

## Minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting of 28.12.2018

Brigitte Borel, APCAV President, welcomed the members, guests and speakers and thanked them for their presence. The guests and speakers were:

- Eloi Rossier, President of the municipality of Bagnes
- Jean-Baptiste Vaudan, Vice-President of the municipality of Bagnes
- Florian Michellod, President of the Verbier Development Company
- Joël Sciboz, Director of the Verbier Tourist Office
- Laurent Vaucher, CEO of Téléverbier SA
- Jean-Daniel Martin, Honorary President of APCAV
- Pierre-André Gremaud, Sirector of Verbier Promotion
- William Besse, member of the Conseil Communal
- André Gorgemans, President of the Friends of Verbier

As usual, the secretariat of the administration of the meeting and minutes was entrusted to the Fiduciaire of Verbier. The invitation to the general meeting was sent by mail to all members on December 5, 2018. The meeting was therefore appropriately convened, and the attending members could decide on the items put to vote.

The agenda was as follows:

1. Approval of the minutes of the ordinary GA of 28.12.2017
2. Report of the Committee on the past financial year
3. Approval of accounts and discharges to responsible bodies
4. Budget for the financial year 2018/2019
5. Designation of the auditors
6. Miscellaneous and individual proposals
  - Information of the Commune, Eloi Rossier, President of the Municipality of Bagnes
  - New cantonal legislation on constructions, Jean-Baptiste Vaudan, Vice-President of the municipality of Bagnes
  - Téléverbier SA, Laurent Vaucher, CEO
  - Information from the Tourist Office, Joël Sciboz, Director
  - Questions

### 1. Approval of the minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting of December 28, 2017

The minutes are on the APCAV website and therefore not re-read. They were accepted unanimously.



Concerning the 50th anniversary of APCA V that took place on July 26, 2018 at the Mouton Noir restaurant, there is no official report, but a report of the event is on the website.

## **2. Report of the President (and Committee) on the past financial year**

Report of the President, Brigitte Borel:

First of all, I would like to thank the members of the committee for their work and support throughout the year. The committee was elected for two years at the last meeting, so we do not have a statutory election this year, but I am pleased to announce that we already have new candidates for next year. This is a good thing because what always strikes me in Verbier is the sum of experience and skills of all kinds gathered in our small area. Whether in the topics of sports, cultural, artistic, financial, education, in almost every field you can imagine, we have in Verbier people who are good in these areas. And not only do they like it here, but they are eager to share their knowledge for the benefit of Verbier and the Commune of Bagnes.

The regular, even permanent, presence of these people in Verbier shows the attractiveness of our resort. It is true that Verbier is doing well. Many indicators are positive, as the real estate market continues to do well, despite the strong Swiss franc. Prices remain high (on average slightly increased since 2017), and the number of transactions is stable from one year to the next. As for hotels and rental agencies, the echoes are also positive. Thanks to the wonderful season last winter and a good start to this winter, with good snow conditions, the booking rate is already high for the entire season.

We note that Verbier won the "Switzerland's Best Ski Resort" award at the World Ski Awards held in Kitzbühel, at the foot of the legendary Streif downhill run on November 17, 2018. I also note that William Besse, who is present with us tonight, was on the podium of the Streif when he did it in less than two minutes, which is exceptional. This downhill is indeed considered the most difficult, the most technical and also the most prestigious of all downhills by professional skiers.

Also on November 17 in Kitzbühel, another important player in Verbier, the W Hotel , won the "World's Best Ski Hotel" Award, as the best ski hotel in the world, for the third year in a row. The W Hotel competes with the most beautiful hotels on the planet, whether in the United States, Europe or Asia and Eastern Europe. It is therefore a magnificent award for the W who make it a point to remain open all year in Verbier. We are grateful for this dedication to Verbier.

Despite these successes, we have our challenges for the future. How do we encourage younger generations to remain faithful to Verbier? How do we attract new visitors? How do



we ensure continuous presence and activities throughout the year? How do we adapt, and better embrace, the digital evolution and revolution that characterizes our era?

These issues were addressed during the celebration of the 50th anniversary of APCAVERBIER this summer. This was an anniversary that we were able to celebrate thanks to the financial support of the Automobile Center Hediger & D'Andrès SA in Sion, UBS, the Commune of Bagnes and the SDV. I want to thank them again for their support and generosity. At this celebration, we looked back with two perspectives: the first by Bertrand Deslarzes, responsible for the culture of the Commune of Bagnes. He shared the history of Verbier via postcards from the past. A book has been published with these photos. It is a beautiful work, and I recommend it. You can get it on the website of the Bagnes Museum. The second perspective was from our Honorary President Jean-Daniel Martin. He spoke, as always, with eloquence and wit. Through his remarks we got to know the history of APCAVERBIER, as well as the highlights, sometimes dramatic, which punctuated the life of our association. After these two speakers, Eloi Rossier presented his vision for the future for Verbier and spoke about the main projects in progress.

For my part, I mentioned some of the future issues and gave some ideas for APCAVERBIER and its members to help shape the future of Verbier. I suggested that we help by identifying the needs, concerns and expectations of the owners and by participating with our authorities in strategic discussions to address them.

Indeed, as I like to say, Verbier is a resort of property owners, and they are one of the best assets to value our region. One of the great opportunities for Verbier is therefore to take advantage of the potential represented by its many owners, in particular by encouraging generations over 50 to transfer their main home here. Not only are these generations very active and fit, but they are also our best ambassadors to their children. This is another reason why we need to create adapted offers and infrastructures that will allow them to see the future with serenity.

I mentioned the W Hotel, which helps make the resort attractive all year round. In the same vein, it is also pleasing to note that the presence of quality schools attracted world to Verbier. More young families are living here year-round to send their children to school round. Other families organize short stays to accompany their children who come to summer camp in Verbier. These are often people who did not know Verbier before.

So in summary, what is the success of a station like Verbier? First and foremost its natural qualities and the exceptional environment of the region. But for the rest, we see it is very multifactorial, and it is therefore important that all players in Verbier, including the owners, work together, hand in hand, to maintain its attractiveness.



Among other highlights to note about APCA V for this year, 2018, there are:

The appointment on July 26 of our vice-president, Nicolas Leuba, to lead the Valaisian Federation of second home owners. This appointment will allow us to further strengthen our links with other owners' associations in the Valais. In addition, we plan joint activities between APCA V and FVSR2. A project has already been started with the Commune de Bagnes about the accessibility for seniors and people with reduced mobility.

The adoption of a new guidelines concerning helicopter flights over the station. Indeed, the constant flights over Verbier during certain periods pushed us to intervene with the Commune. Following this APCA V intervention, new guidelines have been established, which have two priorities. The first is the safety of people and property. The second is limiting when the flights take place. In principle, flights are now allowed only if there is no other viable alternative that is economically feasible. The guidelines also stipulate that flights are prohibited at certain times of the year, especially during strong tourist influxes (it does not specify dates). The adoption of these new guidelines allows me to reiterate again our good relations with the Commune which takes our requests seriously. We now have to ensure the correct application of these guidelines.

Regarding the newsletter service to our members, you will have noticed that it has been less frequent in recent months. Please accept our apologies. For this reason, we have decided to professionalize this service by outsourcing it to Maarten van Geest of the Mountain Hub company (who also manages our website). You received the first version at the beginning of December, and you will now systematically receive the weekly newsletter of the Office du Tourisme, Nouvelliste articles and other news.

As for 2019, our main objectives are:

- Improve our website content level, giving you access to more useful information for owners. In the spirit of what I mentioned a moment ago, we also plan to use our website to strengthen the interactions we have with our members and to identify your needs and concerns.
- Through our contacts with the SDV and the Tourist Office, we want to ensure that the proceeds of the tourist tax benefit the owners. I am thinking in particular about the content of the VIP Pass, Joel Sciboz will talk about it in a moment.
- Finally, another goal is to acquire new members. We have about 800 members to date. This is good but we could be more numerous. Strength comes in numbers, and representing a larger number of owners would allow us to have more weight. This would also allow us to offer more benefits to our members while maintaining the current contribution of CHF 60 per year. And for this, we also count on you, dear



APCAV members, to speak about our association with owners who do not know us yet. Thank you for encouraging them to join our ranks.

### **3. Approval of the accounts, discharge to the responsible bodies**

The financial statements for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2018 were provided to the members present. Stéphane Fellay, of the Trustee of Verbier, presented them.

Mr. Lloyd Gabioud, of Fidiciare FIMOB in Le Châble, auditor, filed his audit report on December 21, 2018. He recommended the approval of the accounts and proposed to discharge the committee for obligations as management.

The President Borel discussed the accounts, the report of the committee and the discharge of the responsible bodies.

With no comments or questions, it was submitted to vote these topics:

- Accounts - unanimously adopted
- Discharge of the committee - voted unanimously
- Discharge of the auditor - voted unanimously

### **4. Budget for the 2018/2019 financial year**

Stéphane Fellay presented the budget. It was put to a vote and accepted unanimously.

### **5. Designation of the supervisory body**

The renewal of the mandate entrusted to Fiduciare FIMOB as the supervisory body was unanimously accepted.

### **6. Individuals and individual proposals**

The President gave the floor to the President of the Commune of Bagnes, Eloi Rossier.

Eloi Rossier expressed his pleasure with the quality of the Commune's relations with the property owners of Verbier.



### **Project of a merger of the municipalities of Bagnes and Vollèges**

Eloi Rossier noted the proximity of the two towns in the same valley and their common history. The project dates back to 2010. The two municipalities already share many services.

At the same time, there is a neighboring project to bring the communes of the Val d'Entremont closer together. The canton of Valais has just elected the members of a new Assembly which will look into the organization of the canton, its communes and its districts. It is better for the municipality of Bagnes to anticipate changes that could come.

The merger would allow the combined population to exceed the critical mass of 10'000 inhabitants. The population of Vollèges is growing. It has recently increased by 900 inhabitants, one-third of whom came from the municipality of Bagnes.

The annual cost of the merger is estimated at CHF 2'000'000, which will be borne by taxpayers. Eloi Rossier noted, however, that during the last decrease in the taxation levels of the Commune of Bagnes, revenues increased. He expects a similar phenomenon in case of merger of the municipalities of Bagnes and Vollèges. Bagnes is today the municipality with largest contributions in the canton.

The merger project for the municipalities of Bagnes and Vollèges will be submitted to the citizens of the two municipalities on February 20, 2019.

### **Sports Center of Verbier**

Following the fire at the construction site, this major transformation and expansion is expected to resume in the spring 2019. It is currently suspended pending the analysis of the insurance companies. It will also be necessary to obtain additional building permits.

### **Curala Square in Châble**

The work of the new station is finished. The connection between the train, Verbier and Bruson gondola lifts and parking is done. The project to build a hotel is funded. Construction is expected to start shortly.

### **Illegal constructions**

Dispute resolution is progressing. The very comprehensive periodic report required by the Council of State has just been sent.

Eloi Rossier gave the floor to Jean-Baptiste Vaudan, Vice-President of the commune of Bagnes to inform the assembly on the cantonal law on constructions. The new federal law on regional planning did not force the municipality of Bagnes to proceed with the decommissioning of building areas. The potential for constructability of plots can currently be established on the basis of two different methods. The old one, SBPU - Unfinished Floor Area – does not include installations, garages, basements, corridors, stairs, elevators, etc. The new method, the IBUS - Gross Land Use Index, does take it into account (see explanation on the document in attachment). Any questions should be addressed to architects, real estate agencies or the construction department of the municipal administration in Le Châble.

Laurent Vaucher, CEO of Téléverbier SA, took the floor to present the new installations and inform us of upcoming projects. He noted that the good snow has allowed a good start to the season.

The construction of the Combi-Mix lift between Les Esserts and Savoleyres will have to be postponed for several years. The environmental impact and circulation studies requested by the Federal Court have been completed and were filed last autumn. The content of these studies should be great interest to APCAVERBIER members. Remedies are possible and could progress again to the Federal Court. Until the building permit for the new Combi-Mix is obtained, the old Savoleyres facility will be kept in working order.

New cabins on the lift Médran 1 will facilitate the loading of mountain bikes. Investments are planned at Grand Tsai in Bruson to make it easier to move from one track to another. The mechanical snow will be developed and improved. Transfers between the train and the ski lifts at Le Châble (Curala) will be facilitated (escalators).

Work will make the Mont-Fort platform more accessible. A new connection will be installed, allowing access to the col de Gentianes. This information raised many positive reactions in the assembly. The access for skiers to Médran will be improved. Mr. Vaucher informed the assembly that the goal of Téléverbier is to become profitable at least 10 months a year, instead of 5 to 6 months now. In particular, it means making the summer months profitable.

The President Borel gave the floor to Joël Sciboz, director of the Tourist Office.

The newsletter of the Tourist Office gives useful and practical information on the activities in the resort and the services of the Tourist Office. A link is planned with the APCAVERBIER newsletter to allow members to find out more easily. Joël Sciboz asked APCAVERBIER members not to hesitate to make suggestions and give him ideas.

Then the President Borel asked the members of the assembly to ask their questions for the speakers.

- The first question was about the voting rights of foreign residents. President Rossier replied that foreign residents do not have the right to vote in Valais and that it is not the municipality's jurisdiction to grant it. This is a subject that will be discussed during the work of the new Valais Assembly.
- Bus line 7 no longer serves Médran.  
Since the beginning of the season the bus line no.7 no longer serves Médran, which poses problems for people living in the area of the rue de la Velle and chemin de la Bergerie. The President of the Commune replied that the situation will be reviewed.
- The Grand Tyrolienne project at Mont-Fort aux Gentianes is generating a lot of surprise in the public. The director of Téléverbier replied that it is indeed serious and happening.
- More information was requested on the start-up schedule for Combi-Mix Esserts-Savoieyres. Laurent Vaucher replied that we should expect a first appeal at the level of the Cantonal Court, then possibly before the Federal Court, for a probable delay of several years. He insisted on the validity of the proposed solution. It ensures that the current Savoieyres installation, which is the oldest in Verbier currently in operation, will be maintained in the necessary time for the implementation of the Combi-Mix.
- To a question about the cohabitation between mountain bikers and hikers during the summer season, Laurent Vaucher replied that Téléverbier is ready to meet the growing demand for mountain bikes. Eloi Rossier mentioned the installation of 400 km of paths in protected areas in the Upper Val de Bagnes and the creation of paths reserved for hikers, in progress with cantonal authorities.
- Late start of the Rouge. Laurent Vaucher explains that the snow cover of the ski lift is currently insufficient, but that the necessary steps to address that will be done quickly.

The APCA V President then closed the question and answer session and spoke again. She informed the assembly that a conference-debate, organized by the Friends of Verbier, will take place on Saturday, January 5 at 5:30 pm at Espace St-Marc in Le Châble, with several Swiss political figures and experts in European Affairs, on the theme "The Place of Switzerland in a Divided Europe". The invitation is available on the APCA V: [apcav.ch](http://apcav.ch).

The third edition of the Verbier Art Summit will take place on the 1-2 February 2019. The Summit was organized in collaboration with the museum director, Jochen Volz, of the Pinacoteca of São Paulo in Brazil on the theme "WE ARE NUMEROUS ART, POLITICS AND MULTIPLE TRUTHS ". Public lectures will be organized at the W Hotel and screenings at the Verbier cinema.

Finally, Brigitte Borel thanked the Tourist Office which offers APCA V every year the aperitif following the assembly.





The whole APCA V committee wished the assembly a happy holiday and all the best for 2019.

Thank you for your confidence.

Verbier, December 2018