

HB

40

HB 40 FILE CONTENTS

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Alaska State Legislature
House of Representatives



Labor and Commerce Committee
MEMORANDUM

TO: All Members, House Labor and Commerce Committee
FROM: Committee Staff
DATE: January 22, 1985
RE: Committee Meeting, Thursday, January 24, 1985

On Thursday, January 24, 1985, from 1:15 - 2:45 pm in Room 102 of the Capitol Building, the House Committee on Labor and Commerce will hold the following hearings:

HB 40: "An Act making a special appropriation for the 1985 Iditarod sled dog race; and providing for an effective date."

HB 40 provides funding to the Department of Commerce and Economic Development for \$72,000 for expenses to run the Iditarod sled dog race. The Department has a matching grant program that will channel these funds.

Last year, CSHB 142 by Larson appropriated \$65,050 for the Iditarod, which passed both houses and passed into law under Chapter 8 with an effective date of February 22, 1984. A breakdown of how this year's appropriation would be spent is attached.

This appropriation covers only a part of the total expenses of the race, which come from other sources as well; totalling some \$380,655 in 1981 and \$468,760 in 1983.

HB 20: "An Act relating to interest on deposits collected by public utilities."

HB 20 has been Cancelled for today's Hearings.

Overview of Boards and Commissions Office, Office of the Governor
by Carol Derfner.

Because of the large number of Board and Commission appointments that this Committee will be holding confirmation hearings on, Ms. Derfner will provide the Committee with verbal and written background on the activities of the Boards and Commissions.

THE AWAKENING OF THE IDITAROD

The Iditarod Trail began in Seward during the gold rush days. It stretched to Knik then on to the gold camp of Iditarod and eventually to Nome.

It's over a thousand miles from Anchorage to Nome via the presently used Iditarod Trail race route. It crosses two mountain ranges, passes through ice-locked wilderness areas, and winds over 200 miles along the mighty Yukon River. The mushers leave civilization at Knik and there's only small towns and villages to break the monotony of traveling in bone-chilling cold until they reach the historic goldrush town of Nome, perched on the shores of the Bering Sea.

The historic Iditarod Trail was established by its many travelers and freighters. But having a sled dog race over the trail was initiated by Dorothy Page, a history buff who lives in Wasilla. Back in 1964 Page was serving as chairman of the Wasilla-Knik Centennial Committee and also as secretary of the Aurora Dog Mushers Club.

As a spectacular centennial year project, Page talked to many people about re-opening the Iditarod Trail, beginning at Knik, and having a sled dog race to call attention to Alaska's past and the part the mushers and their dog teams had played in opening up the Territory of Alaska.

Page could see that raising sled dogs and mushing were going downhill due to the wide use of snowmachines. She felt mushing needed to be revived before the dogs were "completely run down by snow machines." But Page also knew she could talk on forever about a big new race unless she could get a musher interested in her "weird idea."

Dorothy's husband, Vondolee, was Superintendent of Schools in Wasilla then and had kept a dog team for several years. But Von only had time to train the dogs evenings and weekends. Sometimes he couldn't even manage to find time enough for those shorter periods of training. Many of the

teachers new to Alaska got their first taste of dog mushing by helping train the team, too. Von was also a member of the Aurora Dog Mushers Club. He said he thought the idea of a race on the historic trail was a good one, but that he'd have little time to help put such a race together. Others expressed interest in the idea but backed off because they thought it would take too much work.

About the time Dorothy had decided she couldn't stand it if one more person gave her a strange look and asked: "Are you crazy? Don't you realize how much work that would be?" she met the right musher to help her promote the race and put it together.

While attending the "Willow Winter Carnival" sled dog races in 1966, Dorothy talked to Joe Redington Sr., and his wife, Vi, who were then living at Flat Horn Lake. Joe was a veteran musher who had traveled over sections of the historic Iditarod Trail when he homesteaded adjacent to Flat Horn Lake.

During a lull in the finish of the Willow race, Dorothy went up to Redington and asked: "What do you think about having a race over the historic Iditarod Trail? We could begin re-opening the trail just out of Knik. Then we could gradually extend the trail until we reached Iditarod and maybe even Nome some day."

Redington had grinned and replied: "I think that's a great idea!" Vi agreed. With the Redingtons on her side, Page knew that many of the problems connected with making be-

lievers out of the other mushers were solved. But first they'd have to convince the twenty-three members of the Aurora Dog Mushers Club that the race was feasible.

At the next meeting of the club, the proposed Iditarod Trail race was the main topic of conversation. It was decided that the Wasilla-Knik Centennial Committee and the Aurora Dog Mushers Club would co-sponsor the race in 1967, the year that marked the 100th anniversary of the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867. The club unanimously endorsed the idea of having an Iditarod Trail race. Ed Carney of Wasilla, then president of the Aurora Dog Mushers Club, appointed an "Iditarod Trail Committee." Members included Joe Redington, Al Hibbard, Dorothy Page, Vi Redington and Ed Carney.

The first major problems the Iditarod committee faced were clearing the old trail overgrown with brush and trees, and scheduling the race between the season's two big races, the World Championship race in Anchorage and the North American Championship race in Fairbanks. They finally picked the dates, February 11 and 12, the usual time for the Aurora championship race.

Many people said the Iditarod Trail race wouldn't be a success because it was bucking the two prestige races. But the members of the Iditarod Trail committee kept working. They'd decided to offer \$25,000 in prize money and there was no end to fundraising activities. Also, they



A group of people, including Dorothy and Von Page, Joe and Vi Redington, Dan Seavey of Seward and Bill Coghill of Anchorage, gathered in Seward on the 4th of July in 1982 to dedicate the Mile "0" sign on the Iditarod Trail. It was paid for by the Iditarod Trail Blazers.

Photo by Steve Guzzi

decided to call the race the "Iditarod Trail International Championship Race," because they said someday it would attract mushers from all sections of Alaska, the smaller states and even foreign countries.

When the small group of Iditarod promoters signed up 58 mushers for the 1967 race, the Iditarod critics changed their tune. Because fund raising had taken time away from trail work, only nine miles of the Iditarod Trail were re-opened. The race covered 25 miles from Knik to Big Lake on Saturday, and from Big Lake to Knik on Sunday, for a total of 50 miles. Isaac Okleasik of Teller won the race. It took the committee the next year to get out of debt.

Due to lack of snow in 1968 the race was postponed. Snowmachine races were sweeping the area then, and for the 1969 race the committee could only raise \$1,000. George Attla, then living

in Huslia, won that year.

By 1970, snowmachine races were still attracting the attention of the majority of Alaskans and interest in the Iditarod waned. But trail work continued.

Members of the Iditarod Trail Committee knew that they couldn't hold the interest of Alaskans by extending the trail a little further each year towards Nome. Then, at a committee meeting in 1972, Joe Redington said: "Well, let's go all the way to Nome in 1973!"

Redington called Howard Farley in Nome and he started work on the Nome end of the trail. But not many other people believed that mushers could travel over 1,000 miles by dog teams. Clearing the trail was a gigantic task. Fortunately, because of scheduled training in an over-ground movement between Fort Richardson and Nome, the U.S. Army opened portions of the

Iditarod Trail. They employed snowmachines for transportation. The 172nd Arctic Light Infantry Brigade thus helped open and mark sections of the trail in advance of the Iditarod race. Five civilians on snowmachines also helped mark the trail.

On March 3, 1973, hundreds of people watched as 34 mushers left Anchorage and headed to Nome. When Dick Wilmarth of Red Devil, Alaska, reached Nome over the old winter trail mushers hadn't traveled for over 45 years, the celebration was like a combination of Fourth of July and Christmas.

Since 1973 annual races have been held. With each race comes the repetitious task of putting in the trail, raising prize money and staffing race headquarters in Anchorage and Nome. Hundreds of Alaskans donate their time each year to make the race a success.



JOHN "IRON MAN" JOHNSON

John "Iron Man" Johnson, whose incredible endurance made the record for the All Alaska Sweepstakes Race in 1910, is the musher to best in the 75th anniversary race, 1908 to 1983. Johnson covered the distance from Nome to Candle and return, 408 miles, in 74 hours, 14 minutes and 37 seconds. To the left in the photo is his noted blue-eyed leader, "Kolma," whose tireless pace was a marvel to the dog-loving North.

**ALL ALASKA SWEEPSTAKES
1908 to 75th Anniversary, 1983**

The Nome Kennel Club is sponsoring the "All Alaska Sweepstakes Race" on March 31, 1983, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the first race in 1908.

The 1983 race will follow the same trail as the 1908 race. It's 408 miles from Nome to Candle and return following the old telegraph line between various mining villages.

The route will be from Nome to Safety, then to Dixon; then to Topkok Hill; then over or around Topkok Hill, then to Timber Roadhouse, then to Council, then over the head of Melsing Creek to Boston Creek, across the Fish River Valley to Telegraph Creek, over the divide to Death Valley to Camp Haven, then to First Chance, then over the divide into Gold Run, then to Candle, and from Candle to Nome back on the same route.

Participants have until March 30, 1983, to deposit their entry fee, \$1,000 in gold, in the Miners and Merchants Bank in Nome.

The teams will start two minutes apart, the first team leaving at 10 a.m.

The 1983 race will follow the original rules as set out in 1908.

The purse is \$25,000, winner take all.

Those who wish additional information on the race can write to this address:

All Alaska Sweepstakes
Nome Kennel Club
PO Box 3
Nome, Alaska 99762

INDIRECT TRAIL FUND

1981 BUDGET

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INCOME:

Sweepstakes	\$104,000
Entry Fees	73,430
Appropriation	50,000
Grants	25,000
Plaque Sales	20,000
Memberships	6,000
Runner	9,000
Promotional Sales	60,000
Banquet	26,225
Misc.	7,000
Total Income	<u>\$380,655</u>

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE:

Meetings	\$ 550
Travel	300
Rent & Leases	1,820
Wages	19,000
Telephone	8,500
Office Supplies & Postage	4,300
Stationery & Printing	6,300
Runner	7,000
Legal	750
Misc.	4,100
	<u>\$ 52,620</u>

DIRECT RACE EXPENSE:

Trail	\$ 12,000
Ham Radio	12,000
Checkers & Officials	21,500
Veterinarians	7,000
Air Transportation	39,000
Prize Money	101,500
Trophies	1,300
Headquarters	4,300
Banquet	18,900
Misc.	4,035
	<u>\$221,535</u>

INDIRECT RACE EXPENSE:

Goods for Resale	\$ 40,000
Advertising & Public Relations	12,000
Sweepstakes & Raffles	51,000
Misc.	3,000
	<u>\$106,000</u>

TOTAL EXPENSE:

\$380,655



IDITAROD TRAIL COMMITTEE, INC

IDITAROD TRAIL COMMITTEE, INC.
1982-1983 PROPOSED BUDGET

TOTAL INCOME

Sweepstakes	\$100000
Entry fees	45000
Media Sales	14500
Sponsors	88500
Grants (30 + 25 new)	55000
Plaques	10000
Memberships	15000
Sales	120000
Banquet	25000
Misc. & Benefits	7500
	<u>480500</u>

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Wages & Commissions	57060
Travel & Meetings	7000
Telephone (Wasilla & Anch.)	5000
Supplies & Postage	1000
Stationary & Printing	4000
Runner Publication	5000
Legal	1500
Insurance	4500
Misc.	6500
	<u>98560</u>

DIRECT RACE EXPENSES

Trail	15000
Hams	11600
Checkers & Officials	26000
Vets	6000
Airforce	30000
Prize money	100000
Trophies	3000
Headquarters	18900
Banquets	23100
Misc.	9000
	<u>242600</u>

480,500 Income (1983)
-75,060 '82 debt

405,440

Expenses (1983)

98,560 Administrative
242,600 Direct Expenses
177,600 Indirect Expenses

468,760

75,060 '82 debt

Offered: 3/22/84
Referred: Finance

Original sponsors: Larson and Fuller

Funding Information
General Fund \$89,000
Other Funds -0-
\$89,000

BY THE LABOR AND
COMMERCE COMMITTEE

1 IN THE HOUSE

2

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 141 (L&C)

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

THIRTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

A BILL

6

For an Act entitled: "An Act making a special appropriation to the Depart-

7

ment of Commerce and Economic Development for payment

8

as a grant for the Iditarod Trail Committee, Inc.,

9

for construction of a permanent Iditarod sled dog

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race headquarters; and providing for an effective

11

date."

12

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

13

* Section 1. The sum of \$89,000 is appropriated from the general fund

14

to the Department of Commerce and Economic Development for payment as a

15

grant for the Iditarod Trail Committee, Inc., for construction of a perma-

16

nent Iditarod sled dog race headquarters.

17

* Sec. 2. The appropriation made by this Act shall be disbursed in

18

accordance with AS 37.05.316.

19

* Sec. 3. This Act takes effect immediately in accordance with AS 01.-

20

10.070(c).

Offered: 3/11/83
Referred: Finance

Original sponsors: Larson and Fuller

Funding Information
General Fund \$65,050
Other Funds -0-
\$65,050

BY THE LABOR AND
COMMERCE COMMITTEE

1 IN THE HOUSE

2

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 142 (L&C)

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

THIRTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5

A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act making a special appropriation to the Depart-
7 ment of Commerce and Economic Development for payment
8 as a grant for the Iditarod Trail Committee, Inc.,
9 for expenses of conducting the 1984 Iditarod sled dog
10 race; and providing for an effective date."

11 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

12 * Section 1. The sum of \$65,050 is appropriated from the general fund
13 to the Department of Commerce and Economic Development for payment as a
14 grant for the Iditarod Trail Committee, Inc., for expenses of the 1984
15 Iditarod sled dog race.

16 * Sec. 2. The appropriation made by this Act shall be disbursed in
17 accordance with AS 37.05.315 - 37.05.319.

18 * Sec. 3. This Act takes effect immediately in accordance with AS 01.-
19 10.070(c).

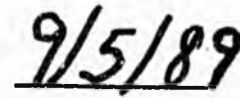


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