying dogs in trailers. But, Nordman said, in the end the Rules committee made no change in the rule.

Jonrowe noted that his only objection to carrying dogs in trailers was the crowding. Nordman noted that he had never seen overcrowding in trailers, but he has seen trailers used to carry dogs when trail conditions dictated that dogs should not be in trailers.

Burmeister noted that he sees negatives of hauling dogs in trailers. He explained that the public image is what pushed him away from hauling in trailers. Also, all dogs need to be visually shown to the checker in the checkpoint.

Nordman noted that lithium batteries could be shipped in food drops as long as they were in the original packaging, AA and AAA only.

He explained the Rules Committee had agreed that mushers should be made aware of rule infractions and penalties within 24 hours of the infraction. He further explained that anything that has to do with gaining a competitive advantage would get a time penalty and anything else would be a monetary penalty. In the past a musher could get a two hour time penalty and then the next level would be disqualification. He explained that changing to a maximum of an 8 hour penalty is serious and in most cases it would put a musher one full checkpoint behind.

Nordman noted that there was a lot of discussion on Rule 35, He explained that it was his understanding that the Rules Committee agreed that any two way communication would

be allowed. There was some discussion about allowing it only in emergency situations. There was a certain feeling that if a musher gets in trouble he can use it but otherwise, they are not supposed to use it.

Baker suggested that we take what the rules committee said and build it into a talk on whether we open it wide open for communications.

Nordman explained that right now, if you have any two way communication, you're out of the race.

Jonrowe asked if the Rules Committee had discussed the preprogramming the SPOT so that emergencies could be reported. Maybe it would be something where the SPOT would be in a hard case. Nordman said that was discussed a little bit.

Nordman noted that, in the beginning, mushers would try to run their race using two way communications but he suggested that that wouldn't last more than a year or two. It either needs to be that they are not allowed or they are wide open.

Baker noted that the issue of people having a phone for safety, the rule #35 should say night vision goggles are not allowed. That would be the entire rule. Burmeister suggested that if they ask to be rescued they continue to be out of the race, as is currently stated. Baker agreed.

It came up that some people would be able to afford a SAT phone and some couldn't. But Nordman didn't feel that should be an issue.

Baker asked about a language for the rule to vote on.

Nordman didn't think that in the end, this would affect who is going to win the race. The musher knows his dogs, he/she knows the trail and he/she knows what the weather looks like.

Baker suggested just taking out everything except the part about the emergency. Nordman noted that a number of years ago we had an incident where the help button was pushed and it put the Air Force in jeopardy and it turned out not to be a serious thing.

Jonrowe suggested, "A musher will carry a one way emergency device provided by the ITC" and continue to Night Vision Goggles and omit that part and put in "use of GPS is permitted."

So we're saying it's wide open but if you press your help button you might be disqualified. At the end of the rule, put "two way communication is permitted."

Handeland stated that he didn't like allowing two way communication because it takes away from the historical aspect of the race. It also gives the musher an opportunity to compete with Iditarod in a commercial venture and be potentially in competition with the

Iditarod. He believed they could carry to use in an emergency but that would be the only use.

Nordman noted that the Rules Committee had discussed not using two way communication with the media and the Rules Committee felt that was covered in Rule #8.

Hooley noted that the Board shouldn't do anything too quickly, that maybe something in Rule #8 should be combined in Rule #35. He said he just wanted to make sure the language is right.

Nelson suggested that a statement be added in Rule #35 that the use of two way communication for commercial purposes is not allowed.

Baker noted that this needs to go to a vote today and suggested we move it down on the agenda and let Nordman finish the rest of the Rules Committee Report. He asked Hooley to get with others and come up with wording for this.

Owens asked if allowing two way communication would eliminate the requirement that mushers couldn't call home to family without a race official present. Nordman explained that it would mean that a musher could call anyone at any time. Baker noted that we're saying use of two way communication would be wide open and we don't expect a competition problem.

Handeland asked what if a musher in the front of the Race communicates with his puppy team in the back. Baker noted that that could be done but he didn't think a musher would be very competitive if he spent a lot of time talking to a rookie.

Burmeister noted that when a musher is running the race and trying to be competitive, the last thing he/she is going to do is have his/her phone turned on.

Baker said he is adamant that this should be done for safety reasons.

The question was raised about whether a musher in trouble could call for rescue and then the news media might find out about this before race officials know. Nordman said that he hoped any musher with a problem would call him first. He said if he/she calls for rescue, they will just call him. So mushers should call him first.

Rule #35: now revised to read:

A musher may carry and use any two-way communication device(s), including, but not necessarily limited to, a cell and/or satellite telephone. Use of any such device for outside assistance (coaching) will result in disqualification. Use of such devices may not be used for any media purposes during the course of the race unless expressly approved in advance by ITC.

A musher may also carry an emergency locator transmitter (ELT), a Spot™, or other similar satellite tracking device. However, activation of any help or emergency signal, including accidental activation, may make a musher ineligible to continue and may result in an automatic withdrawal from the race. Use of a GPS is also permitted.

Regarding the \$2500 fine limit, \$2500 is not that much money to a major media company and they might be willing to pay the musher's fine. Nordman commented that there is always the possibility of disqualification.

Baker noted that Hooley and others would figure out the language for rule 35 so they can be adopted when we get to 11.1.

IOFC REPORT

Burmeister had no report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Jonrowe/Foo moved to go into Executive Session for discussion on Item 10 on the agenda and the CEO report. Motion passed.

Executive Session began at 10:14 and ended at noon. The Board went back into session at 12:42.

ADOPTION OF RACE RULES

Jonrowe/Handeland moved to adopt the race rules for 2017.

Jonrowe suggested adding AAA and AA to the statement about shipping lithium batteries.

Baker had requested that Hooley put together verbiage for rule #35. Following is that verbiage:

Rule #35 as written by Hooley: **35 – Electronic Devices:** A musher may carry and use any two-way communication device(s), including, but not necessarily limited to, a cell and/or satellite telephone. Use of such devices may not be used for any media purposes during the course of the race unless expressly approved in advance by ITC.

A musher may also carry an emergency locator transmitter (ELT), a Spot™, or other similar satellite tracking device. However, activation of any help or emergency signal, including accidental activation, will make a musher ineligible to continue and may result in an automatic withdrawal from the race. Use of a GPS is also permitted.

Jonrowe/Handeland motion to adopt the rules for 2017 passed unanimously.

ADOPTION OF BUDGET

Burmeister/Jonrowe moved to adopt the revised budget for FY 17 that calls for an increase of \$168K in revenues and \$138K decrease in expenses for FY 17. Motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Jonrowe/Foo moved to get into Executive Session to discuss agenda item 10.2, the CEO Evaluation. Motion passed.

Executive session at 12:55.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.