

Denver Group Council Minutes
Jan 14, 2015

In Attendance: Dave Hutchison, Grover Cleveland, Brian LeBlanc, Sandy McRae, Alex Petre, Kevin Schaal, Valerie Walker, Roger Wendell; **Absent:** Maddie Philley

Guests: Scott Robson, John Aldag, Linda Lawson, Jeff Flax

1. **Call to Order:** Dave called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.
2. **Chair's Comments:**
 - Dave reported that Linda DuPuis resigned from council for personal reasons.
 - Council will request that the DG social sections - RMOTHGC, Trail Blazers and Summit Seekers - sponsor a day devoted to doing trail work. A suggestion was made that it would be a good idea to best match the section's interests with a pertinent trail that was scheduled for work on their day.
 - In last month's minutes, it was mentioned that Linda DuPuis and Brian LeBlanc would be the primary liaisons between DGC and the Trail Work Program. With Linda's resignation, Grover will be her replacement.
 - DG conservation efforts, such as trail work days, should be coordinated with the State Conservation Department, specifically Heather in Estes Park and Julie in Salida since they are aware of non-CMC agencies also doing trail work. A reminder will go out to Jerry Helmke and Fred Griest to plan with State before scheduling trail work days.
 - It was pointed out that the American Alpine Club also sponsors trail work days.
3. **Approval of December Minutes:** The December minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.
4. **Financial Report:** A significant change to the format of the monthly budget report was made to highlight pertinent information more concisely.
 - The November 2014 budget is attached. Alex's notes included the following bullet points:
 - a) Schools - There was ~\$3100 in BKPS, HAMS and Tech School revenue that was budgeted for November but did not occur and/or is deferred. This caused the large variance.
 - b) Sections - Photography, Trail Blazers and OTHG revenues were collectively ~\$1,000 lower than budgeted.
 - c) Sections - there was a large variance in Section expenses and Alex is researching reasons why. He will report back next month on his findings.
 - d) G&A - Membership dues revenue was worse than budget by ~\$1,200 for November but is flat YTD.
 - e) G&A - Annual dinner expenses were less than budget for November but this should even out in December when the DGC subsidy and all expenses are accounted for.
 - Other comments were:
 - a) School revenue is realized at the beginning of a school session, but expenses hit the budget later.
 - b) New gear purchases are expenses that haven't generated school tuition revenue at the time the expenses are made.
 - c) A new line item called 'deferred revenue' may be added to the budget to show the opportunity for recovering these expenses.
5. **Approval of New Backpacking School Director:** John Aldag applied for the position of Backpacking School Director, taking the place of the outgoing director, Steve Billig. John made a comprehensive presentation of his proposal to change BKPS School, as follows:

The school would focus on students interested in gaining skills for 3-season, warmer weather backpacking instead of the traditional 4-season backpacking skill development offered in previous years. The market for the 3-season curriculum is likely much larger than for the 4-season curriculum and 40-60 students are anticipated to enroll. In the past, with the focus on 4-season backpacking, the attrition rate has been as high as 50%. Students from previous years commented that camping in the snow involves commitments and costs that maybe aren't anticipated when they enroll in the class during summer. Revamping BKPS supports the goal of maintaining or increasing enrollment and improving the graduation rate.

Accompanying the change in the school's focus will be the elimination of classes that teach snow skills. However other skills not previously taught would be added, such as reducing pack weight, electronic navigation (GPS, map creation software, etc.), trip planning and group dynamics. Overall, the number of required classes can likely be reduced by 2.

In summary, the curriculum for the core school will be:

- Six classroom sessions.
- A day trip with a focus on testing gear and camp craft.
- A one night trip with a focus on navigation.
- A one night trip with a focus on wilderness first aid, survival and emergency management.
- A multi-night trip with a focus only on enjoying the backcountry experience

Following John's presentation, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously passed approving John as the new director for the Backpacking School. John's complete report is attached to these minutes.

6. **Ratification of new Denver Safety & Leadership Members:** Linda Lawson reported that DS&L is recommending that Bob Collins, Brad Cotton, Nancy Stevenson and Council member Brian LeBlanc be ratified as new DS&L Committee members. Following a brief discussion, Council unanimously approved the selection of the four new members with Brian abstaining from the vote. Descriptions of each candidate as provided by Linda are copied below.

Bob Collins: RMOTH leader. Has taken WFA, WTS, TLS; enrolled in AIARE L1 February 2015. Lead about 25 trips in 2013/2014. Was Treasurer of DGC 2011/2012. Profession: Attorney

Brad Cotton: New leader. Profession: Flight Instructor United Airlines. Has taken WFA, WTS Waived, Knot School Instructor, TLS. Other experience: 7 Years as Boy Scout Trip Leader.

Nancy Stevenson: Profession: Nurse. New Leader. WFA, WTS, BMS, TLS. Member since 1988. Competed in international triathlons. Climbed all Colorado's 14ers, now working on Centennials. Has climbed Rainier & Grand Teton. Taught a variety of nursing, pharmacology & Red Cross Classes

Brian LeBlanc: Climbing Leader, New Member of DGC. His bio was included as part of DGC Candidate Election. Profession: IT Professional

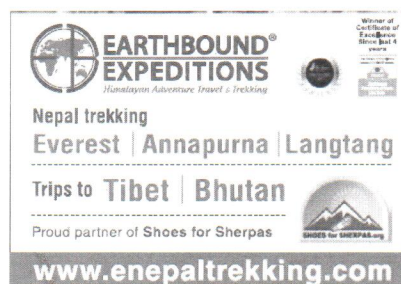
7. **Website Migration:** DG's effort over the past number of months has been to reinvigorate the Denver Group website, www.hikingdenver.net. The urgency of improving the website was amplified

when two system crashes happened, both occurring on weekends. Other issues needing resolution have been identified, such as the limitations of updating themes in Word Press, the high amount of content currently stored on www.hikingdenver.net, cost, and the number of people who would be granted access. Jeff Flax received a quote from Craig Campbell for \$1500 to make changes to www.hikingdenver.net. Superimposed on all this is State CMC's initiative to bring all groups' websites together under the umbrella of the CMC.org website. DG's estimated cost to migrate our website to the CMC.org website is \$5000. Council took the stance that DG needs to be supportive of the State initiative and help lead the effort to migrate all groups' websites to CMC.org. To that end, Brian moved that "DGC approves up to \$5000 to migrate hiking Denver.net to cmc.org website contingent upon a full statement of work deliverables and the corresponding time table from CMC". The motion was seconded and unanimously passed. Funds from Denver Group's reserves will be used to pay for this expense.

8. **Annual Dinner:** Attendance at November's Annual Dinner was approximately 180 people, but not many of them were younger members. This trend is typical of past dinners, too. The question was raised if Council should consider a different approach to the annual dinner rather than continuing with having a \$40 per person formal sit-down dinner. A comparison was made between the Annual Dinner and the Backcountry Bash where most people attending the Bash were in their 30's whereas those attending the Dinner were in their 60's. Also mentioned was that DGC's subsidy of the Annual Dinner was \$1735 for the 2014 dinner, up from \$550 for the 2013 dinner. Council agrees that this is a problem needing resolution. A discussion of the issue is planned for the February meeting.

9. **Other Business:**

- Roger, speaking for Andrew Medlyn who was not present, mentioned that Council should encourage trip leaders to commit to leading beginner hikes. Andrew cited statistics showing that 30% of new members don't participate in any activities during their first year of membership. Perhaps offering more A and B rated beginner hikes might yield better new member participation.
- Roger, speaking for Brenda who was not present, suggested that DGC consider absorbing the expense of new member discounts offered to new Denver Group enrollees. Council took no action.
- A DG trip leader who leads many ski trips noted a problem with the way the website has been assigning skill levels to DG members such that a person's skill level is overstated. Therefore a person with an Easy ski rating may mistakenly be listed as a Moderate skier. She asks that this issue be fixed. She also recommends that DGC not consider eliminating skier classification as a criteria for signing up for ski trips similar to the way that hiker classification was eliminated as a criteria for signing up for hikes.
- A recommendation was made that the MHM should not run advertising from Professional Outfitters competing with CMC Adventure Travel trips, thereby possibly reducing the number of member sign-ups up for adventure travel. Such ads have recently been run in the October, December and January issues of MHM. A copy of such an ad is shown below. Council took no action.



- Grover presented an idea that DGC should think about offering trip meeting places in downtown Denver for those living in the downtown area who don't have transportation, thereby providing more access to trips that typically have meeting places in the suburbs. Such a plan might result in greater participation.

10. **February:** The February meeting of DGC is scheduled for Feb 11 at 6:30 PM. Alex will bring snacks.

11. **Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Schaal 2/1/15

Attachments: November 2014 Budget Report, John Aldag's Statement as Candidate for Director of Backpacking School including his 2015 Budget Estimate, Annual Dinner Revenue and Expenses.

CMC Denver Group Financial Review
November 2014

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reverse*

	Actual November 2014/2015	Budget November 2014/2015	B/(W) November 2014/2015	Actual YTD 2014/2015	Budget YTD 2014/2015	B/(W) YTD 2014/2015
TOTALS SCHOOLS						
Total School Revenue	2,313	5,133	(2,821)	11,084	13,499	(2,416)
Total Expense	(1,354)	(1,971)	617	(9,414)	(4,032)	(5,382)
Total Room Charge	(1,325)	(1,450)	125	(4,175)	(3,890)	(285)
Total School Net Income	(367)	1,712	(2,079)	(2,506)	5,577	(8,083)
TOTAL SECTIONS						
Total Revenue	610	1,675	(1,065)	1,600	2,380	(780)
Total Expense	(1,715)	(326)	(1,389)	(1,791)	(512)	(1,279)
Total Room charges	(275)	(400)	125	(350)	(400)	50
Total Section Net Income	(1,380)	949	(2,329)	(541)	1,469	(2,009)
TOTAL G&A						
REVENUE	10,966	12,576	(1,610)	17,269	19,313	(2,044)
EXPENSES	(13,838)	(17,633)	3,795	(20,827)	(24,882)	4,055
ROOM CHARGES	(150)	(200)	50	(300)	(275)	(25)
G&A Net Income	(3,022)	(5,257)	2,235	(3,858)	(5,844)	1,986
GRAND TOTAL REVENUE	13,888	19,384	(5,496)	29,952	35,192	(5,240)
GRAND TOTAL EXPENSE	(16,908)	(19,930)	3,022	(32,032)	(29,426)	(2,607)
GRAND TOTAL ROOM CHARGE	(1,750)	(2,050)	300	(4,825)	(4,565)	(260)
GRAND TOTAL NET INCOME	(4,770)	(2,596)	(2,174)	(6,905)	1,202	(8,106)

- 1) Schools - There was ~\$3100 in BKPS, HAMS and Tech School revenue that was budgeted for November but did not occur and/or is deferred. This caused the large variance in school revenue.
- 2) Sections - Photography, Trail Blazers and OTHG revenues were collectively ~\$1,000 lower than budgeted
- 3) Sections - OTHG held their annual picnic in November which was not budgeted until later in the year. This caused the large variance in Section expenses
- 4) G&A - Membership dues revenue was worse than budget by ~\$1,200 for November but is flat YTD
- 5) G&A - Annual dinner expenses were less than budget for November but this should even out in December when the DGC subsidy and all expenses are accounted for.

CMC Denver Group Backpacking School – Statement as Candidate for Director

As a candidate for the position of Director of the CMC Denver Group Backpacking School (BKPS), I offer the following statement of my thoughts about the school and my proposed plans, should I be elected.

It appears to me that, compared to other schools offered by the Colorado Mountain Club, BKPS covers a very broad range of topics. Students can, in principle, enroll in the school as a backcountry novice and graduate with the skills to survive, navigate, camp and thrive in the wilderness in all seasons.

Perhaps because of this, the school appears to me to appeal to students with a broad range of the skills, experience and enthusiasm, from those that just want to learn basic skills for weekend camping to those who are BMS-bound and/or know they want to do more challenging backcountry trips, may already have some of the skills and gear to do so and just want to fill in gaps in their knowledge and skills.

While conceptually appealing, the breadth of topics, training and activities in the BKPS requires a large amount of class and field time over a many months. It seems likely that some students will not recognize the commitment the school requires as they sign up for it. This breadth also places a significant time burden on instructors, requires them to be prepared to teach many topics and demands experience in the outdoors in all seasons.

Mindful of the huge contributions of many past directors and instructors to develop and improve BKPS, if elected to the director's role, I would propose to focus and simplify the school for a more targeted student profile. I would see these changes as trials or experiments which would be undone if they were not successful. I would propose to measure the success of my overall approach by 1) our ability to maintain or increase student enrollment and 2) more importantly, by retention. I would set a goal of graduating 75% of students initially enrolled.

Continuing What Works: I note first what I'd propose to NOT change – at least not significantly. While there is always room for improvements, I'd continue with a number of – in my opinion - highly effective aspects of the school:

- Navigation classroom instruction would continue as currently done except that additional instructors should be more involved. (See **Instructors** below.) Field activities may need to be adjusted based on the trip plans, but should provide the same experience and training as is currently done.

- Survival classroom and field instruction and exercises would continue as currently done, except that additional instructors should be more involved. (See **Instructors** below.)
- Wilderness medical classroom instruction and field exercises should continue largely as currently done, allowing for changes in the field trips.
- Steve Billig's Leadership Development initiative should continue and be expanded, especially given the recent attrition of senior instructors. (See **Instructors** below.)
- Steve's initiative to increase hands-on, active, student-directed learning is beginning to yield effective approaches and should continue. As an example, the trial student-directed gear review rotation in the first class this year appeared to me to be effective and enjoyable for both students and instructors.

Proposed Changes: Many of the changes that I'd propose were suggested by others and have been discussed:

- **Scope of the School and Student Profile:** The most significant change that I would propose would be to shift the focus of the school more towards students who are interested in learning about and/or gaining more experience in 3-season/warmer weather backpacking. I suspect this 'market' of students is much larger than, e.g. the group bound for BMS. While those with more experience would certainly be welcomed to enroll in the school, targeting to larger market of warmer weather backpackers could support the goal of maintaining or increasing enrollment.

Comments from students to me have indicated to me that camping in the snow involves commitments and costs that some students do not anticipate as they enroll in the class during the warmth of summer. There is much that can be learned in warmer weather camping that will provide a foundation for those interested in future camping in the snow. A BKPS fall outing will still let students test their enthusiasm for colder weather camping and whether they want to invest in the gear required for camping on the snow.

- **Outings:** The practical results of this change will be to remove classes and outings involving snow travel skills and camping in the snow. Some coordination with and accommodation of BMS may be needed but I believe there are several options for providing snow travel skills training to those students who are BMS-bound, without involving students who are interested only in 3-season backpacking. Accomplishing this coordination with BMS will be my responsibility.

Especially given the shift in focus to less experienced students, I'd propose to add a day trip as the first outing, early in the school. On this trip, students would pack and set up

camp as if they were staying the night. It will give them the opportunity to test and gain experience with their tent, food, water, essentials, etc. before their first overnight experience. This trip will allow more time to teach important camp craft skills such as water purification, use of a stove, cooking, hanging a bear bag line, knots, etc.

I believe that a final multi-day trip – focused only on practicing recently learned skills - could be the cap stone of the school, cement the previous instruction and expose students to the enjoyment and challenges of multiple days in the backcountry and trail hiking.

In summary, I'd propose the following outings for the core school:

- A day trip with a focus on testing gear and camp craft
 - A one night trip with a focus on navigation
 - A one night trip with a focus on wilderness first aid, survival and emergency management
 - A multi-night trip with a focus only on enjoying the backcountry experience
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- **Classes:** With the school focused more on 3-season outings, the number of required classes and the risk of student attrition due to the number of classes in general and adverse weather conditions on the nights of the classes will be reduced. Even with the introduction of additional topics (See **Curriculum Additions** below.), I believe that the number of classes could be reduced by at least 2.
 - **Curriculum Additions:** While scaling back the overall scope of the school, I feel that students would benefit from a brief classroom and field exposure to some topics not routinely taught. These include reducing pack weight, electronic navigation (GPS, map creation software, etc.), trip planning and group dynamics. These topics could be introduced in a classroom setting and most could be added into current field exercises.

In summary, with these changes, the span of time requiring commitments from students and instructors would be much shorter, the school will be more focused and somewhat more intense. Because the typical student will be less experienced, it will let less experienced instructors play a larger role. I'd envision the school beginning in early August and finishing in early October.

Instructors: I am mindful of the significant time commitments made by BKPS instructors. I'd strive to optimize this time and make it challenging and fun.

Ideally, a teacher of any subject is knowledgeable at a level significantly higher than the level at which they teach. In addition, student safety and preparation for future years requires that we continue to develop our collective instructor expertise and set some expectations:

- All instructors should be CMC leaders before beginning their third year as an instructor.
- I'd propose to continue the leadership development program initial by Steve Billing and to gradually expand it to include all instructors via more instructor development sessions during classes. We can all learn from each other and from others.
- I'd propose that newer instructors should be assigned at least some small – but growing - class instruction roles. The 'regulars' will not be around forever and the best way to learn is to teach.
- I'd encourage all instructors to teach and participate outside their 'comfort zone'. All instructors should be reasonably skilled in all aspects of the school and the best way to learn is to teach.

Committees: The use of committees to provide a focus on important topics and activities within the school was an effective innovation. The director cannot manage all aspect of even a scaled-back school without this assistance. If elected, I would however, simplify and condense the committee structure. I would recruit or assign committee chairs but allow/ask them to recruit assistance from the other instructors as needed.

Style: I am also very aware of the effort and time commitments required of the director's role especially as I have a tendency to perfectionism. I'll not have the time or energy to implement my version of 'perfection' of the school, even if I could figure out what it was. My goal will be to implement an effective – not perfect – program while optimizing my commitment of time and that of all of instructors:

- I'll rely heavily on the committee chairs to take full responsibility for their areas, recruiting help from other instructors as needed.
- I'll try to use consensus building for important topics where coordination and buy-in are most important. I'll try to communicate ideas, issues, etc. for comment and will consider all suggestions - but I may not spend a lot of time 'consensus building' around more minor topics. As a result, my style may feel at times somewhat 'tops-down' Again, my intent will be to optimize our collective time commitments to the school.

Credentials: I have graduated from the following CMC schools: WTS, WCS, BKPS, WFA (2), Avalanche Awareness, AIARE Level I, ASC, BRCS and BMS. I have instructed in the following CMC schools: WTS, WCS, BKPS, WFA and ASC. I have directed WCS. My wilderness experience outside of the CMC includes leading multiple multi-day trips into the Boundary Water Canoe

Area Wilderness, 3 Sierra Club led multi-day trail repair trips, hiking ~100 miles of the Colorado Trail, hiking the 211 mile John Muir Trail and the summiting of Mt. Rainer.

I'm open to comments on all of the above. I look forward to working with all of you if elected.

John Aldag

November 29, 2014

BKPS Budget 2015

	INCOME				\$5,000.00
50	Denver Group Students		\$100.00		
	Other Group Students		\$110.00		
	Total Income				

25	Instructors				
8	New Instructors				

	EXPENSES				\$4,915.00
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CMC Lecture Rooms

Rental fee for Foss	\$	200.00			
Rental fee for a,b,c,d	\$	125.00			

Room Fees

	Foss	Conference		
1 Class 6/24 CR a,b,c,d		\$500.00		
2 Class 7/8 CR b,c,d		\$375.00		
3 Class 7/22 CR b,c,d		\$375.00		
4 Class 8/5 CR b,c,d		\$375.00		
5 Class 8/19 CR b,c,d		\$375.00		
6 Class 9/2 CR b,c,d		\$250.00		
New Instructors Orientation		\$125.00		
All Instructors Meeting		\$125.00		
Total Room Fees		\$2,500.00		\$2,500.00

Books

Field Manual	75	\$15.00	\$1,125.00	
New Instructor Books	10	\$15.00	\$150.00	
Shipping			\$50.00	
			\$1,325.00	\$1,325.00

Map

Maps in stock	0			
Maps Needed	50	\$1.60	\$80.00	
Shipping/Handling			\$0.00	
			\$80.00	\$80.00

Miscellaneous

Name Tags, etc.	1	\$50.00	\$50.00	
Knot Tying Cord	0	\$50.00	\$0.00	
Emergency Tarps	50	\$7.70	\$385.00	
Wag Bags	50	\$3.50	\$175.00	
			\$610.00	\$610.00
Graduation Party materials			\$100.00	\$100.00
Instructor Gifts	25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Meeting Refreshments			\$300.00	\$300.00

Margin					\$85.00
Percent Returned					1.70%

2014 DG Annual Dinner

ACTUAL

REVENUE

Pre-registration (\$180 with comps @ \$38)	6,004.00
On-site registration (6)	228.00
Liquor Income	619.00
CMC Reimbursement for staff (Robson and Porter)	<u>76.00</u>
Total Revenue	6,927.00

EXPENSES

Meeting Space	2,760.00
AV Tech (2 @ 97.50)	incl in facilities costs
Microphones	incl in facilities costs
Screens	incl in facilities costs
Projectors	incl in facilities costs
Misc.	incl in facilities costs
Food with 10% Service Charge (182 attendees); 19.82+10%=21.80	3,914.78
40 year and Comps (17 attendees); 19.82+10%=21.80	incl
Bartenders, etc.	incl
Speaker (includes one night hotel room)	679.50
Misc. (estimated) - SEE BELOW	701.08
Drink tickets for leaders (74 at \$4.00)	in liq costs
Liquor License	25.00
Refund to VOY	38.00
Liquor	<u>544.01</u>

EXPENSES

8,662.37

NET LOSS BEFORE DGC SUBSIDY

-\$1,735.37

MISC. COSTS

myEmma (approximate)	55.00
Printing included with supplies	61.00
Supplies and frames for certificates	285.08
Glassware for bar	incl in food costs
Credit card fee (for 180 at \$1.25)	225.00
Frames for certificates	include with supplies
CMC Supplies (approximate)	<u>75.00</u>

Misc. Subtotal

701.08