

**Twin Cities Bicycling Club
Minutes of Board Planning Retreat
December 13th, 2008**

DECEMBER BOARD BUSINESS:

Present: Mary Derks, Patt Seleen, Garry Glubka, Richard Franco, Cindy Hanson, Lisa Austin, Jack Uttermark, Laurie Holm

Absent: Kelly Hazel

Also present: Doug Nelson, Pete Hawkins, Tony Stifter, Paul Arsenault

MINUTES: The minutes for November 4th, 2008 were approved with minor changes.

IRS CHANGES: Paul Arsenault brought to the club's attention several issues. In the future, the 990 tax form will ask for additional information. The information includes accounting and oversight issues. Over the next few years, the maximum gross receipts to file the 990EZ will drop to \$200,000. All information provided on the 990 or 990EZ is publically available. TCBC will electronically file the 990EZ this year.

Changes in the club mission need to be filed with the IRS. Possible tax impacts of the new sponsorship program and the ongoing merchandise programs were also discussed. If TCBC exceeds \$25,000 in contributions, TCBC will need to file with the state of Minnesota. Thus far, TCBC has not needed to file with the state. Literature on tax form changes and laws governing charitable organizations was provided and is being filed with TCBC's other documents.

SNTC: (SNTC is the State Nonmotorized Transportation Committee, formerly known as MNTAC). Two applications were received for the bike club representative position.

WOW: The committee met a few weeks ago. They are discussing involving other organizations (specifically the Bike Alliance of Minnesota) in the WOW event, including sponsoring rest stops and providing LAB courses. They are also discussing how to increase event revenues to allow for a contribution to the Bike Alliance. The board approved cohosting the LAB rally with the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota and increasing the ride fees to provide revenue for our new cohost.

ANNUAL BOARD RETREAT:

Present: Mary Derks, Patt Seleen, Garry Glubka, Richard Franco, Cindy Hanson, Lisa Austin, Jack Uttermark, Laurie Holm

Absent: Kelly Hazel

Also present: Pete Hawkins, Tony Stifter

BRAINSTORMING:

All participants floated visions of what the club should look like in 3-5 years in six key areas:

Leadership/Recognition

Safety

Outreach/Laws/Advocacy/Education

Communications/Promotion

Infrastructure

Memberships/Member Retention

The brainstormed ideas were:

LEADERSHIP/RECOGNITION

- Get to a “How can I help” place with volunteers
- Competent leaders with a passion for TCBC
- Adequate number of leaders to support the mission/vision of the club
- There is definitely a “clique” perception – especially on A/B rides. How to mitigate?
- Paid support staff (website, database, mileage tracking)
- Remain a volunteer organization with no paid staff
- Vision: Quality, not quantity
- Operate within our resource (human) means
- Mentor members for leadership roles
- New stream of volunteers coming in to lend continuity/new blood and avoid burn out
- Have 75% of club members in the volunteer database
- Have a great volunteer program in action (awards? Time tracking?)
- Adequate recognition to all volunteers
- Balanced workload amongst volunteer base

SAFETY

- Work with other organizations to analyze bike safety issues and increase safety in the larger bike community
- Obey rules of road
- More LCI trained ride leaders
- Program to promote safety (web, newsletters)
- Improve bike safety in schools and for young riders
- A portion of LCI training incorporated into ride leader training
- Common biking abilities (i.e. at least minimum training in bike skills)
- Would like to see monthly or weekly rides for new members to acquaint them with other rides and promote good group riding techniques
- Safety rules/state laws/group riding information sent to new riders
- More frequent bike maintenance offerings

- Look to other resources to improve our club's safety record – info before actions or panic
- Fewer accidents
- Some sort of protocol for addressing accidents from a PR/membership perspective?
- Empowering leaders to deal with unsafe riders (maybe also training?)
- Maybe some pass/fail standard for ride leaders?
- Improve image of club for obeying traffic laws
- Train all leaders in Road I (or equivalent) safety
- Measurement or metric on club safety (incidents/miles)
- Provide resources for the rehabilitation of injured riders (not medical, but ways to get them back on the bike and give support)
- 10% of ride leaders should take Road I
- Review/manage info related to safety
- Focus on having safety education material in every TCBC News issue and in every monthly email update
- Safety page on TCBC website
- Zero accidents

OUTREACH/LAWS/ADVOCACY/EDUCATION

- Coordinated efforts to provide info/volunteers in different venues (schools, companies, health fairs)
- Work together with SNTC
- Do more in advocacy
- Have a good relationship with local bike shops (sponsorships), work with bike shops on rides.
- Have a program to support bike programs and money to donate to organizations and programs (Lansing Bike Club has a great program).
- Close alliance with Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota starting now
- Significant financial and membership support of Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota
- Would like to see TCBC become a more prominent force in the development of a more bike friendly city of Minneapolis/St. Paul
- Work with appropriate organizations to improve driver education about cyclists
- Promote bike riding to general public – improve image of safe and respectful riding. How can TCBC do this better?
- Community education on laws of cycling for cyclists and motorists
- Positive image in cycling and non-cycling community
- Build a strong LAB instruction program
- Conduct more group riding skills and base it on LCI curriculum
- Continue to minimize political advocacy (example – Legacy amendment)

COMMUNICATIONS/PROMOTION

- Use website and internet based social networking technology (i.e. Facebook, Youtube) for promotion and education
- Have a Facebook page and a blog. And a Twitter feed.
- 60% of members will communicate through, subscribe to, or at least reference the message boards
- Platform of e-communication tools to reach members in a timely fashion
- Innovative ways to communicate with membership (all members)
- Main ride schedule is online
- Newsletter is printed and sent monthly and is a partnership with other MN bike groups (i.e. park & trails with MN Trails Magazine, LAB partners with Bicycling Magazine)
- Publish articles on bicycling in publications for other organizations
- 50% of the newsletter subscriptions will be delivered electronically
- Totally electronic schedule by 2010

- Either sharpen the focus of the TCBC News on safety, bike issues, and bike stories or eliminate it by 2011
- Updated logo and style guide
- TCBC recognition as a safe and fun club to bike ride? How to promote?
- Keep up the good work of communicating with members

INFRASTRUCTURE

- All systems (databases) are linked, backed up, supported, and have multiple trained users (scheduling, membership, mileage, volunteer, leader)
- Backups exist for all functions and are adequately trained
- Invest in effective systems to reduce workload of volunteers
- Database, schedule, all computer type stuff connected and ease of use
- Systems on common platform, up to date
- Rider mileage easier to enter into the system and track
- Leaders can enter mileage into the system?
- Develop a vision for moving forward with IT improvements and where we would like to be in 5 years
- Spend more of our revenue and pipe profits back into the community
- All volunteer positions have trained backup and succession plan
- Organization is nimble enough to comply with changes in financial reporting requirements
- Publication of annual financials either online or in newsletter
- Continued work to reduce amount of time required by key volunteers
- Automation of some functions that are currently done by volunteers
- Work towards 100% ride sheet submission electronically
- Work towards the reduction of the number of printed newsletters by 50% over the next three years
- Membership totally online by 2010
- Members update their own information by 2010
- Automatic email renewal notices by 2010
- Paperless membership forms, insurance waivers, registration
- Proxy voting for annual meetings
- Documented policies and procedures
- Organize/formalize volunteer core
- Volunteer issues if club continues to enlarge – can it be run with just volunteers?

MEMBERSHIP/MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

- Have programming to attract younger riders (20's – 30's). Support or promote Ghost Bike, MplsBikeLove.com (not a dating site – this is info), etc.
- Continue to have good balance and variety of A, A/B, B, and C rides
- Adequate number of rides at all levels
- TCBC should have 25% (or at least more) membership under 40 years old
- 95% of members attend a club event their first year of membership
- All first year members should fill out a club survey at the end of their first year
- Keep diversity of rides
- Keep cost low
- Steady growth (vs rapid, declining, etc.)
- Provide good rides and maps
- Work with other bike clubs/schools/youth organizations to promote and increase the number of young riders
- Better offerings/promotion of family related rides (especially at Watermelon ride)
- Work to improve the public perception of TCBC (and some internal perceptions)

- Greater variety of riders. More recruitment of younger riders (under 30?)
- More diversity of membership (via outreach?)
- Reaching out to new/beginning riders
- Mentoring?
- Is it best to maintain or do we need to grow membership?
- 60% of club members should have ridden a ride at the end of each year
- Have a ride like an A/B (ride leader can ride anywhere) but average speed can be slower. Maybe an ABC ride?

We broke into small groups to evaluate and consolidate the brainstormed ideas.

LEADERSHIP/RECOGNITION (*Jack, Garry, Laurie*)

1. Volunteer Issues
 - a. Increasing number of volunteers
 - b. Volunteer database (establish and maintain)
 - c. Recognition (awards/time tracking)
2. Benefits and detriments of paid staff
3. Leadership issues
 - a. Keep high quality leaders (competent/with passion)
 - b. Reducing “clique” perception
 - c. Having adequate number of leaders to support mission/vision
 - d. Mentoring future leaders

SAFETY (*Jack, Garry, Laurie*)

1. Training (LCI)
2. Statistical analysis of accidents
 - a. Measure number of accidents per miles ridden
 - b. Compare statistics with other groups
3. Education of members
 - a. Safety information with new member packets
 - b. Safety rides
 - c. More safety information on website and in newsletter
 - d. Bike maintenance
4. Education of community
5. Improve image of club for obeying traffic laws
6. Stop rumor mill about accidents
7. Ride leader evaluation and empowerment
8. Rehabilitation resources

OUTREACH/LAWS/ADVOCACY/EDUCATION (*Lisa, Tony*)

1. Developing educational programming (kids, community outreach, LCI) but avoiding duplication of educational efforts
2. Improving the image of bicyclists in the community overall (helping them become better riders, increasing the amount of bicycling within the community). HBC did a community education class on bicycling and is looking for help to replicate this in other communities.
3. Support other organizations (participation, financial aid, etc.)

COMMUNICATIONS/PROMOTION (*Lisa, Tony*)

1. Develop 5 year plan for newsletter – determine the future of the printed newsletter, the utilization of the newsletter content in other ways, etc.

2. Taking advantage of Internet based technology to communicate (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, PDA friendly content, etc.)
3. Logo development and consistency

INFRASTRUCTURE *(Mary, Cindy, Richard)*

1. Systems
 - a. Up to date
 - b. Backed up
 - c. Efficient
 - d. Reduce workload
2. 100% Online
 - a. Membership forms
 - b. Registration for rides
 - c. Waivers
 - d. Ride schedule?
 - e. Ride sheets?
3. Documented Policies and Procedures
 - a. Backups

MEMBERSHIP/MEMBER RETENTION *(Mary, Cindy, Richard)*

1. Rider diversity
 - a. Younger members
 - b. General diversity
 - c. New riders
 - d. Families
 - e. Members of other organizations (schools)
2. Planful growth
3. Ride offerings
 - a. Number of rides
 - b. Variety
 - c. Revisit levels
4. Robust mentoring program
5. Cost of membership (keep low)
6. Member satisfaction
 - a. Implement membership survey
 - b. Increase member participation on rides
 - c. What does membership mean to people?

OPEN ISSUES

SAFETY: We will discuss safety at the January board meeting along with reviewing the results of the safety survey.

MESSAGE BOARDS: The message boards will be discussed at the January meeting as well. Various possibilities will be presented and reviewed. Jack will evaluate message boards and develop a list of topics to consider and forward to the board prior to the meeting.

JANUARY BOARD MEETING: The next board meeting will start at 6:30. Future meetings may begin earlier through the rest of winter. The venue for the January and February meetings has not yet been determined.

RIDE LEADER TRAINING: New Ride Leader Training has been scheduled for April 4th. Leader Training Review has been scheduled for the evening of April 6th. An LCI group riding course will be offered after the new leader training on April 4th.

WOW: The WOW committee has determined a ride cap of 350 riders.

ROUNDBABOUTS: Roundabouts are increasing in usage and can be problematic for bicyclists. Roundabouts are planned for two areas that have a lot of bicyclist traffic – Minnesota 5 in Lake Elmo and the intersection of Mahtomedi Avenue and Stillwater Road in Mahtomedi. Bicyclists should attend the public meetings or contact the project managers for the planned projects.

MAP: TCBC signed a contract with MAP to evaluate our systems. The systems committee will start meeting with our MAP coordinator (Kathy Ulman) after the first of the year.

TOUR DIRECTORS CONVENTION: Mary Derks reviewed her experiences at the Tour Directors convention. Some of the information was elementary, but she did get a lot of good information. She has written a summary of the information learned. The validity of electronic event waivers have not yet been tested in a court of law. Our insurance company does feel online waivers are valid. We will look into including online waivers with online membership and membership renewal. We will continue to do paper waivers for events.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Holm