

Helena Vigilante Runners

Board Meeting #3

Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2009

I. Call to order

Steve Engebrecht called to order the third meeting of the **Helena Vigilante Runners** at **7:00 pm** on **February 16th, 2009** at **107 W. Lawrence**.

II. Roll call

The following board members were present: Michele Bazzanella, Steve Engebrecht, Marta Fisher, Mike Jacobson, Thomas Jodoin, Patrick Judge, Lori Heit, Jeff Thomas and Alan Wintersteen. Janet Robinson was also present.

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting

Michele made a motion that the minutes of the January 19, 2009 meeting be approved. Mike seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

IV. Meeting Issues

a) **Governors Cup Report:** Janet Robinson updated the board on the current status of the Governor's Cup Race to be held on June 6th and 7th. Blue Cross Blue Shield has issued a press release affirming the following races will be sponsored: The 10K (8:00am), 5K (10:00 am), and 1mile fun run(11:00 am) will take place on Saturday, June 6th and a bike event will be held on June 7th. There will be finishing AND starting mats for chip timing, and they will be using new "disposable" chip technology that does not require the chips to be collected. The decision to eliminate the half-marathon and marathon races was a result of expenses and lack of resources. According to Janet, the new focus for this year's event will be the 10K race and emphasis will be placed on encouraging teams to compete. The intent is to persuade members of the community that don't normally participate in this type of event to step out and partake, keeping in line with BCBS's philosophy of promoting a healthy lifestyle for everyone. Discussion then turned to improving the 10K course. Marta and Todd Younkin reviewed the standard course and are trying to find a way to reduce the "wobble" between California and Fee. The new course would allow for the same start as the 5K course. The big concern would be redirecting traffic and interfering with ambulance/emergency vehicle corridors. Janet mentioned there was talk of completely moving the 10K race to an entirely different area but it was decided to keep the standard course due to traffic concerns and neighborhood cooperation. Also new this year will be an awards presentation at 9:00 a.m. for the 10K race and 10:30 a.m. for the 5K. The top 3 males and females will receive awards, along with a team first place award. There will be no awards for the 1 mile event. The marathon and half-marathon are scheduled to take place on September 20th, 2009 in Billings (usually the day after the Mt. Helena Run). Steve said it's hard to come up with a good marathon course in Helena and mentioned the Wolf Creek relay route would be a potential option should Helena race coordinators want to pursue this further. Jeff mentioned he talked to Jeff Bockhorn (manager of Team 180) and said the group had penciled in the Governor's Cup Marathon and relay and had hopes of running 2:09 in the latter. They were saddened by the news of the relocation of the event. They may attend the Governor's Cup Marathon in Billings in a future year.

- b) Montana Cup Report:** Jeff attended a planning meeting in Bozeman and passed on the following information: The cup will be held on October 31st, with the men starting at 12:00 and the women at 1:00 (there is also a home Bobcat game scheduled for the same day). Jeff also brought up 3 points at the meeting that were of some concern. First: he attempted to change the age of junior runners to 18 and under rather than 19 and under. Ray Hunt objected to this idea, appealing to international rules. Second: he had attempted to change the scoring, so that more runners would be included (as is done with the Vig Scrimmage 1 mile event). Ray rejected this change as well, arguing that the method of scoring 1 through 7 only has always been the rule. Third: Jeff was unsuccessful in arguing that collegiate runners on ANY varsity running team be ineligible for team scoring. Ray insisted that only cross-country runners be considered ineligible – that it would be too difficult to police. However, Jeff was successful in getting consistent language on this point for the website and entry form. The current practice of allowing 30 minutes only for appeals will also be preserved, despite the failure of this system to catch all ineligible runners last year. Ray felt that the team captains should be doing their own policing.
- c) Administrative Issues:** The HVR has received corporation status from the State of Montana, but has yet to hear from the Department of Revenue. Once Steve is able to get an employer identification/tax id number, he will be able to open a new checking account. Michele wondered if we already have an existing tax id number from the old Helena Road and Track Club that went along with the bank account at Wells Fargo. The group agreed that it would be better to start fresh. Steve and Michele will shop around at various financial institutions to try to get the best deal. They will also be talking to vig members associated with various banks and credit unions. Pat reported that Mike Fanning has offered to help out with the IRS 501c3 application.
- d) Financial Policy:** Discussion turned to adopting a good financial policy. Mike Jacobson brought up the concept of sending purchase orders when pre-paid expenses get too big for a race director to handle. Steve suggested we try to look at Bozeman's Big Sky Wind Drinker's financial policies and Michele said she might get a peek at Butte's Piss and Moan's policies.
- e) RRCA Membership:** Steve discussed the roster and the amount paid per household (couples count as 1 household, etc.) and at this point the cost is \$4.60 per household. The cost for race directors and officers coverage is \$175. Currently, we have 48 households signed up. The RRCA membership would cover the running club's races, training runs and social events for the calendar year. Last year, the cost was \$400 which is very affordable for all of the insurance coverage we get.
- f) Cliff & Balance Bars:** Marta volunteered to spearhead an effort to collect wrappers as there is a promotion by the company to offer \$0.02 per recycled wrapper.
- g) Fleet Feet:** Michele volunteered to contact Fleet Feet regarding running shoe recycling.
- h) Railway 8K:** Alan voiced the concerns of Alan Peura regarding the race taking place on Saturday and proposed the idea of doing the fundraiser without doing the actual event. Pat spoke in favor of narrowing the slate of races in Helena. Michele mentioned the idea of shifting the sponsorship to the Mt. Helena Classic and swapping the pig roast for a pancake breakfast.
- i) Perfect Timing:** Steve said he would like to sign a contract to again employ this company for the Mt. Helena Classic at the cost of \$600. Mike made a motion, Marta seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- j) Port-a-Potty:** Jeff said the total cost for 5 months would be \$350 (or about \$70 per month). Jeff expressed he would like the club to take over this responsibility. Steve agreed this was a good use of the club's money. Jeff made a motion to for HVR to contract with Littl'e Johns to keep a port-a-potty at the track from the end of track season to the end of October. (The port-a-pottys are already provided for track season.) Pat seconded and the motion carried unanimously. The group agreed that Jeff should still attempt to raise donations from the runners, at the Phase parties and at the track.
- k) Jeff's Tent:** Jeff said it still needs poles and a couple of folks to do a trial set-up. Lori agreed to store the tent in her outbuilding and Steve expressed the need for the tent at Elk Horn.
- l) Flags:** An official team flag would be a nice touch, at some point, to go along with the tent.

V. Adjournment

Steve adjourned the meeting at 8:25 pm.

VI. Addenda

- a) Following the meeting, Pat sent the www.vigilanterunning.org information to Alan Wintersteen, so he could start the process of converting the website.
- b) On February 24, 2009, the HVR board approved the following statement, which Pat presented to the Helena City Commission that night:

Mr. Mayor, and Members of the Commission, my name is Patrick Judge and I am the vice-president of the Helena Vigilante Runners (HVR). While the local running group has existed for many years, it was formally incorporated as HVR just one month and one day ago. The board asked me to present the following short statement:

The Helena Vigilante Runners is grateful for the opportunity to address the commission on the subject of trail surfaces – specifically, “soft vs. paved.” For many, running on softer surfaces such as dirt, bark, or crushed rock is not only aesthetically preferred, but also important in avoiding impact-related injuries.

Helena is extremely fortunate to have a high-quality trail system, and strong support for parks in general. The South Hills and Mount Helena trails are truly outstanding, but they are somewhat seasonally limited, and also quite challenging. Steep inclines come with steep descents, which involve high impact.

HVR is concerned that the availability of local running surfaces that are both “soft” and “flat” has been decreasing in recent years (Legrande Cannon, Spring Meadow Lake, and some formerly dirt roads such as the east end of Broadwater Ave., etc). Such paths are quite valuable to runners looking for low-impact training opportunities. The HVR intentionally schedules its interval workouts at places like Centennial Park, Spring Meadow Lake, and the western end of Legrande for precisely this reason. Carroll College also stages its home Cross-Country meet on the soft Centennial trails, and the Helena School Activities Department has expressed interest in holding High School cross country meets at Centennial Park.

We would like to emphasize that HVR supports non-motorized trails of any kind, and the creation and linking of such trails, even if some of that includes pavement. But where soft trails already exist, and where the city is moving ahead with paving, we would strongly advocate a parallel system that preserves both options (as is commonly done in many other cities). This approach not only accommodates the various preferences, it also offers safety advantages by helping separate higher-speed activities (such as biking or roller-blading) from lower-speed activities such as walking or running. We believe there is sufficient room available at Centennial, Rails-to-Trails, Legrande, and elsewhere to allow for this type of arrangement.

We urge you to take these comments under consideration when planning the improvements to Centennial and other parks. Many of you are runners yourselves, and may relate to these concerns personally. Again, we wish to thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective on this matter.

These minutes were prepared by Lori Heit, and reviewed by Pat Judge.