



# ***Prairie Striders***<sup>TM</sup>

## ***Running Club***

**BROOKINGS, SD EST. 1969**

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Box 504, Brookings, SD 57006

**Tuesday, June 7, 2022**

Noon, Mills Construction, 1311 S. Main Ave., and via Zoom at:

Present: Dave Graves, president; Nancy Scholl, vice president; Jay Larsen, treasurer; Matt Bien, John Blatchford, Randy Hanson, Kati Merkley. Present via Zoom: Kevin Bjerke, Andy Carlson, Rod DeHaven, Michelle Buffalo Knuppe.

1. Approved **April 12 minutes** for posting on website.
2. Update on **Walk to 5K program** — John Blatchford reported that he and Megan Nankivel were at Dakota Nature Park May 3, 5, 10 and 12. The only person to join them was John's wife one time. The program was well promoted on Facebook, radio and newspaper. One suggestion to get a group run off the ground next year would be to partner with a gym, such as Crossfit or bWell.
3. **Update on youth track series in July** — Kati Merkley reported she has a Facebook page ready to release as soon as the registration link and online waiver is ready with Fellowship of Christian Athletes, which is a partner and covering insurance.  
**Run for Fun Brookings will be at 6 p.m.** each Wednesday in July — 6, 13, 20 & 27 — at Brookings High School with a timing board but no individual timing. Free entry and Brookings Health System is providing participation ribbons as well as refreshments.  
**Age groups and events:** Junior kindergarten & kindergarten — 50- and 100-meter dashes; first and second grade — , 50-, 100- and 200-meter dashes; third and fourth grades — 100-, 200- and 400-meter dashes; fifth and sixth grades — 100-, 200-, 400- an 800-meter runs.
4. **Discuss future race management for Brookings Marathon** — Matt Bien reported that after 21 years of working with the marathon and 16 years as director, the responsibilities are wearing on him, especially after this year's race had to be postponed at the last minute due to the wind storm.

He foresees four options:

- 1 — Find a new director to take over after May 2023.
- 2 — Consider turning some operations over to a race management company.
- 3 — Greatly simplify the marathon so it would require fewer volunteers.
- 4 — End the marathon.

In flushing out those options, Bien said:

- 1 — No one on the current board is prepared to take on the responsibility.
- 2 — He was meeting with Greg Koch of 605 Running Co. June 8 to examine the interest and cost of the Sioux Falls firm taking over administrative duties such as ordering shirts and medals and handling communication with entrants. It would still be a Brookings Marathon/Prairie Striders event with volunteer coordination done locally.
- 3 — The marathon now has 300 volunteers on the course and about 50 at marathon headquarters in Pioneer Park. A two-loop course staged mainly on the trails in south Brookings would reduce the need for volunteers.
- 4 — As the third longest continuously run marathon in the nation, no one wants to see that.

Bien asked if there were other options he wasn't seeing. One suggestion was hiring an administrative assistant to handle some of the duties. The challenge would be finding someone interested in doing it.

Bien will report back to the group at the July meeting.

5. **Discuss updating the Prairie Striders logo** — Nancy Scholl brought this to the group after getting feedback from her daughter, who is a young adult runner. There was no consensus to change it.
6. **Discuss purchasing an assisted race chair** -[The Blade Racer – Hoyt Running Chairs](#) — Jay Larsen said he was approached by a club member asking if the group had an interest in buying such a chair. On a unanimous voice vote, it requested that Jay review options and present information at the July meeting.  
While the deluxe option is about \$5,000, Bien noted that there is a basic unit available for \$2,600. While it isn't as collapsible, it could be stored at the club's storage unit and would meet the needs.

### **Miscellaneous**

1. **Newsletter update** — Dave Graves reported he has most of the copy collected and should be ready to send it to Allegra soon for design of the electronic newsletter.
2. **Next Sports Show appearance** — Derrick Powers, director of the Longest Day 10K, will be asked to schedule an appearance on the local radio show.

### **Race director reports**

- **Arbor Day 5K** — April 29 — John Blatchford reported 79 finishers, one less than last year. The event went well with good help from the Outdoor Adventure Center and City of Brookings Parks and Recreation Department. Showers the night before may have scared off some potential participants.

- **Brookings Marathon** weekend May 13-14 — Matt Bien reported about one-third asked to have their race bag mailed to them (at a total cost of about \$2,500 to the marathon) with the remainder rolling their registration into the new date — Oct. 22. Registration opened June 1.

- **Longest Day 10K** — June 18 — Derrick Powers communicated previously that a two-loop course will be run in Dakota Nature Park to avoid construction on 20<sup>th</sup> Street South.

- **Beef and Eggs 5K** — July 9 — Kevin Bjerke reported no major changes are planned. The race will use the Prairie Striders timing system, which will save the race money. Volunteers are need. Contact him at 701-361-9782 or [kevinbjerke@gmail.com](mailto:kevinbjerke@gmail.com).

***Next meeting – noon July 5 at Mills Construction, 1311 S. Main Ave., with a Zoom option.***