

Minutes Heli Ski US Association Meeting 2009 Squaw Valley

Friday, May 15, 2009

Meeting was called to order

Roll Call:

Kevin and Jessica Quinn

Chris Owens

Jon Shick

Joe Royer

Mark Baumgardner

Joel Serra

Craig Pattee

Sigi Vogl

A three ring binder was distributed to the membership. This binder has important HSUS documents and is to be used as a reference and brought to future meetings. For those not attending, the binders will be mailed.

-Review and approval of 2008 Minutes tabled to later in the meeting

Agenda Item: Anti Trust Policy:

-Joel presented the Anti Trust Policy and noted that the final portion of the policy should be read aloud at all future meetings of the Association

Upon motion by Chris Owens and seconded by Jon Shick, it was

RESOLVED that Anti Trust Policy is adopted.

A copy of the Anti Trust Policy is annexed to these minutes.

Agenda Item: Approval of Agenda:

- Review and approval of the 2009 Meeting Agenda. Chris Owens made a motion to approve the Agenda, the motion was seconded and approved with the following agenda items added:

- Incidents
- Review of the Bylaws regarding membership attendance
- New Operators
- Travel Insurance
- Flight Following
- Emergency response in case of an incident – Media/PR Firm

- ABS

Joe Royer – All need to be on time for the meeting and it should be mandatory all members to attend future annual meetings

Agenda Item: Operator Season Reviews

The group next took up a review of Summaries of the season by each operator:

The following operators were present:

Company Name: Ruby Mountain helicopter Skiing

Presented By: Royer

Season Began: January 22nd Season Ended: April 1

Skier Days: 910

Helicopter Total Time: 152.7

Helicopter Mfr/Model: A-Star B3

Helicopter Provider: Classic

Helicopter Notes: 2 hr a day minimum

Injuries/Accidents:

Permit Status/Issues: 4 on a ten

Other Operations Notes:

Company Name: Points North Heli-Adventures Inc.

Presented By: Kevin Quinn

Season Began: Commercial operations began Feb 21st **Season Ended:** April 25th

Skier Days: 1083 (3 day average for a 7 day trip) (361 guests total)

Helicopter Total Time: 277 hours flown – 283 contracted

Helicopter Mfr/Model: A-Star B2 x 3

Helicopter Provider: Northstar Trekking

Helicopter Notes: We utilized 3, A-Star B2's this year again from Northstar. We have had the same pilots and aircraft for 9 of our 11 years. They are great!

Injuries/Accidents: 1 hip dislocation, 3 knees - possible ACL injuries No major incidents/accidents to report. (Several at other operations however)

Permit Status/Issues: We currently fly strictly on DNR land. We are working very hard to obtain additional land usage from the USFS for the coming season 2010. H20's permit is up for review and PNH is looking to gain access into areas it believes are underutilized. PNH is also working with the USFS to gain additional access into new areas within the USFS as well. 2010 looks good for all of the above as we are very hopeful.

Other Operations Notes: With the current state of the economy we did see an 11% decrease in the overall number of guests. We did fly more than last year and are thankful the volcano had no effect on operations in both Cordova and Valdez. Our overall numbers again were down 11% however our actual fly days we up a bit from last year.

We skied 5,426 runs this season averaging 15.03 runs per person for each week. Some weeks we skied a significant amount more than the average number shown here. The 15.03 runs per week is purely an average per person each week.

Additionally, this was our 8th year working with Warren Miller Ent. PNH produced an Alaskan Guide segment to be aired in this fall's new WM film, "Dynasty".

PNH also produced a pilot show for TV, TBA very soon. The idea of the show is to showcase our on goings at PNH and in Alaska and gain additional media exposure. The show is looking to rival the Deadliest Catch, Heli Loggers, Ax men, The Alaskan Experiment, etc. Further details to come.

Overall the season was one of our best in regards to the quality of skiing and our no fly days were enjoyable with guests utilizing the local ski area, Mt Eyak on weather days. Additional opportunities available to guests were ice climbing, fishing, sea kayaking and ski touring, to name a few.

We added 2 new yurts with wood stoves to the operation giving us an area to stage clients for possible breaks in the weather for quick access. These yurts will be instrumental in our heli-assisted ski touring program starting 2010. We have found there is a significant interest in this. Not to mention, PNH does not have a road system through our land. The yurts also play a similar role like that of the Valdez road runs available at the other operations.

CPG – Need electronic
SVHS – Need electronic
HMH – Need electronic

The following members were not present; written reports were read to the group:

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Company Name: Telluride Helitrax Inc.

Presented By:

Season Began: 1/08/2009

Season Ended: 3/28/2009

Skier Days: 273

Helicopter Total Time: 56.4 hours

Helicopter Mfr/Model: Bell 407

Helicopter Provider: Air Resources

Helicopter Notes: low hours

Injuries/Accidents: none

Permit Status/Issues: 3 years into 10-year permit USFS | 1 year into 5-year permit BLM

Other Operations Notes: very smooth season overall

Company Name: Dean Cummings H2O Guides

Presented By: Dean Cummings

Season Began: Company annual training: February, 12th-19th, American Mechanized Ski Guide I course: February 19th - 26th, 14 students went well, Public Guests Season began February 26th

Season Ended: April 30th

Skier Days: 500

Helicopter Total Time: 132

Helicopter Mfr/Model: 1 A-Star B-2, 1 A-star B-3

Helicopter Provider: Evergreen

Helicopter Notes: excellent maintenance and pilots, no major issues

Injuries/Accidents: Two knee injuries

Permit Status/Issues: Ten year on track

Other Operations Notes: ABA had skier fall above big exposure and died from mass trauma, VHSG had a guide broke his back after falling over cliff while skiing Meteorite mountain. Both of these lines are extreme descents.

Company Name: Wasatch Powderbird Guides, Inc.

Presented By: Rusty Dassing
Season Began: December 15, 2008
Season Ended: April 15, 2009
Skier Days: 1,013
Helicopter Total Time: 239 hours
Helicopter Mfr/Model: (2) A-Star B-3
Helicopter Provider: Classic Helicopters
Helicopter Notes: none
Injuries/Accidents: Several knee injuries / no heli incidents
Permit Status/Issues: Awaiting 10 year Decision Notice for 2010 season
Other Operations Notes: Client demand was strong but we had some cancellations. Flyable days were down 15% due to weather.

Company Name: North Cascade Heli.

Presented By: Paul Butler
Season Began: 1/9/2009 Season Ended: 3/16/2009
Skier Days: 570
Helicopter Total Time: 123 hours (includes ferry and admin. time)
Helicopter Mfr/Model: A-Star B2
Helicopter Provider: Edelweiss Helicopters

Helicopter Notes: Brand new machine; operated on Classic's Part 135

Injuries/Accidents: Minor sprains and strains; one client-triggered avalanche that guest rode out with no injuries; one guide-triggered avalanche, partially buried, no injuries.

Permit Status/Issues: USFS forest plan being revised, looking at existing wilderness/non-wilderness lands; American Alps Legacy Project recently launched by North Cascades Conservation Council seeking to expand national park boundaries into heli-terrain.

Other Operations Notes: The 2009 season wasn't without a variety of challenges, yet we had a safe one and sent nearly all our guests away satisfied with their heli-skiing/riding experiences. We hoped to start in late December, but the brand new helicopter had maintenance issues. The silver lining here was there was very little snow in the mountains. We were forced to cancel a handful of trips. After finally getting underway, with a different B2 A-Star from Classic, and a different pilot who wasn't familiar with our terrain and had limited heli-skiing experience, we scratched away trying to find decent snow and hazard-free terrain. Our main, nearby areas were practically unusable, for a variety of reasons, until mid-February. Several weeks into the season, our main ship showed up, piloted by Seamus O'Daimhin. We continued to experience some mechanical problems off and on with the new helicopter, particularly with the VEMD, resulting in some expensive no fly days. It finally felt like winter really started in late Feb. and we closed out the season on a good note. Finally, our main partner in lodging and dining, the Freestone Inn, changed ownership and we were able to purchase the heli-barn where we have been based out of for 14 years as part of the deal. So now we are involved in the exciting business of barn renting in the off-season.

Saturday, May 16, 2009

Agenda Item: HSOPs.

-Joel – Presented a review of revised HSOP's

The group went through each red-lined item and corrections and changes were made. The revised HSOPs will be circulated to all members for a final review before implementation for next season.

- Kevin showed a new Google Earth GIS run mapping program.

- Gary Bard, tech rep for Ortovox gave us an update. There is a new distribution center in SLC, Dale Bard overseeing. They are in the process of hiring sales reps.

ABS discussion:

Kevin – presented question regarding customers flying with ABS and recommends a set of protocols. Seeing more clients with ABS and recognizes hazards.

Recommendation by Owens - Cartridge goes in the basket due to oxygen displacement

- Action: Sigi to research protocols that Canadian Operators are doing

ISSW 2010 – Kevin and Jessica brought up the opportunity to have a HSUS booth at next years meeting at Squaw. All agreed that the Association should pay the \$500 booth fee.

Agenda Item: Governmental Affairs.

Craig Pattee presented a report on Governmental Affairs:

Items worked on to helping Association and individual members:

- 10 Year Permit
- Permit issues
- Fuel Tax

Craig highlighted that Dutko is paid on a trade basis. In the past each operator provided 8 skier days. Craig is careful not to abuse.

Following operators are facing threatening challenges:

H20

TH

NCH

WPG

HMH

The most serious issue is proposed Wilderness Bills and will affect multi users in the next 5 years.

Craig suggests forming recreation coalitions. Take a proactive stand with other user groups

HSUS Operators directly affected by The Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act:

HMH & SVHS

Discussion regarding HMH situation, it is serious.

Joe – what can HSUS do to help?

HSUS could write a letter in support of opening more terrain

Request clients to send a letter in support

Legal Strategy – Forest Service cares about threat of lawsuit

News Alert – Create a Press Release – place on new website

- Action – Sigi to work with Jon on putting out a press release to the membership to push to their clients on their respective websites.

Agenda Item: HSUS Website:

A Presentation on the Associations website was made by Kevin:

Need content ASAP from membership – Kevin will send out memo. Each Operator must go to the website and add its own content on the section created for them. The web address is: _____, the user ID is _____ and the password is: _____.

Kevin presented the features and suggestions were discussed

There will be a Membership login page for each member to manage their own content and keep private or public.

Usheliskiing.com not live yet

Need more verbiage and members need to proof their own content.

Suggestion to add Sponsor page

Kevin has paid \$2k of his own money to BJ Hansen for the new site.

Joe wants HSUS to reimburse Kevin – Group approved to reimburse Kevin \$2,000.

Members can contact BJ Hansen (webmaster) direct through Skype or email. His e-mail address is _____.

Agenda Item: State of Heli Ski U.S. and its Future.

Kevin led a discussion on the future of the Association and asked Joe for his vision.

Kevin feels that heli US needs to create a value to become a member

Craig – Value of being a part of heli-ski us:

- Gold standard good housekeeping seal
- Government Affairs
- Do not understate the peer interaction
- Raise awareness to the customer
- HSUS logo on website

Further comments: by Kevin:

- HSUS should contact WOGA for a group price break especially in light of our high safety standards (HSOP's)
- Audits should be conducted and are very positive for membership
- It should be mandatory to attend annual meeting
- Need to have a bi-monthly meeting for communication – Skype
- Need to have a benefits offering in order to attract new members
- Consider pushing HSOP helicopter standards on companies who fly member operations

Craig - Consider writing helicopter companies and aviation insurance companies regarding our high standards

Consider writing WOGA and Helicopter companies a formal presentation of the gold standard of HSUS

This is an opportunity to elevate the worth HSUS positioning HSUS as the Gold Standard

Joe – first step to go to WOGA

- Action Item : Joel offered to try and get on the Helicopter Association International (HAI) agenda to discuss HSOPs and their importance.

Agenda Item: Approval of 2008 minutes.

Motion to approve the 2008 minutes, Chris moves, all approved.

Discussion regarding failure of Theo to reimburse HSUS. Group asked Joe to re-bill Theo Meiners. Joel mentioned consideration of taking him to small claims if he fails to pay

- Action item for Joe to send invoice and letter to Theo Meiners.

Agenda Item: Bylaws.

-Joel Serra presented Amendments to the bylaws. Joel noted that the amendments were essentially as agreed at the 2008 meeting, but that he had added substance and therefore wanted to have the group ratify the final documents.

Joel noted that the amendments addressed:

- Article III, Membership, creating four classes of members – Operators, Guides, Associates (customers) and Affiliates (allied businesses).
- Article IV, Meetings of Members, allowing notice of meetings to be given by e-mail and fax.
- Article V, Board of Directors, allowing notice of meetings by e-mail and fax.
- Article XI, Amendments, allowing for amendments of the bylaws, as had been allowed under the bylaws that the Association was mistakenly using.

Idea of extending an invitation to WOGA to become an affiliate member

Upon motion by Mark, seconded by Chris, it was:

RESOLVED that the Amendments to the bylaws as presented by Joel are hereby adopted.

Voting: 6 in favor, none opposed, Rusty Dassing voted by phone. It was ordered that the Amendments to the Bylaws be affixed to the minutes.

Agenda Item: Carbon Offsets Program.

Joel presented the Ski Green Carbon Offset Program. He explained what carbon offsets are and how individual skiers can purchase one to offset the carbon footprint created by their heli skiing activities, for \$4 dollars per day. He also noted that the Bonneville Environmental Foundation will create a special Heli Ski Green sticker that will be used for our members. The money raised by this program will be used to help schools and other non-profit organizations purchase green (wind and solar power).

The consensus of the group was that this is an important program and though each company will make its own individual decision, it was recommended that all Members implement either this program or some other carbon offset program. Joel agreed that he would have the Bonneville Environmental Foundation contact our members individually.

Agenda Item: Insurance.

Insurance was discussed. Joel expressed his concerns of having one insurance provider.

Sigi presented his contact with Heath Lambert Group based in the UK and their interest in presenting a proposal.

It was suggested for Sigi to contact Heath Lambert requesting what information do they need in order to present a proposal. Then create a form and email it to HSUS members for them to complete and return to Sigi.

- Action item for Sigi to move forward with a form to the group and get a proposal from Heath Lambert Group
- Action item for Joe -Important for HSUS to meet with WOGA – Joe will set up a meeting in SLC

Discussion regarding Emergency Response – it was suggested to consider contracting with a PR firm for assistance on a stand-by basis. Especially due to the information network, and the need to mitigate misinformation quickly. Pay them for a plan for crisis PR not marketing. We should be pre-prepared and this is what a PR firm does with all of the key media contacts.

- Action Item for Chris Owens: Chris will vet PR firms for a proposal for mitigation PR during the season ala cart and Crisis mitigation. Owens will report to the group.

Agenda Item: Alaska Issues

AK Discussion:

Consideration of needing a HSUS AK Committee in order to address issues related specifically to AK. There are currently 11 operators in AK.

Joel- suggested to move a motion to form an AK committee

Joe - made a motion to establish an AK committee, seconded by Jon Shick, where upon it was

RESOLVED that the Association shall have a committee to address Alaska specific issues; and it was further

RESOLVED that Chris Owens will be the initial chairperson of the Alaska Committee.

AK issues – AK committee to email Joel incidents in AK to eventually prepare a memo to WOGA, State officials, etc. Highlight stuff that is unacceptable and dangerous by new, non-member companies and how enforcing standards like the HSOP's will add to public safety and strengthen the industry.

Craig will outreach to executive branch. (CP will consider how to handle)

Long term HSUS guidelines for helicopter operators for safety protocols. HAI Craig to visit in D.C.

- Peer pressure
- Go to aircraft
- Reach to insurance
- Politics

Re-cap:

Suggestion for Kevin to talk to heli company that stacked up helicopter in AK

Joe to WOGA

Craig to HAI

New Operators:

Joe working with new company in San Juan's of Colorado located in Wolf Creek & Park City Powder Cats on a consulting basis

Non-Agenda Item: Further Amendment to Bylaws.

Discussion was had regarding Bylaws and attendance and sharing in expenses if not attending. It was noted that the bylaws provide for terminating an Operators membership, but that was too drastic.

Upon motion by Mark Baumgardner, duly seconded it was

RESOLVED to adopt a bylaw allowing suspension of a member, upon vote of a majority of the membership if:

- The member misses future meetings (a representative of some kind or rank should be sent)
- The member fails to pay dues in a timely fashion;
- The member materially or regularly breaches the HSOPs.
- The member fails to comply with good business practices.

And to reinstate the membership of a suspended upon showing that they have resolved the condition causing them to be suspended.

All voted in favor are in favor (6:0); Rusty Dassing voted by telephone. It was ordered that a copy of the new bylaw be affixed to these minutes.

Chris Owens raised the subject of Travel Insurance. Chris said that Travel insurance had been instrumental in allowing his company to maintain good relations with persons whose trips were cancelled. Highly recommended, Travel Guard link on website. Mention travel insurance on the new HSUS website as recommended

Finance Report provided by Rusty Dassing not present and verbally presented by Joe Royer:

Heli-Ski U.S. Association

Financial Summary – May 2009

2008 – 2009 Income:	Dues paid x 8 members @ \$2,500	\$20,000.00
	Points North audit and member fee	\$ 6,509.48
	Unpaid dues North Cascade	\$ 2,500.00
	Unpaid audit fee ARA	\$ 1,509.48
Total Income and Receivables:		\$30,518.96

Expenses:	Reimburse audit fees to RMHS	\$ 2,429.23
	Jackson food and beverage	\$ 3,855.80
	Executive Director	\$14,400.00
	HAI and Helicat Canada dues	\$ 290.00
	Web hosting	\$ 199.70
	Travel expenses Joel and Sigi	\$ 1,096.97
Payables:	no known outstanding	
Total Expenses:		\$22,271.70
Bank Statement:	Ending Balance 05/13/2009	\$12,096.12

Outstanding Dues was discussed: NCH owes \$2500 for 2008 dues

Association dues payment should be net 30. If operator is having a tough time, work with operator.

It was decided that to become an Affiliate Membership it will be \$250 a year. An Affiliate Member which is also a heli skiing company seeking to become a regular Operator Member has two years probation during which they must get their program up to HSOPs standards and be reviewed. They get a copy of HSOP's and can attend part of the annual meeting.

It was decided that a Guide membership is \$40 per year.

- Action item for Sigi and Kevin to put together a list a benefits for guides and affiliate membership

2009 HSUS Dues: \$2,500 due net 30

However, each member shall have the option to pay in two installments, with the second due in September.

NCH needs to pay full amount of 2008 past dues and current 2009 dues

- Action item for Sigi to draft letter of exciting new key points from the meeting for Joe to send out to the membership

Election of Officers:

Mark Baumgardner nominates the following, all are in favor:

Joe Royer as President

Rusty Dassing as VP

Kevin Quinn as Secretary

Jon Shick as Treasure

Motion to nominate Chris Owens as chairperson of the AK committee. All are in favor.

Regarding finances: the HSUS checkbook is to go to Sigi immediately, Sigi to get mail forward from Alta P.O. Box to Ketchum P.O. Box; get set up as primary signor and receive bank statements. Sigi to give financial report to the Treasure on a monthly basis.

- Action item: Sigi to Pay Bills Immediately: reimbursement to to Jessica Quinn for meal expenses; Kevin for website reimbursement; Joel for travel expenses and photo copy expenses; Sigi for travel expenses and photo copy expenses.

Joe asked Jessica to help organize the HSUS booth for ISSW in 2010 at Squaw Valley

ED discussion:

Sigi to remain as ED at current compensation of \$1,200 per month

A review will be conducted at 3 months and 6 months.

Sigi to report and give Joe a time card every two weeks.

Sigi to give a financial report to the treasure once a month.

Joe suggested that the entire membership download Skype and get familiar with it for future telephonic meetings.

Joel reminded the group not to let out sensitive HSOP's information outside of the group. And to destroy old copy's of HSOP's when you receive the revised final copy for your binders.

Next years meeting:

The group agreed to have next year's meeting will be in Sun Valley May 21-23 Consider extra day on front end (May 20) for new members to attend.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm