



EAGLECREST BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA

December 05, 2024 at 5:30 PM

Porcupine Lodge Board Room/Zoom Webinar

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://juneau.zoom.us/j/88259484580?pwd=Z0dyTUdKdHh4ZEY0STU0N1M0VnovZz09>

Meeting ID: 882 5948 4580

Passcode: 372236

- A. **ROLL CALL** – Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m. Board members in attendance: Brandon Cullum, Kevin Krein, via Zoom, Mike Satre, Norton Gregory, Jonathan Dale. Hannah Sively joined the meeting in person at 5:32 p.m.
- B. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
Norton moved to amend the agenda to remove approval of the minutes. Jonathan Dale moved to amend the agenda to move committee reports before new business. Motion by Norton to approve the agenda as amended. M/C.
- C. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
- D. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
 - Charlie Herrington: Thanks, yeah, I just want to point out to whoever might be logged on as well. I think I can hear the Thursday night football game in someone's background from time to time. And then also, I was wondering if there is a PDF to the agenda packet that could be shared in the chat so those of us online can follow along the agenda packet link online was just a four page PDF, which I presume is Mr. Duncan's draft report based on what what the content was. I know no minutes or managers reports or committee reports, so it just be nice to follow on. Thanks.
 - Deb Craig: Thanks. So I just wanted to comment on some of the upcoming agenda items, and I apologize I'm not going to be able to stay for the meeting. But my first comment is, I met with Mayor Beth Weldon a couple of weeks ago on matters completely unrelated to this, and the first thing she said to me as I walked in the room was, Deb, if you're going to ask for money, don't so I have a few comments to add, in addition to the written comments I provided to the board on November 19, and I'd like to ask the secretary to please include that letter in the minutes, also just as a point of reference before I make my comments, I formally managed a statewide grant funded program, so I'm fairly familiar with reviewing funding requests, and I have to say that I am troubled by the draft report to the CBJ, that is in the minutes that I read from mr. Duncan, as it's a foundation on which funding decisions may be made, and I hope that the board actually revises it. The document dwells on the loss of senior managers, non competitive wages, lack of maintenance, what sounds like the pipe dream of a gondola, but that gondola was deemed by gold belt to be secure enough in terms of potential revenue that they invested ten million in it. So I think reports to funding entities, even including those that have serious issues, could be solution oriented and focused on cost benefit values. This this report should reflect that Eagle Crest has generated massive community support and progressively increased revenue based on the manner in which the ski area was operated over the last several years. And I know there were issues behind the scenes, but the ski area continued over the last several years to continue to grow its fan base. I believe the report should reflect the positive benefits of maintaining Eagle Crest to the community and our 3000 Ski Area users, as well as community commenting on the financial needs of the area now and in the future, by including funding needs as well as how the area will generate funding beyond CBJ, I'm also going to reiterate that this EBD should consider a seven day ski week, as outlined in my letter, to compensate Ski Area users for the loss of the black bear, as well as engaging in community

fundraising as soon as possible. Lately, we've heard a lot about what Eaglecrest cannot do, but this is a ski area that was built with a can do attitude by a bunch of skiers with a dream. We can keep that dream alive by approaching these issues and our communications with the same can do mindset. And I thank the board again for your service to our community. Thanks for listening to my comments.

E. MANAGERS REPORT

Verbal General Managers Report provided. Please see meeting summary in AI generated summary below.

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. COMMITTEE and Liaison ASSIGNMENTS

- Finance Committee: Chair, Jonathan Dale. Members Kevin Krein, and Brandon Cullum
- Planning Committee: Chair, Norton Greory. Members TJ Mason, and Brandon Cullum
- Human Resource Committee: Chair, Hanna Shivley. Members Kevin Krein, and Norton Gregory
- Nordic Club Liaison: Hannah Shivley

Motion by Hannah to approve the slate of assignments listed above, and to remove the proposed assignment of Eaglecrest Foundation Board liaison to be filled at a later date.

G. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

1. FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS NOV.21 and DEC. 3

H. NEW BUSINESS

1. EAGLECREST FOUNDATION UPDATE
2. DRAFT ASSEMBLY REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - KIRK DUNCAN
3. See summary in AI generated summary below.

I. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- **Rick Harris:** Rick Harris. I've got just a couple of comments. You know, I appreciated number one, the discussion you guys raised on Kirk report, because I was very concerned that this thing was kind of like feeling like a fast train running down the tracks with no control or brakes the I you know, and I've raised this with you before, Mike is what's the role of this board? You're an enterprise board, yet the Assembly passed an ordinance that took away some potential power of the board. Now, Kirk proposal is, is, is essentially undoing the enterprise board. I mean the comments that you guys raised, so it's appropriate, and I think that you need to be stepping up strongly and clearly and making agreements with the city, whether you think the role of this board is and I'm, I'm a little flabbergasted about it. The my other comments are, you know, I think we're missing what we need to do to get skiers on the mountain now we we have issues. I mean, it's great. We got the opening day done and and it's happened before. The focus has been on getting the lower mountain and the beginner runs going. But we don't really see effort. Well, there's effort, but there seems to be a great big hole. How you get from the bottom of a black bear? How the hell you get to the bottom of ptarmigan? Because that's your only option. And, and, you know, we've talked about snow making. Charlie has raised the issue of the snow making on the upper mountain, which I I'm not a snow making expert. I know nothing about it, but, but I understand, in order to really do it, you need to run that log jam pump house. Now, nobody's saying. What does it take to get that fixed so that we can get that part of the mountain running? Because regardless of what happens in black bear, if we don't get snow between bottom of black bear down, you know, you're going to have a hard time. And I just don't see what we're going to do to get skiers on the mountain. And I've raised, I've been the make snow guy that. And again, I said, I don't know anything about it, other than I've ridden, I know what I'm skiing on, and I appreciate that. I think the idea of trying to fix black bear, it's a matter of cash flow, and it's cash flow

\$200,000 or \$500,000 and if I was going to the assembly, I'd go, we really would like to have \$750,000 to fix black bear, but we realize that that's not a very good idea, given the cash flow situation that we have right now, we will go in and do a \$200,000 fix on black bear, and it'll get us through. I mean, it's not a one year deal. We'll get it fixed, and it'll, you know, it'll operate for 235, years. But that's what we need. That's your gap. That's your cash flow gap. Let's deal with that cash flow, and let's figure out how to really get serious, to get to your questions, which were the good questions to get by, you know, a little bit in between and the full monty? Well, I think the full Monty is probably a problem to be asking for. And, and so you guys, before you Kirk gets his report the assembly, because it's going to blow up in everybody's face. And so I'm, you know, I didn't have anything prepared, and I apologize for kind of stumbling through it, but I appreciate you know you're doing it. So the question is, is this an enterprise board? If it is, then make it an enterprise board and have the power to do what you need to do. Your question was right? The Assembly doesn't that there's no ski expertise there, either, there's probably more expertise here. And so that has to be done. I think, look at this cash flow issue, you know? I think Black Bear is just a good example of it. And and really look at, I haven't heard any talk about what it takes to get that upper pump house going. And we need to have somebody sit down and say, you know, we can, we can do it. It's going to take this, but it has to be done because I don't otherwise, I don't see how you're going to get snow on that middle part of the mountain to be able to get skewers up there. So thanks.

- David Odette: yeah, hi. This is David Odette, just to follow up on what Rick said. And in conjunction with the question of not ski industry expertise on this mountain. I've suggested before that you have a committee on operations and maintenance, and that you receive reports on those subjects, and so that the mountain staff is going to produce reports and board can be up on that. You don't have to be experts, but you can know that the inspections were done, things were found, and this is what's coming down the pike. This is what we've done. It's just something that the board could do is have another committee that focuses on operations. Thank you.
- Charlie Herrington: Okay, yeah, thanks, everyone that's sad, quick, really, like the written reports in the past. And I'm wondering if tonight's managers report and departmental reports were all verbal, if they will be sort of composed in a written format for reference later. And then, you know, regarding black bear, you know, \$200,000 fix makes a lot of sense, you know, if, if we've got issues with the motor room format, everyone knows. But if we're looking at a future of Eagle Crest, where money's coming down the road later, with the summer, you know, use the cheaper solution to get the system back up and running. And if it becomes obsolete in 2030 when the gondola is online, it's obsolete, but it's a good investment and shows faith in the pass holders that you guys are doing a lot to run the mountain give them operations. That's that would be my advice. I wondering, tooth is this meaning being recording, if we can watch it later, I was digesting Kirk's report was was challenging at times. And you know, I really appreciated Kevin's comment, which maybe was a question, but you know, we've approached the city for more money before. I know it's hard now, with all the flood, all the other requests coming into the city, but I don't think Kevin's comment was really answered or addressed. We started talking about ski patrol hours, and I couldn't really follow the logic there. So I appreciate you guys following up with Kirk. I think that report, yeah, like Rick saying it's going to make some waves. And Mike said, before the meeting, you replied to a letter I sent to the board. You guys don't have an official stance on it, Kirk support. And I think you know, if you get your hands on it Monday, you'll have some time to hopefully, you know, develop a stance and some responses and maybe engage with them and editing it. Thanks.
- Mariah Thibedeau - Yeah. Thanks, everyone. I accidentally put my hand up earlier. I was late, which I apologize. I'm a graduate student, and it's the last week, well, this week and next week, or the last week, so I wasn't able to make it, and you said you would post the

recording of the meeting. Is that correct? Correct? And where will we find that?

- Casey Kriger: not sure we'll, you know, we don't always answer them directly through through the public participation, but we may, you know, we'll, we'll see where we go. Yes, I worked at Eagle Crest the prior two seasons, and it seems like I'm on the same page with the community and a few of the other members of the meeting. There is communication gap between Eagle Crest, the community and the board, and the one gentleman did suggest the community to help with the maintenance and overall aspects of what's going on at Eagle Crest. I was going to maybe suggest a community liaison, somebody who's not affiliated with CBJ or Eagle Crest, who could be answer to the board or communicate with the board. Maybe some things that people at Eagle Crest or CBJ would not be willing to share with the board because they know they need the money to make it happen. Maybe a third party not involved with any of those entities, would help the board get straighter answers and help with maintenance issues that have failed in the past. That's my suggestion that might help the board. My other question is, is anybody on the board. I'm sorry, I don't know everyone. Have you guys ever worked at Eagle Crest? Or has anybody worked at a ski hill? Because that would really help the board if somebody had more knowledge about what was going on at Eagle Crest and what it took on a day to day to make it happen. Thank you,

J. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

K. Please see AI generated summary below

L. NEXT MEETING DATE

1. EAGLECREST BOARD REGULAR MEETING - JANUARY 2, 2025

M. ADJOURNMENT – Motion by ? to adjourn. The audio cut out on the recording.

AI Meeting Notes

Summary:

The Eaglecrest board meeting covered several key updates and decisions. Mike Satre confirmed the presence of board members and quorum. Norton Gregory agreed to prioritize fixing the audio issues for in-room attendees. The agenda was amended to move the finance committee report before new business. Public participation included comments on funding requests and the importance of a positive report to potential funders. Craig Cimmons and other staff members provided updates on marketing, patrol training, base operations, and mountain maintenance. The finance committee discussed the need for significant funding to address operational and maintenance gaps, with potential requests of \$1 million in FY25 and FY26. The Eaglecrest Foundation's role and recent contributions were highlighted, and a draft assembly report was reviewed, emphasizing the need for strategic financial planning. The meeting discussed the financial and operational challenges at Eaglecrest. Kirk Duncan presented options for fixing the Black Bear chair lift: a \$200,000 motor room fix or a \$700,000 gantry-style upgrade. The board debated the board's role versus city management, emphasizing the need for ski industry expertise. Financial constraints were highlighted, with a \$200,000 shortfall for staff increases. Concerns about communication gaps and public perception were raised. The board agreed to review Kirk's report and schedule follow-up meetings. Public comments stressed the need for transparency, better communication, and addressing safety and maintenance issues.

Action Items

- ☐ Schedule regular committee meetings and ensure agendas and materials are posted in a timely manner.
- ☐ Provide written manager's reports going forward.
- ☐ Schedule a finance committee meeting on December 17th at noon to review Kirk Duncan's report.
- ☐ Attend the Eaglecrest Foundation board meeting next week to represent the Eaglecrest board.

Outline

Meeting Setup and Initial Discussions

- **Mike Satre confirms audio issues and discusses potential solutions with Craig Cimmons and Norton Gregory.**
- **Mike Satre confirms the presence of board members and establishes a quorum for the meeting.**
- **Norton Gregory notes the role and moves to approve the agenda, with a minor change requested by Jonathan Dale to move the finance committee report before new business.**
- **Public participation is opened, with Charlie Herrington requesting a PDF of the agenda packet and Deborah Craig commenting on the draft report to the CBJ and suggesting improvements.**

Manager's Report and Marketing Update

- **Craig Cimmons provides updates from various departments, starting with marketing. Kristen highlights the new marketing coordinator, James, and his contributions to social media and advertising.**
- **Kristen reports on the success of the November events, including the ski swap and Black Bear and Beyond, and mentions upcoming marketing efforts for December.**
- **Justin from patrol discusses recent training activities, including EMS skills, avalanche refresher, and interagency avalanche scenarios.**
- **Craig Cimmons provides updates from base ops, including repairs to walk-in freezers, annual service on coffee machines, and new staff hires.**

Mountain Operations and Snowmaking Efforts

- **Craig Cimmons provides detailed updates from mountain ops, including new staff members, snowmaking efforts, and lift inspections.**
- **Craig highlights the importance of the Porky-only opening and the efforts of the team to prepare for the season.**
- **Craig mentions the upcoming Friday Night Lights event and the ongoing snowmaking plan.**
- **Erin from snow sports school reports on staffing, training, and equipment maintenance, including the arrival of new rental equipment and the efforts of the repair shop.**

Committee Assignments and Finance Committee Report

- **Mike Satre formalizes committee assignments, including the finance committee chaired by Jonathan Dale, the planning committee chaired by Norton Gregory, and the human resources committee chaired by Hannah Shively.**
- **Jonathan Dale reports on the finance committee meetings, highlighting the comprehensive analysis by Kirk Duncan and the upcoming presentation to the assembly.**
- **Brandon and Jonathan discuss the need for a clear financial plan and the potential impact of different budget options on Eaglecrest.**
- **Neil Steininger, the assembly liaison, provides an update on the assembly's annual planning retreat and the potential budget considerations for Eaglecrest.**

Eaglecrest Foundation Update

- **Jim Calvin provides an overview of the Eaglecrest Foundation, its history, and its role in supporting the ski area through fundraising and grant distribution.**
- **Jim highlights the foundation's recent activities, including the distribution of funds from the Packer estate for maintenance and the support of youth programs.**
- **Jim discusses the foundation's structure, including its board members and the importance of communication with the Eagle Crest board.**
- **Jim invites board members to attend the foundation's annual meeting and offers to provide additional information and support.**

Kirk Duncan's Draft Assembly Report

- **Kirk Duncan presents the draft assembly report, outlining the financial needs for FY 25 and FY 26, including unfunded positions and materials and commodities.**
- **Kirk emphasizes the need for the board to decide whether to request additional funding from the assembly or operate with a negative fund balance.**
- **Mike Satre and other board members ask questions about the breakdown of needs, the timing of the next 5% disbursement from the Juneau Community Foundation, and the process for leaving estate gifts to Eaglecrest.**

- The meeting concludes with a commitment to further discussions and planning to address the financial needs and future of Eaglecrest.
- Kirk Duncan discusses the need to fix the Black Bear chair, estimating the cost at \$200,000 for a motor room fix or \$700,000 for a gantry-style chair.
- Mike Satre expresses the need for detailed breakdowns of the numbers to inform budgetary decisions and potential conversations with the manager's office.
- Norton Gregory questions the issues facing the ski area and the lack of industry knowledge among board members.
- Kirk Duncan explains that departments like parks and rec could not comment on the ski area's abnormalities due to the empowered board structure.

Board's Role and City Manager's Feedback

- Norton Gregory asks for clarity on the board's role and the sentiment of the assembly and city manager.
- Kevin Krein suggests that the board's expertise in the ski industry is limited, questioning the city's ability to provide more expertise.
- Norton Gregory and Kevin Krein discuss the lack of ski industry expertise in the city compared to the current board.
- Kirk Duncan clarifies that he is not making a recommendation but pointing out issues with the board concept, leaving the decision for the next year.

Financial Constraints and Patrol Hours

- Kevin Krein raises concerns about past financial constraints and the lack of funding for maintenance.
- Kirk Duncan shares that ski patrol hours have increased significantly, from 5,800 hours in 2012 to 8,300 hours last year.
- Speaker 3 acknowledges communication issues between the city and the board regarding the ski area's operations.
- Kirk Duncan emphasizes the need for the board to see the full report before it is presented to the assembly.

Budget Planning and Public Participation

- Mike Satre and Kirk Duncan discuss the importance of seeing the report details and scheduling additional meetings for review.
- Kirk Duncan highlights the need to present the 2026 budget by January 6, with significant expenses for employee raises and lift maintenance.
- Mike Satre mentions the start of the city budget cycle and the need to consider the report's input in the budget process.
- Public participation includes comments from Rick Harris and David Odette, suggesting a committee on operations and maintenance and emphasizing the need for ski industry expertise.

Public Comments and Board Responses

- Charlie Herrington suggests a cheaper solution for Black Bear to show faith in pass holders and asks for written reports.
- Norton Gregory explains the use of AI note-taking for future meetings to provide comprehensive records.
- Mariah Lóol asks about the availability of meeting recordings, and Norton Gregory confirms they will be posted on the muni code.
- Casey Krieger suggests a community liaison and questions about OSHA and maintenance issues, emphasizing the need for transparency and involvement.

Board Member Comments and Next Steps

- Brandon and Kevin express appreciation for public participation and emphasize the need for a collaborative approach to budget planning.
- Norton Gregory suggests regular HR committee meetings and leveraging CBJ resources to support the mountain's operations.
- Craig Cimmons acknowledges the need for staff support and plans to hold more Black Bear and Beyond meetings for transparency.
- Mike Satre emphasizes the importance of standardized reporting and scheduling regular committee meetings to ensure consistent communication and planning.

Comments regarding Mr. Duncan's Report

From Deborah Craig <deborahlc11@gmail.com>
Date Mon 12/9/2024 1:33 PM
To Eaglecrest Board <eaglecrestboard@juneau.gov>
Cc Deborah Craig <deborahlc11@gmail.com>

EXTERNAL E-MAIL: BE CAUTIOUS WHEN OPENING FILES OR FOLLOWING LINKS

Dear Eaglecrest Board of Directors (EBD),

The Juneau Empire December 6th article regarding Mr. Duncan's Draft Report exemplifies how challenging the situation at Eaglecrest has become with the loss of our high functioning General Manager, non-competitive wages and *purported* lack of maintenance. While this portrayal brings attention to the many needs of the ski area, it also highlights functional deficits. Unfortunately, Eaglecrest's recent on-line marketing and self-congratulation does not mitigate the obvious issues occurring on the mountain - this is a small community ski area reliant on local support that is being strained by recent events.

It's unclear if any other local entity has either the capacity or "industry knowledge" to better manage the ski area as suggested in Mr. Duncan's report. Many feel Eaglecrest is best managed by a team of skiers/boarders deeply committed to its success and willing to take the time/energy to mitigate the current situation. I urge the EBD to use its 'empowered' authority to be candid and direct with both the management team and public or be in the sad position of potentially enabling Eaglecrest's demise.

Perhaps it would mend public perception for the EBD to acknowledge the difficulties that have resulted from 1) firing the most successful General Manager in two decades (who gleaned significant community support due to his work ethic, performance, priorities and communication skills), 2) failing to support the former GM's repeated requests for resources to maintain and improve the ski area and 3) failing to provide timely guidance to the former GM in areas viewed as under-performance.

This would pave the way for the EBD to provide the new GM with concrete direction for action and assistance generating more resources. I urge the EBD to consider the following:

1. Advise the GM that the EBD, due to cost and revenue considerations, plans to reevaluate the recent decision to delay the repair of Blackbear until the summer of 2025 or to implement expensive drive system changes. Loss of current/future revenue and public support, as well as the potential for future Gondola income means a shorter-term fix could be reasonable and do-able. The EBD could invite the GM and local people knowledgeable of the Black Bear operation and construction to develop an alternative plan and schedule for maintaining the vault system. The current relaxed attitude about responding to the public outcry for some type of ski area mitigation could be compromising needed public support.

With a concrete plan in hand, the EBD could do immediate fund-raising for a one-time injection from a local entity willing to help fund a **Fix the Black Bear Campaign** that would engender massive goodwill in our community for that company and the EBD's efforts.

2. Previous GMs recognized that having snow on the lower part of the mountain made the rest of the mountain accessible. (This also speaks again to having a GM who has the capacity to perform tasks that now must be contracted out at additional expense.)

The EBD is encouraged to instruct the GM to report immediately (in writing) on the status of snow making plans and snow-making equipment on the mid-mountain, including the Log-Jam installation detailing perceived safety issues and precisely what improvements need to be made such that the full capability of the snowmaking that occurred in the 2023-24 season can operate in the 2024-25 season. The EBD could invite the local companies that

installed the systems to describe the system, safety considerations incorporated into the design and if they recommend other improvements. The EBD and the GM could determine the minimum resources needed to immediately start working on snowmaking beyond Porcupine when the opportunity arises. The recent allocation of needed resources to marketing instead of mountain maintenance is quite perplexing given our current circumstances and ski area needs.

3. The EBD is encouraged to form a subcommittee to respond to the community and CBJ on each point of Mr. Duncan's distressing report. The response should also emphasize Eaglecrest's benefits to the community. Ignoring the substantive findings in the report and the article is not recommended. There are a number of Eaglecrest supporters willing to help with that effort to ensure the Assembly and community continues to view Eaglecrest as a worthwhile long-term investment.

Lastly, Juneau understands seasonal work. Tourism, construction, fishing, legislative session, ski season – all rely on seasonal employees and all-hands-on-deck. Seasonal staff work long hours, perform tasks beyond their job description and do whatever is necessary to make that seasonal effort successful. It's showtime and a short season – timely action is needed.

Juneau wants to ski - that is the prime objective. I am hopeful that we are going to have a successful ski season and our next frontpage article is positive. I would appreciate seeing Mr. Duncan's final Draft report as soon as it is issued. I do not envy your position and, as always, offer my thanks to the EBD for your service to our community.

Deborah Craig, longtime Passholder and Eaglecrest Supporter

Purpose of the Foundation

Eaglecrest Foundation is a publicly-supported non-profit corporation established in 2008 to solicit, manage, and invest donations for the exclusive benefit of Eaglecrest Ski Area.

Eaglecrest Foundation...

- *Serves as a conduit for private funds to support the ski area*
- *In association with the Eaglecrest board and staff raises funds for ski area programs and projects*
- *Receives and distributes funds from the JCF Eaglecrest Operating Endowment Fund*



Projects and programs facilitated by Eaglecrest Foundation

- *Black Bear and Porcupine chairlifts*
- *Youth programs*
 - *Books2Boards, School Group, youth rental equipment, class sponsorships*
- *Construction projects*
 - *Nest re-root crushed rock purchase*
- *Equipment/parts purchases*
 - *Snowmaking (pipeline, valves, guns)*
 - *Snocat and chairlift parts*
 - *Nordic grooming equipment*



Eaglecrest Foundation funding

Revenues

- *Restricted Revenue accounts*
 - *Eaglecrest Operating Endowment*
 - *Packer Estate*
 - *828 and School Group Program*
- *Individual & corporate donations*
- *Other revenue*
 - *Black Bear chair sales, event revenue, investment income*

To date, approximately \$1.7 million has passed through the foundation to Eaglecrest



Eaglecrest Operating Endowment Fund

- *Created in 2014 by Bill and Katie Corbus*
- *\$2 million initial endowment*
- *5% of fund value distributed to EF each year*
- *Uses...routine operations, not capital improvements*
- *Total received to date by EF: \$1,016,334*
- *Total distributed to the Ski Area to date: \$785,706*
- *Balance held by EF (Nov. 2024): \$230,628*



Packer Estate Funds

- *In 2023, the Dwayne Packer Estate left \$431,000 to ¹¹Eaglecrest maintenance department"*
- *Court directed the funds to EF, Eaglecrest's 501c3*
- *Funds distributed upon written request from the ski area manager*
- *13 requests processed to date for funds totaling \$205,598*
- *3 requests in process totaling about \$24,000*
- *Approximately \$200,000 remaining*



Foundation governance and administration

- 8 board members, including one seat designated for a ski area board member
- No paid staff
- Low overhead {Board insurance, website costs, SOA filing fees, PO box rental, misc.}
- Accounting and tax returns prepared pro bono by Elgee Rehfeld





Books2Boards

School Group Program

Donors

History

f

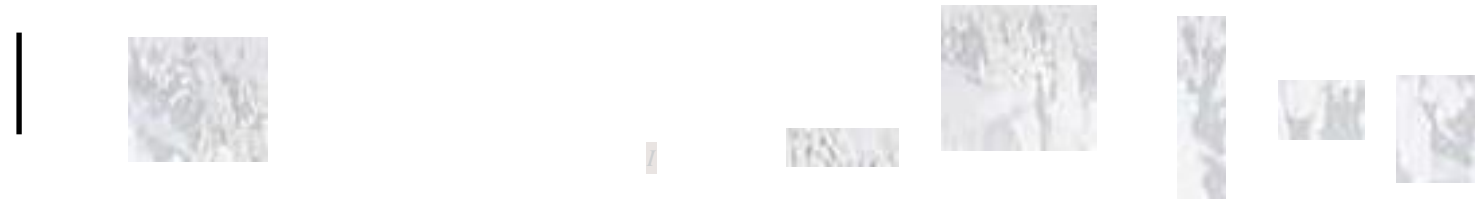
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DONATE

The story of Eaglecrest begins decades before its construction. It's a story of passionate skiers working hard over many years to make skiing an important part of life in Juneau.

Juneau's long and rich skiing history is described here with images and newspaper clippings. It is presented in four parts (links to PDF documents are provided on the right).



- [Part 1: The Early Days of Skiing in Juneau](#)
- [Part 2: Eaglecrest Ski Area, from Concept to Reality](#)
- [Part 3: Eaglecrest Pioneers: A Profile of the People that Led Development of Juneau's Ski Area](#)
- [Part 4: The Evolution of Eaglecrest, 1977 to Present](#)
- [Acknowledgements and Sources](#)



Eaglecrest Foundation

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Executive summary –

This report's purpose is to provide an objective view of the current state of Eaglecrest, what will be needed in the next several years, and expectations for gondola project financial performance.

The Eaglecrest Ski Area is at a pivotal time in its history. Three of the five senior management positions are held by newly hired individuals who are qualified to do the job but face steep learning curves. Eaglecrest is a complicated ski area compared to many areas in that it has extensive avalanche mitigation which increases costs. In addition, its relatively low elevation and maritime climate make a consistent opening date and operations a challenge.

Eaglecrest has not kept up with paying competitive wages to its employees and lacks a coherent pricing structure. Eaglecrest, in anticipation of the gondola operation has increased year-round staffing, which needs to be reexamined as the gondola is not coming online until July of 2027 at the earliest.

Eaglecrest has not maintained its lifts to industry standards (which are somewhat subjective) and at present does not have adequately trained lift mechanics. While the new management intends to develop necessary training programs, until such time that staff is fully trained, additional funds over current levels will likely be required for contracted services. Insufficient maintenance and lack of ongoing training over the past several years have resulted in the Black Bear chair not operating this winter and added to the cost of maintenance on the other chairlifts in the years to come.

There is much hope that gondola summer operations will “save” Eaglecrest, supporting additional investment in the ski area and ultimately replacing city support for winter operations. However, as in any business endeavor, future financial performance is uncertain, particularly in the absence of market demand research. How many people will use the service and how much are they willing to pay for the service? These questions are critical when planning a restaurant, a gas station or any other enterprise. This important due diligence has never been done for the gondola. The expense numbers are relatively easy to develop, however, the revenue numbers are very uncertain, leaving the gondola operation business plan with a wide range of possible financial outcomes.

Many of the issues facing the ski area can be traced back to the Eaglecrest Board of Directors. While board members are very dedicated to the ski area and its success, they

lack the industry knowledge needed to provide supervisory overview of the area. As a city department, some of the past and current issues at the ski area would not have been allowed to grow to the point that the board had to take drastic action. Whether Eaglecrest remains as an empowered board or a city department with an advisory board (ala the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee) will be a much needed conversation within the community.

In Fiscal Year 2025, there are many unfunded positions within the current budget. The need to purchase lift maintenance parts in Fiscal Year 2025 to ensure those parts are in Juneau for the summer maintenance season of 2025 (Fiscal Year 2026) as well as an apparent budgeted increase in season pass revenue that did not occur during the management transition, Eaglecrest may have an increase in the budget by as much as \$1,000,000. This amount could be offset by increasing the level of general fund support, increasing the negative fund balance, increase in fund raising, reducing costs, or some combination of these or other offsets.

In FY 2026, if the decision is made to increase Eaglecrest salaries/wages to a competitive level, the increased costs will range between \$600,000 and \$800,000. There will be one more year of increased lift maintenance costs before Eaglecrest will be back on a more routine preventive maintenance program. Lift maintenance and personnel services could increase the budget by as much as \$1,500,000. There may be some limited opportunity to offset increase costs with increased user fees, though development of a rationalized pricing model and strategy would first be required.

In FY 2027, the ski area will be back to “normal” winter operations with no need to bring in outside lift maintenance contractors as the two lift mechanics will have been fully trained. This will be the year when some up front gondola expenses occur. These would include the need to hire two additional lift mechanics to maintain the gondola, some capital equipment costs related to the gondola operation such an all-wheel drive 18 passenger van to get people off the top of the mountain if the gondola has a mechanical issue, additional evacuation equipment purchases, potential point of sale interface costs and other related items.

In FY 2028, if the gondola realizes it’s projected ridership and revenue targets (40,000 riders with revenue of \$85 per rider as specified by the Eaglecrest Board) and expected expenses are correct, the summer operation would have net income of about \$1 million. With projected ridership increasing to 125,000 and revenue per rider increasing to \$125, the gondola would generate net income of \$10 million annually by 2043. Eaglecrest would over

time be able to invest \$19 million back into the mountain, have a positive fund balance of \$43 million by 2043 and stop receiving general fund support in 2031.

It would be wise for the CBJ Finance Department to spend time verifying and/or changing these numbers as there are a lot of moving parts and many opportunities for errors. The following pages provide more detailed information.

Further information –

FY 2025 discussion

Budget topics

- Increased labor

Staffing discussion

- Training local residents to be paid lift mechanics

- Correct people in the correct positions

- Increased material and commodities

FY 2026 discussion

Budget topics

- Revenue

- Increased labor

- New Pay Plan

- Increased material and commodities

- Equipment replacement fund increases – going forward

- Trail maintenance

FY 2027 discussion

- Preparation for the gondola

Budget topics

- Personnel services

- Deferred Maintenance – getting back to preventive maintenance

- Gondola mechanics training

- Gondola auxiliary expenses

FY 28 – long term planning

- Winter operations

- Increased year-round benefits

- Gondola operations?

Expensed terrain – more patrollers

Putting inexperienced users in difficult terrain

Summer operations

Gondola Projections

Revenue – Total visits and per visit projections

Expenses

Staffing

Material and commodities

Multi year financial planning

Winter budget

Summer budget

Capital replacement

Professional Planning

Lifts

Facilities

Infrastructure

Snowmaking

Water/wastewater

Road

Parking lot

Access road

On mountain road

Governance

Empowered Board versus CBJ Department

Financial Impact