



Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting of APCA V Salle des Combins, July 29th, 2024

The President opened the session at 2:00 p.m. and welcomed the members.

The President thanked the guests and the speakers for their attendance:

- Vincent Michellod, Vice-President of the Municipality of Val de Bagnes
- Guillaume Collin, Operational Director of Construction, Regional Planning and Mobility.
- Simon Wiget, Director of Verbier Tourisme
- Laurent Vaucher, CEO of Téléverbier SA
- Florian Michellod, President of the Verbier Development Company
- Jean-Daniel Martin, Honorary President of the APCA V, sent apologies for his absence

Agenda:

1. Welcome from the APCA V, Brigitte Borel, President
2. Address from Hervé Boissière, co-CEO of the Verbier Festival
3. Information from the Municipality of Val de Bagnes, Guillaume Collin
4. Information from Téléverbier SA, Laurent Vaucher, CEO
5. Information from Verbier Tourisme, Simon Wiget, Director of Verbier Tourisme
6. Miscellaneous

1. Welcome from the APCA V, Brigitte Borel, President

“In 2024, major events continue to shape our world and directly or indirectly influence our daily lives.

We are seeing an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as heat waves, heavy rains or violent storms. Our Commune, like the rest of Valais, has been confronted with them recently. The Haut Val de Bagnes was affected by torrential lava flows at the beginning of July which led to the Village of Lourtier becoming cut off and remaining inaccessible by road until further notice. Throughout the Canton of Valais, which has 8,800 km of hiking trails, many paths have been damaged and are no longer passable. Rockfalls also represent a danger. It is therefore advisable, before setting off on a hike, to find out about the routes that can be taken safely. In the Val de Bagnes, we must acknowledge the hard work of the Municipality and all the staff who have committed to securing the area and are restoring access to the Haut Val de Bagnes as quickly as possible. Fortunately, no deaths were reported in our municipality. However, one person lost their life, others lost their homes, and there was damage estimated at between CHF 160 and 200 million in Valais. There are 1,200 employees from two multinationals who are still on sick leave and various sites, particularly data processing sites, which have been affected.



These recent events remind us of our fragility and our limits as human beings. They encourage us to remain humble in the face of nature. They also encourage us to respect and protect the environment.

The vision of the Municipal Council's published legislature for 2021-2024 was to integrate sustainable development into its plans. A sustainability delegate was hired, and numerous actions are now being implemented in the Commune. I will not list all the commitments and projects in progress, there are many, but I invite you to read the "Sustainability" page on the Municipality's website (<https://www.valdebagnes.ch/grandsprojets/51169>).

I would like to discuss some concrete initiatives offered to owners and citizens of the region.

Firstly, the energy library. This is a program that was launched in 2023 by the Municipality of Val de Bagnes. The management of this project has been delegated to the company Altis, which aims to enable residents to reduce their environmental impact and optimize their energy consumption. The energy library offers owners a free energy assessment of their property.

Secondly, the Municipality is to weave a network of link trees. This initiative is carried out with the Combins-Catogne forestry. The idea is to create a network of old trees in the valley in collaboration with the population. From June 1st to September 30th, citizens can propose trees for protection. After validation in October, the trees will be integrated into the Arbre-lien VdB network and will be protected. In recognizing the essential role of trees for the resilience of our forests and the maintenance of biodiversity, the Municipality is positioning itself as a pioneer with this project. The hope is that the project will be taken up at cantonal level. Ms. Laure Oberli, forestry engineer and anthropologist, devised and initiated this project. More information can be found on: https://combinscatogne.ch/arbre-lien/?et_fb=1&PageSpeed=off

Finally, I would like to discuss a major European project Mount Resilience launched at European level and in which Switzerland has partnered. Its objective is to promote adaptation and resilience to climate change in mountain regions.

Many countries are participating in this program and have divided up different themes to be addressed. The theme entrusted to Switzerland is that of water management and it is the Municipality of Val de Bagnes that has been chosen to undertake research and test transformative solutions.

Why Val de Bagnes? Because there is already a pioneering infrastructure in this area, with Blue Ark and Altis, but also because of all that our region comprises: torrents, glaciers, natural areas, agriculture, dams, industry and tourist infrastructure.

The research does not show a significant drop in water on average over the year, but it demonstrates that the precipitation periods and the nature of the supply are changing significantly. This is therefore a problem for management and demands anticipation.

Sensors are currently installed in the Municipality, which provide data in qualitative and quantitative terms. The objective will then be to translate this data into useful indicators for all stakeholders, and for those who play a crucial role in water management.



The project is led by EPFL, ECAL LB (EPFL Design Research Centre specializing in digital interfaces), the Canton of Valais, BlueArk and Altis among others. APCAVERBIER was asked to contribute by participating in workshops. Our Vice-President Nicolas Leuba has already participated in one of them in June.

Sustainability goes beyond environmental issues. Sustainability also relies on social systems. We hear a lot about overtourism, even if our region is not as exposed as Barcelona or Crete, it is nonetheless a factor that must be taken into consideration to ensure that a fair balance is maintained. This is a point that APCAVERBIER has discussed with the Commune as part of the development of the Master Plan.

In summary, the management of water resources, the increased risks of natural disasters, the management of tourism and real estate, represent challenges. They will have to be well managed because it is likely that mountain regions such as Verbier will become increasingly attractive in the future, for several reasons.

Firstly, climate change – people will come to the mountains to seek milder temperatures and better air quality.

Secondly, Switzerland is perceived as a “safe haven”, particularly in the present context of geopolitical tensions and political uncertainties. It is also a country with political and economic stability, offering security. It is seen as a “safe bet” contributing further to the attractiveness of Verbier and the strength in the value of real estate.

In 2024, APCAVERBIER organized two thematic aperitifs.

The first aperitif took place on March 9th at the private club: 67 Pall Mall, now a partner of APCAVERBIER, which offered us an aperitif dinner. We used this event to discuss the rumours of the takeover of Téléverbier SA by the American group Vail Resorts. We invited Christian Burrus, the main shareholder and Vice-President of TVSA, to meet the members of the APCAVERBIER. Mr. Burrus stated that he had a long-term vision for TVSA, and he emphasised that TVSA was not for sale. He gave a history of his family’s decades-long commitment to the company and stressed the importance of having a common vision between TVSA and the Commune de Bagnes. Mr Burrus indicated that he had very good relations with the Commune but that this required commitment, and he maintained that the backbone of Verbier is TVSA and that the entire economy depends on it. Likewise, TVSA depends on the Commune and its ability to create suitable infrastructure.

The second thematic aperitif that we organized took place on April 20th at Les Elfes International, which is also a partner of APCAVERBIER. The theme was “How to stay open 10 months a year”. The Elfes school is an important company in the region because it employs 40 people full-time and up to 120 people in high season. It is open 10 months out of 12 and offers camps for young people aged 6 to 17. Around 10,000 children attend Les Elfes each year, often accompanied by their parents, which contributes to the life in the resort. This was an opportunity to recall the importance of these schools, along with the international schools, which guarantee the presence of families in the resort all year round.



We will of course continue to organize themed aperitifs. I do not yet have a specific date for the next event, but we hope to collaborate with Air Glaciers. You will receive the information in due course.

Some recent information:

We have undertaken to collaborate with APCACH, which is the association of owners of Crans Montana, to be able to discuss our respective issues and create synergies. On August 1st, they have invited me to celebrate the national celebrations in Crans Montana.

We are continuing to work to increase the offers of discounts and special promotions for APCA V members. There have been offers for the Verbier Festival and the new Verbier Music & Cinema festival. There are also other promotions that you can discover on our website, under "Benefits".

Mr. Peter Brabeck informed us during the opening concert of the VF that he wants to make Verbier a centre for culture. He plans to create a new foundation for this purpose. He will participate in one of our upcoming AGMs to tell us more about his project.

The President thanked the members for their attention and closed the meeting.

2. Hervé Boissière, co-CEO of the Verbier Festival

Hervé Boissière gave a brief presentation of his career before being appointed co-CEO of the Verbier Festival Academy in Verbier.

He reported that the 2024 VF Academy was encouraging, the first week was full, there were places remaining for the second week which had a little lower attendance.

He explained that, even though the festival only lasted two weeks during the summer period in Verbier, it was a year-round effort, involving other events and other initiatives and a lot of work on audiovisual.

He described the tour with the Orchestra of the Verbier Festival Academy in Verbier. He explained there are three orchestras in the Verbier Festival Academy and the training with the Academy of Verbier is one of the most beautiful tours in the world.

3. Information from the Commune de Bagnes, Guillaume Collin, Director of Construction, Land Use Planning and the Mobility Department

Guillaume Collin briefly introduced himself and informed us that he had taken over overall responsibility for construction, land use planning and the mobility department within the Commune on 1 July 2024.

He explained the Fregnoley torrential lava flows and gave an update on the situation.

Principally his work within the construction department consisted of issuing building permits. In land use planning he is involved in analysing and establishing area allocation plans. In mobility he is developing the E-bike routes and events and supervising public transport. He mentioned some



projects in progress: the sports centre, schools and other major projects in the Commune de Bagnes.

The major projects included developing the centre on the Perrin-Médran axis. One of the next suggested projects was to pedestrianise this area for events and for the summer period. The large events would always be held on the Place Perrin, but the smaller events could be held in the centre of town after the development of the Place de l'Ermitage.

Other projects being considered are the future of Orny chalet and the future of the Verbier cinema. The aim of the Commune is to enhance these buildings increasing their use in tourism all year round.

The project on the Place de l'Ermitage provides three levels of parking with a green square on the top level with a soft mobility area without cars that would allow the hosting of small and medium-sized events. During the winter, there would be the ice rink which is currently operating near the tennis courts.

The plans for Chalet Orny which will be rebuilt from 2025, include a library, a games library and multi-purpose rooms. These rooms can be rented for events or by local businesses for seminars and other events. Some public services will be moved from the building opposite the Coop to this new building.

The project for the sports centre is now validated, and work should resume in autumn 2024 for demolition and in 2025 for construction.

In relation to the zone development plan, a new zone plan is being studied for the centre of the village to maintain shops on the ground floor of all buildings.

The Commune is studying ways to minimize traffic, and they are collaborating with Téléverbier SA to look at mobility for this purpose.

Mr. Collin specified that the priority of his department is to enable the resort to be open 12 months a year. The development of a new library and the construction of a building to move the Verbier International School are in line with this objective.

His department is currently operating with reduced staff but several recruitments are underway to guarantee the service for the population.

4. Information from Téléverbier SA, Laurent Vaucher, CEO

Laurent Vaucher looked back on the 2023 summer season, which was a great season with increased attendance. He summarized the work carried out during the summer of 2023, namely:

- Construction of the Inkontro restaurant in place of the Carlsberg restaurant.
- Modification of the Nord chairlift
- Internal digitalization of Téléverbier



He explained TVSA was suffering inflated electricity tariffs, increasing their operational costs. He admitted he did not have control over the date of closure of all the facilities. He would like to guarantee the operation of all businesses until the end of October but regrets that many businesses will not remain open until the end of the summer season.

Laurent Vaucher praised the 2023-4 winter season with its excellent snowfall and fewer gaps in attendance than in previous years. He raised the issue of very unusual weather at the end of the season, which reduced attendance.

In summary, 2023-24 season was a good season with lots of snow but complicated in terms of operations, particularly due to the weather, especially the rainy periods.

Laurent Vaucher then presented some TVSA statistics relating to snowfall, temperatures, skier days and the number of visits to certain points in the ski area. He pointed out that TVSA is an important employer for the municipality and the region.

TVSA projects for the summer of 2024 which are in progress are:

- Savoleyres which should start in September 2024 and will be in service for the winter of 2025-2026 if everything goes as planned.
- Lac 2 which should start in 2024 to be completed for the winter of 2025-2026.
- The new construction at Six Blanc, Bruson, will start in the summer of 2025 to be in service for the winter of 2026-2027.

Laurent Vaucher stated TVSA's problems are the building permits which require a lot of energy and time, the labour market which does not make it easy to find staff, and inflation which has a considerable impact on the company's accounts. However, he guaranteed that there will be no price increase for the ski pass next winter.

Finally, he confirmed that the possible takeover by Vail Resorts was a rumour and that TVSA was not for sale.

5. Information from Verbier Tourism, Simon Wiget, Director of Verbier Tourism

Simon Wiget discussed the Haut Val de Bagnes following the torrential lava flows. He encouraged members of ACPAV to visit the area which is safe because of the measures put in place. Verbier stood in solidarity with the regions at the end of the valley which are experiencing a very difficult summer because of the extreme weather.

Events, these can be classified into three categories:

1. Entertainment events recurring which are organized throughout the year.
2. Local events, eg the celebrations on the 1st of August.
3. There are 21 major events which aim to promote the destination and boost the resort's attractiveness for at least 10 months out of 12 months of the year.



He emphasized that the tourist tax helped promote these events but that the Commune also contributed to the organizational costs and supported the major events.

6. Miscellaneous

Questions and answers

- A member raised a problem with the payment machine in the Ermitage car park and that it should be repaired.
- A member asked for explanations as to the use of the funds collected via the tourist tax. Promises had been made for the use of the extra funds when the tourist tax was increased but have not been kept and he wanted to know if the accounts were published.

S. Wiget responded that the annual reports are available at the office and on the website.

Laurent Vaucher added the VIP Pass was not a right, but a gift and it offered many advantages. The accounts for the tax de sejour are monitored because they must comply with the law on tourism. The rates for the tourist tax in Verbier are not particularly high compared to other Communes. Simon Wiget said the VIP Pass is very successful, when it was introduced, there were around 16,000 users and in 2023 more than 50,000 users. He reminded property owners that if they rent out their properties, the tourist tax charges collected are deducted from their personal charges for tourist tax the following year.

- A member expressed disappointment and described it as shameful, expressing her frustration at the delay in building the sports centre.

G. Collin responded that the project is a priority for the Commune but is not easy given the consultations and planning applications. He emphasized that this is not a renovation but a reconstruction. He reassured all members that this project is a priority for the Commune.

- A member asked for details on the Ibus. G. Collin replied that the Ibus will be in use until 2026, there may be a change after this date depending on the cantonal law.
- A member thanked for the events organized during the summer. He raised the issue of infrastructure and procedures in Verbier. He complained of a lack of a medical clinics. He expressed concern that TVSA had undergone 10 years of procedures for the Savoleyres telemix and that the sports centre had undergone numerous appeals between 2019 and 2022. He complained the Commune never issues a completion date for their works. G. Collin's responded that it is very difficult to commit to deadlines because of the possible appeals, which the Municipality cannot control.
- André Guinnard spoke of the difficulty that the stairs at the Col des Gentianes represented for seniors to reach the cable car. He has set up a senior club in Verbier to analyse the various problems encountered by seniors with mobility and other needs. They meet with the Commune to find solutions (for example, the absence of a tearoom and pavements that are difficult to use).
- A member expressed concern to TVSA that there were some communication problems during the winter regarding the closures of sectors linked to avalanches. Laurent Vaucher responded that an



alert system is now set up to announce the closures of sectors that are not yet secure after heavy snowfall, and that he will install loudspeakers in Verbier to announce the openings of the different sectors.

- An Apcav member queried if TVS could offer discounts for seniors who are on AVS. Laurent Vaucher reminded us that the offers vary by resort, and that a reduction is offered for the ski pass to people over 75 years old.

The extraordinary general meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Verbier, 29th July, 2024