

MINUTES FROM THE 2020 SKÅL INTERNATIONAL USA WINTER MEETING

Upon notice duly given, Skål International USA, a professional organization of tourism leaders around the world, held the 2020 Skål Winter Executive Committee meeting at The Higgins Hotel on Friday, January 24th, 2020.

The following Committee Members were present at this meeting:

Dave Ryan—President	Holly Powers—International Skål Councillor
Richard Scinta—VP of Administration	Art Allis—VP of Finance
Jim Dwyer—VP of Membership	Morgan Maravich—Director of Membership
JoAnne Ford—Auditor	Celeste Lupercio—Director of Membership
Tom Moulton—VP Communications & PR	JoAnne Ford – Skål USA Auditor
Robert Lowell – Skål USA Deputy Auditor	

Call to Order

President Dave Ryan called the meeting to order, VP of Administration Richard Scinta held a roll call. It was determined that a quorum was met.

President's Welcome – Dave Ryan

- Introduction of the 2020 Executive Committee – President Ryan introduced the members of the 2020 Skål USA Executive Committee and also introduced the past Skål presidents in attendance, Stu Barish, Skål International Director Burcin Turkkkan, and Skål Administrator Eric Braendel.

2019 Presidential Review – Past President Lisa Conway

- Conway thanked the EC and the attendees. She noted that she sent out her review last week. Conway reviewed past pitfalls including registration software issues, she encouraged the EC to test out all software and to sign agreements before choosing a software. She said that overall NASC and the World Congress were very successful. SI Hawaii did lose money, however she recommended that a budget going forward to prevent future host clubs from facing that issues. Powers did note that this was the best attended one since the SI New York cruise. Conway thanked SI Miami for their hard work and for pulling it off. She also thanked Moulton for his work with the newsletter, and how crucial it is to communicate consistently with the membership and to update the website. She also emphasized the power of positive stories displayed on social media and cautioned the EC to be stricter with social media posts on the Skål USA Facebook page, and to keep the focus to Skål USA issues, not just international postings. She thanked everyone for their time and hard work and wished them the best of luck.

Approval of the Consent Agenda of Executive Committee 2019 Reports – Richard Scinta

- VP of Administration – Jim Dwyer
- International Skål Councillor – Holly Powers
- VP of Membership – Dave Ryan
- Membership Director – Jim Dwyer
- Membership Director – Richard Scinta
- Director of PR/Communications & Website – Tom Moulton
- Approval of Minutes and Financials – December 9th EC Meeting
- Financial Report – November 20th, 2019

- Motion to approve the Consent Agenda of the EC made by Powers. Seconded by Dwyer. There being no further discussion, there was a call for a vote, all in favor, no opposed, motion passes.

President's Report – Dave Ryan

- Housekeeping
 - Monthly EC Calls – President Ryan encouraged the EC not to get hung up on these calls, to do their due diligence and make the call and leave a message but not to feel pressure to chase down a member who isn't answering their calls.
 - Monthly Webinars for Presidents/Skål USA Reps – President Ryan said he wanted to continue to do monthly webinars to supplement the monthly EC calls, and talked about the importance of a new member webinar. Moulton agreed and stated that having a communication calendar is crucial. Dwyer stated that there needs to be a webinar to show the clubs how to clean up and update their rosters. After some discussion, Turkkan stated that she had a training manual that she can share with them for the webinar. There was some more discussion about membership information and how it is submitted through the Skål International website. Powers noted that there needs to be a conversation about membership information that has just been lost. Turkkan agreed and stated that a lot of it is because the organization was not online until the 90's, and that because the office has moved so many times, some information has just been lost. President Ryan stated that they had a planned demo presentation from Skål International but that it was scrapped with ongoing issues with the new website. Moulton asked Braendel if there was a work around for billing with dues, he answered that there can be but it is extremely difficult as they get their billing data from SI. Braendel also said there needs to be a conversation between Skål USA and SI if SI isn't able to provide them the membership data, and that they should then push back the deadline if that's the case. He said that Skål USA has a liability coming up where they owe for the Euros that they purchased to send the dues to Skål. With that, Powers raised the issue of payment on time for the Club of the Year requirements, after some discussion, Powers motioned to amend the verbiage for 2020 Club of the Year that a club must pay their dues on time, to just that a club must pay their dues by the day that they request all the dues. Seconded by Dwyer. There being no further discussion, there was a call for a vote, all in favor, no opposed, motion passes.
- Goals for 2020
 - Membership Growth & Retention – President Ryan said they are going to continue to do their reporting as they have been. Overall, their main focus will be membership growth and retention. The issues is that they are losing members faster than they are gaining them.
 - Member Engagement & Social Media Participation – Currently their Skål USA Facebook page is the largest platform, and he estimated that 10% of the followers are Skål International, not Skål USA. They need to increase that number to better reflect their actual membership numbers. They need to formalize criteria and overall social media strategy, specifically to use LinkedIn more frequent.
 - Fundraising – Creation of a National Program – President Ryan talked about the ongoing discussion of teaming up with SI Canada for fundraising, noting that a national program would be ideal, he then opened the floor for suggestions. Powers recommended that Skål USA clubs participating in fundraising to use those funds for NASC and World Congress attendance and for membership development, stating that they need to have a clear purpose for the use of the funds. She cautioned that if they can't do it right, it's better not to do it at all. After discussion, the EC decided that they want to keep the fundraising in the US and on their next phone call, they will brainstorm ideas.

- IPW/IMEX Attendance for Recruiting – Powers stated that it was a phenomenal show. One year they were able to set up a table in the lobby outside of registration and how they used that to network and when they walked the floor. She noted that that is how they got the Southwest Florida club up and running.
- *Other Industry Partnerships*
- *Tourism Cares – Approval to Attend – May 13th – 15th at Lake Tahoe*

Financial Report – Arthur Allis

- 2018 End of Year P&L vs. 2019 Budget – After reviewing the numbers for the past five years, Allis stated that they have averaged a 5% decline in membership that peaked in 2017 when they had a 10% decline. He projected a 4% decline in active members, a 10% decline in retired members, 13% decline in life members, no change in the active individual members, and a 3% decline in Young Skål. The bottom line is that they are currently in a break-even situation with a net income of \$700. Going forward, they need to set realistic goals for membership retention and growth and to control their expenses. After discussion by the EC it was determined that they should increase Skål USA dues by 3%, which is a \$2.25 increase – noting that the CPI is 2% and they are raising it by 1% over the CPI in the bylaws. Powers motioned to increase the Skål USA dues for 2021 by \$3.00, seconded by Scinta. There being no further discussion, there was a call for a vote, all in favor, no opposed, Allis abstained, motion passes. The overall dues received were down 2.8%, total income was up 2.8% and expenses were down 18.8%, to summarize Allis said they had a much better year than they anticipated.
- Outstanding Accounts Receivable – Regarding SI Jacksonville, Powers motioned that clubs with outstanding NASC non-attendance fees, the EC will reach out and broker a deal where the outstanding fines are forgiven if they send a delegate for the 2020 NASC. Motioned seconded, floor is open for discussion. After some discussion, it was determined that this should be handled on a club by club basis. Powers amended her motion to only include SI Jacksonville. Seconded by Allis. There being no further discussion, there was a call for a vote, all in favor, no opposed, motion passes.
- 2021 Budget Draft—Going forward, Allis will make that adjustment to the budget and the EC will review it during their next meeting. Allis also noted that he wanted to wait to get the March membership numbers to see if that changes the budget at all. Powers reminded them that the budget needs to be posted 30 days out. Allis recommended going forward that they purchase Euros in the spring.
- Expense Report Procedures and Timeliness—The Auditors recommended a new flow for payment, rather than having a check signed twice that there would be an invoice signed by the VP of Finance and then it is sent to the President, then there would be a direct payment.
- After Allis’s presentation, Dwyer motioned to accept his report, seconded by Powers. There being no further discussion, there was a call for a vote, all in favor, no opposed, motion passes.

International Skål Councilor – Holly Powers

- FVF Update – Powers said going forward they need to combine FVF efforts with club development funds so they can be used for membership development, because the fund is only useful if there are active clubs in place. Currently the SI FVF fund has an estimated half a million Euros. Right now they can’t touch the funds that are already in the FVF fund but that going forward they can use the new funds for membership development.
- ISC Update – The meeting will take place in April in Spain; the focus will be on membership development. Allis motioned to accept her report, seconded by Dwyer. There being no further discussion, there was a call for a vote, all in favor, no opposed, motion passes.

Membership – Jim Dwyer

- Dwyer asked to postpone his presentation until the following day where they can discuss it at length. Ryan agreed and they tabled the membership report and presentation.
- SI New Orleans Presentation – by Stu Barish and Tim Hemphill
 - They noted that there is no cookie-cutter solution for growing membership in each club, but stated that they can't let the SI model stand in the way of what they need to do, nothing that the health of the club is crucial and that subsequent SI compliance is secondary. Their club began hosting a Skål sponsored Industry Update that provided relevant information to individuals across all sectors of the industry. Events like that make their club a resource and desirable for networking. Making their club a forum where industry professionals can have discourse is key – they focused on rebranding and not calling themselves a “club” in attempt to shed the exclusivity perception they had. They then opened the floor up for discussion with the EC. President Ryan asked how smaller clubs bring hotel GM's and larger industry professionals in – they answered with their industry update model. By providing them with talking points and important data, the club becomes an asset to the members and industry at large. If they are having trouble filling tables, the solution is to ask the membership – what are you looking for? And then bridging that gap. The EC thanked them for their time and feedback.

PR & Communications – Tom Moulton

- Strategic Plan for PR & Communications – Moulton stated the importance of increasing the number and diversity of clubs in terms of industry sectors represented. They need to speak with the same message and have a clear plan of action, specifically identifying what baby boomers and millennials want out of Skål. To accomplish this, the EC can minimize the administration in place, they need to make it easier to become a club and give them the tools that they need to launch. When clubs are starting off, or for troubled clubs, they need to be paired with a nearby club to help mentor them – he believes club to club is the easiest way to strengthen and growth their clubs. Clubs need to look at local destination and meeting calendars to see what meetings are coming to them, they need to work with their local CVBs to gain leads and new members. There needs to be clarity and consistency about what content get posted on what platform. There needs to be clear responsibility about who is responsible for monitoring the content that is posted. He proposed that they create a series of short videos that highlight the people of Skål to meet the members of Skål. They need to develop techniques to increase membership engagement online. They need to fix the broken SI links (which will be fixed as soon as the links are available from SI). There needs to be a master events calendar with all club anniversaries on it. Maravich asked about the PR Newswire agreement. Turkkan responded clarifying the terms and agreement. Motion to accept Moulton's report by Scinta, motion seconded. There being no further discussion, there was a call for a vote, all in favor, no opposed, motion passes.

Other Business

- NASC Winnipeg Update – Powers reported that they are working hard to get Mexico to come to NASC and that she has a verbal agreement. The biggest issue is getting to Winnipeg and she recommended that in the next two weeks, everyone needs to look into airfare and the route they need to take to arrive, she recommended the available Delta Air discount. Hagen had reserved a block of rooms for them already and had paid the deposit. There was some discussion about the registration systems and its issues noting that this was consistently a problem, but the priority is NASC and getting all their clubs to attend.
- Skål International Website – Ryan went through some of the website, and showed how to update the personal information, noting that there is no longer a character limit. The profile number is an

automatically generated code and not your membership number. Powers said that you can also update your password. Turkkan said they are aiming to have all the bugs worked out by mid-February. Ryan said if they have any issues that they need to submit a ticket to get it addressed. Turkkan said that there were now going to be weekly officer updates about what is going on, and Ryan said that he wouldn't be doing a membership-wide update since there really is no new information. At length, the EC went through the process to add a member on the website and discussed the form and location issues. Powers recommended that they just keep a good paper trail to rely on in the event of an issue and told clubs not to delay in adding a member while waiting on the website to work out its issues.

- **ISC Meeting and Initiatives – Burcin Turkkan – Turkkan summarized her work for the past three months highlighting the following:**
 - Starting a committee for Skål Asia, adding Skål to Wikipedia, engaging with clubs that are in the “danger” zone, meeting with PR Newswire to negotiate an agreement worth \$10K. Moulton asked if a portion of their SI dues go into the membership fund, Turkkan said that yes this happens with their Skål USA dues, there was more discussion about the funding of the membership fund and how that former line item was removed.
 - She summarized the ISC meeting reviewing the President’s vision for 2020 to grow the membership and to strengthen the clubs. She highlighted the training program between SI and a university in Barcelona for travel industry professionals. She highlighted the efforts of their tradeshow portfolio and mentioned that there is a proposed Skål TV production with India CNBC. For the sponsorships, they are creating an actual committee, where individuals are incentivized to bring sponsorships to Skål. For their twelve free press releases, the first one will highlight the Australian bush fires. There are adjustments being made to the membership business plan, but they voted to approve it as-is. Turkkan also reviewed the incentive plan that will run through 9/10/2020. A member who brings 20 members to Skål will get full registration for the World Congress. A member who brings 15 members to Skål will get 50% discount for registration for the World Congress. A member who brings 12 members to Skål will get their registration cost paid for the World Congress. Turkkan noted that they crunched the numbers or make sure that they aren't losing any money on this. The EC pointed out that a single club could bring in 20 members, have it all run through one person and they could have a free World Congress trip. The ISC reviewed the business plan from 2017-2020 and looked at how successful it was, she presented them with a new plan that the ISC is reviewing and then it will be released to the membership around February. For the Digital Transformation, Turkkan said she didn't get a lot of answers, but that it's not finished and that it needs to be finalized by the end of the month. She told them that the membership has not been happy with the lack of communication and that there needs to be weekly updates to the membership. She said that the resources are in place to finish it with about 68,000 Euros in the budget. Phase II will bring the platform to connect the club databases to SI and have websites created through SI that should be inexpensive. They are also bringing an optional payment platform but that Turkkan hasn't received more details on that. The goal is to make club management and running a club as easy as possible. They reviewed ISC tasks and highlighted a portion of the website that will list a Skål speakers who are interested in speaking/being featured. They will be grouped by industry and will be connected to tradeshows. Their next meeting will be in Spain in April where they will meet with the ISC Councilors. Turkkan has a list with all the upcoming meetings and tradeshows where Skål International will be present and will share it with the EC.
- Moulton talked about starting up the running database of all communications sent out to the membership, having it back on the website. He will follow up with ABA about it.

- President Ryan thanked everyone and will send out Turkkan's membership development plan to the EC. Motion to accept Turkkan's report made by Moulton, seconded by Powers. There being no further discussion, there was a call for a vote, all in favor, no opposed, motion passes.

There being no further discussion, Maravich motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Dwyer. All in favor, no opposed, motion passes and the meeting adjourned.