

# **Helena Vigilante Runners**

## **Board Meeting #12**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**November 8, 2010**

#### **I. Call to order**

Patrick Judge called to order the twelfth meeting of the Helena Vigilante Runners at 7:05 pm on November 8th, 2010 at 107 W. Lawrence.

#### **II. Roll call**

The following persons were present:

Patrick Judge, Vice President

Michele Bazzanella, Treasurer

Chris Beskid, Board Member

Mike Fanning, Board Member

Marta Fisher, Board Member (once again, providing delectable treats!)

Ann Seifert, Board Member

Sarah Slanger, Board Member

Jeff Thomas, Board Member

Brian Wieck, Board Member

Alan Wintersteen, Board Member

Todd Younkin, Board Member

Chris Colberg, Observer :)

#### **III. Minutes**

Jeff Thomas moved that the minutes of the August 23rd, 2010 meeting be approved. Sarah Slanger seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

#### **IV. Financial Report**

Treasurer Bazzanella delivered a detailed "statement of cash flow" showing the status of all income and expenses so far this year, with a current balance of \$618.72. She elaborated on the following line items:

- the \$2,184 in "individual support" was from the "water bottle" fundraising drive (and does not include event-specific donations)
- the \$367.17 for Viga-potty expenses is the final amount for this year, and includes the October billing
- the \$130 for website & listserv expenses covers us until June next year
- the \$96 in postage / PO Box charges covers the box through March 31 next year
- Steve has indicated his preference to move forward with the 2011 event insurance this year (to make sure we get the Fat Ass 50k covered).
- All told, HVR expects to receive about \$1600 in net proceeds from the Elkhorn and Mount Helena races this year, demonstrating once again the crucial role these races play in the HVR organization.

The previous day, Patrick Judge had emailed the board a description of the Montana Cup finances (the pertinent portions of which are reproduced below):

*First, some background:*

- As you know, the bus cost was \$1541 and HVR agreed to cover just over 50% of it (\$791). I expected to raise the other \$750 through a \$15 fare assessed to each of 50 riders.

*As it turned out, our ridership fell off rather dramatically in the last couple of days leading up to the event, dropping from the expected 50 down to 36.*

*So far, we have raised \$600 (roughly 36 x \$15, plus \$60 in additional contributions from riders and non-riders), leaving us \$150 short (note that this amount is owed back to the club, in consideration of the check that HVR wrote for the full amount).*

- As most of you know, I took a separate collection for beer & tip money (\$5 suggested contribution). That collection yielded \$168 (including Scott's from last night), which covered the \$95 beer tab and \$73 toward the tip for the bus driver. I kicked in \$27 additional, to make it an even \$100 tip.*
- As you know, Tread Lightly generously donated \$200, which covered 20 pizzas from Pizza Hut (which was just about exactly the right amount, including pizza for the junior vans).*

He also described his preferred approach for dealing with the issue (pertinent portions below):

- I would propose that HVR waive the \$150 debt owed by the Montana Cup venture. The alternative would be to continue to "hound" the non-riders, or to have some benefactor (like me, or perhaps a combination of benefactors) step forward to make good on the debt. The reasons I propose the "debt relief" option include:  
1) *I don't think anyone acted in bad faith -- some degree of cancellation could probably be expected, but I truly didn't expect THAT much. I guess we could adopt some kind of "overbooking" strategy like the airlines do, but I'm not really comfortable with that approach either.*  
2) *"Hounding" people (such as those who became ill and regrettably had to cancel) seems rather tacky & counterproductive. I already feel bad about accepting \$15 from Debbie, who chose to drive separately due to kid issues (and who consequently incurred her own fuel expenses in addition).*  
3) *If HVR were in financial straits right now, I would happily offer to cover the \$150 personally, as I do feel largely responsible for the short-fall. But having reviewed the club finances with Steve and Michele, it looks to me like we are pretty healthy. Even with this motion (including the points that follow), I think we're still looking at a 2010 year-end balance of \$500+, leaving us some room for other expenditures or to start building some savings.*
  - I would propose that HVR provide some compensation to the drivers of the junior vans (Chris Colberg and Julie Ackerlund). Neither of them have asked for anything, but I think it would be a very appropriate gesture to show our thanks. In my view, it was a truly heroic thing for them to do. And the cost of two big vehicles traveling all the way to Billings and back is not insignificant. While it falls far short of the government-recommended mileage rate, I suggest sending them each \$100, which I think would be appreciated.*
  - I would also propose that we reimburse Jeff \$86, for providing numerous cases of Shasta soda to accompany the pizza and also providing some excellent return-trip entertainment for us with the trivia questions and prizes (which he purchased). The pop was \$20, and the prizes were \$66. I think this is the least we can do for Jeff, who is always giving to the club.*
  - Finally, I propose we properly engrave the Montana Cup trophies! I estimate that this will cost about \$50 (5 inscriptions -- 3 for Helena, and 2 for the lame teams that didn't do it last year).**

Sarah Slinger moved this proposal, and Todd Younkin seconded it. A thorough discussion ensued. The group agreed that we need an improved procedure for dealing with Montana Cup transportation expenses. This could include requiring an up-front / non-refundable financial commitment to reserving a spot on the bus, confirming that we are getting a competitive quote for the bus (this year's cost seemed much higher than usual, but at least part of that was attributable to the long distances and time commitments), and/or putting some "padding" in the fare (basically a convenience fee, reflecting all of the work we do to arrange the bus, etc.) to ensure the club doesn't see these unexpected losses. These changes should help address the concern that too large of a portion of the club's resources are being devoted to this one event -- \$1277 in 2010, assuming passage of this motion (\$791+\$150+\$200+\$86+\$50). Patrick Judge again apologized for the situation and called for the vote on the motion, which passed unanimously (with Jeff Thomas recusing himself on the \$86 portion).

Marta reported that the revived trail running clinic went very well, with 10-11 participants and great feedback from them. The event brought in \$140 for the club. She would like to repeat it, perhaps early next year. It could be targeted to first time trail-runners planning to do a specific race, such as DFMI.

The group also had a discussion about equipment. Pat commented that he thought the first priority should be to complete the inventory, and then to have the board think carefully about whether it really makes sense for HVR, Inc. to own its own equipment. He noted that Jeff would be entirely within his rights to press for payment for the army tent, given the earlier board decision to purchase it. Jeff responded that he too shared some of the concerns (about storage, access, the need for regular inventories, etc.), and very graciously offered to rescind the previous agreement.

## **V. Other Montana Cup Follow-Up**

The group also had a thorough discussion regarding our relationship to the Helena-area junior runners. Chris Colberg described the difficulties involved in recruiting complete teams of juniors for the Montana Cup. But he also reported that once they make it to the meet and compete, they have nothing but positive things to say about it. Todd Younkin suggested that we try to develop closer relationships with the coaches. Jeff and Pat agreed, and said they had already talked about setting-up a dinner with the CHS & HHS coaching staffs, for the purpose of clearing the air of any concerns. The group agreed that the relationship with the juniors could be very mutually beneficial, but should be much more "global." Historically, HVR and its members have supported the juniors in a number of important ways (volunteering at their races, organizing & contributing the proceeds from the August Road Race, inviting them to summer interval workouts, etc.), but these relationships could certainly be improved. For example, much more could be done to promote the August Road Race and to advertise HVR's sponsorship of that event. Sarah Slinger said that a greater effort could be made to get to know the kids at the event, and that having an announcer might also help.

There will always be some disagreement about the proper role of juniors as part of the Montana Cup. Alan and Brian continue to have misgivings about "recruiting juniors." Pat thinks that we achieved a good balance this year by successfully fielding full teams of juniors, but also being responsive to concerns (by arranging for separate transportation with proper chaperones). Whether or not it constitutes a technical violation of the junior athletes' code of conduct, it's important that HVR addressed the concern about having juniors on the bus with alcohol present. Todd said he thinks that we succeed in acting as good role models for the kids, throughout the year, and that if we work on building a more comprehensive relationship with them, the fact that we travel separately will not have a significant impact on that.

## **VI. Short Discussion Items / Board Member "Round Robin" Session**

Patrick Judge stated that Viger Christy Otte Stergar has been out of Montana State University sufficiently long to be eligible for Hall of Fame nomination and induction. He described her stellar athletic career at MSU by mentioning just a few highlights:

- 10-time Big Sky Conference Champion
- All-American and Academic All-American honors
- 200 meter indoor time of 24.09 (MSU record)
- 400 meter indoor time of 53.12 (MSU record and Big Sky Conference record)
- 800 meter indoor time of 2:09.13 (MSU record)
- 400 meter outdoor time of 53.05 (MSU record)
- 800 meter outdoor time of 2:09.75 (MSU record)

Christy has already been recognized by a plaque in the Brick Breeden field house, which describes her as one of the most successful MSU track athletes in history. In Pat's view, she is clearly deserving of prompt induction into the Hall of Fame. Ann Seifert moved that the HVR board endorse Christy Otte Stergar for the Montana State University Athlete's Hall of Fame. Jeff Thomas seconded the motion, Mike Fanning added a hearty "Go Cats!" and the motion passed unanimously.

On another topic, Pat mentioned the idea of offering a "broader wardrobe of Vigwear" -- something which is being requested with greater frequency. Several board members had great ideas about it, and

Pat proposed setting up an informal committee or task force to work on it. One comment was that the sale of hats, jackets, fleece tops, shirts, or other "official" Vigilante merchandise could become a source of revenue for the club.

Todd Younkin mentioned that he would like HVR to develop a set of procedures governing requests for HVR race sponsorship or assistance. This could include a list of criteria the board would consider when making those decisions, and also a specific process for how race officials should go about "applying" for the various levels of support. Marta expressed agreement, and also emphasized the importance of how to deal with race continuity if a race director "retires" or leaves town. Pat mentioned that the "Race Directors Guide" should help with this, assuming it gets written some day. :)

Jeff Thomas read a card from Jim Opitz of the Helena School Activities Department, expressing gratitude for HVR's assistance at the 2010 Montana State High School Cross Country Championship. There were approximately 20 Vigers who helped out at the finish line. Jeff reported that it was the smoothest and best run finish area operation in his many years of working the meet. One suggestion was to involve the trainers in Jeff's pre-meet finish area briefing.

Alan Wintersteen stated that he thought HVR could do more in the way of public outreach and marketing, by having a presence (booth) at the Governor's Cup fitness fair and similar events. Todd Younkin agreed, and said that the Race for the Cure has "tailgate" opportunities for entities like us. Alan and others thought that "Elkhorn" and "Vigilante" banners or flags would also be helpful.

Mike Fanning indicated that he hoped to initiate the Winter Lecture Series sometime after the New Year, probably on Tuesday or Thursday evenings.

## **VII. Announcements / Accomplishments**

Todd Younkin stated that he felt the club had accomplished a great deal this year, for which we can all be proud. Patrick Judge stated that we would be remiss in not mentioning Helena's recent success at the Montana Cup:

"Team Blue" fielded complete teams in all divisions, with a total of 55 participants (21 in the women's race and 34 in the men's race). This effort culminated in three team trophies for Helena (in the women's open, women's masters, and men's open divisions), two second-place finishes (junior boys and men's masters), and a third place finish (junior girls). There were also two individual champions from Helena (John Gilboy in the junior boys division and Kyle Strode in the men's masters), and many other Helenans who received "All Montana Cup" honors (top-7) in their respective divisions. Topping it off, Helena's women's masters captain (and HVR board member) Ann Seifert was very deservedly inducted into the Montana Cup Hall of Fame. These accomplishments were duly celebrated on the bus ride home, and also at the Phase III party hosted by Demaris Taylor. As always, comprehensive Montana Cup information is available at: [www.montanacup.com](http://www.montanacup.com)

An equally impressive news item was that the Carroll College women's cross country team became that school's first ever to 1) win a conference title, and 2) qualify for the national meet. On the same day, Bill Ballinger was voted Frontier Conference Women's Cross Country Coach of the Year by his peers.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

At 8:30 pm, Marta Fisher moved that the meeting be adjourned. Todd Younkin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**These minutes were prepared by Patrick Judge, in Lori Heit's absence.**