

## **SOCIETE DE DEVELOPPEMENT OF VEYSONNAZ**

### **60<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

Date : 07.04.2023  
Place and time : Gymnastics hall, 18h45  
Chaired by : Mme Nicole Fragnière Meyer (NFM)  
Presences : 60 people, of which 45 with the right to vote  
Excused : 9 people

LINK TO THE ACTIVITY REPORT: [www.veysonnaz.ch/agsd](http://www.veysonnaz.ch/agsd)

### **Order of the day**

1. Opening of the Assembly and greetings from the chairwoman
2. Appointment of the scrutineers
3. Control of attendance
4. Approval of the minutes from the GA held on the 15th of April 2022
5. Presentation of the activity report and accounts for 2022
6. Audit report
7. Approval of the activity report, accounts for 2022 and discharge of the Committee
8. Annual fees
9. Presentation and approval of the Budget 2023
10. Information regarding local authorities
11. Miscellaneous

### **Opening of the Assembly**

NFM opens the session at 19h00, greets the participants and thanks the members present, Patrick Lathion, President of the municipality who is to speak later, the local craftsmen and local businesses and Baptiste Constantin, Director of Nendaz Tourisme, who is also a member of the SDVE.

This Assembly is a little special this evening as it is indeed the 60<sup>th</sup> edition to be celebrated during the aperitif to be served after the official speeches.

In a spirit of sustainability and respect for the environment, only a few printed copies of the activity report are distributed to those who request it, as it is available on the VT website and can be downloaded by scanning the QR code provided.

### **Appointment of scrutineers**

M. Michel Tobler and M. Jean-Edouard Fragnière are appointed as scrutineers.

### **Control of attendance**

In the absence of a quorum for this Assembly, it is validly opened and held regardless of the number of members present. According to the attendance list drawn up at the entrance, 60 people are present, 45 of whom have the right to vote.

The committee is represented by NFM, Mme Mélanie Fragnière and Mme Ann-Kristin Huber. NFM apologizes for the absence of Mme Marylène Volpi Fournier and for Mme Laurence Fournier.

### **Approval of the minutes for the GA held on the 15th of April 2022**

The minutes had been sent to members following the 2022 Assembly and were available on the Tourist Information Office website. In the absence of any comments or questions, they were approved.

### **Presentation of the activity report and accounts for 2022**

The report is presented by the staff from the Tourist Information Office.

As a reminder, the year under review is that of the 1st of November 2021 to the 31st of October 2022.

### **General context 21-22**

A period marked by a gradual return to normal following the years of the pandemic that had previously disrupted activity. Throughout the year, some uncertainties remained, and planning could not always be carried out

smoothly, but overall, it has been a year that went well. Other concerns arose in the summer of 2022 with the energy crisis, which created a lot of uncertainty about the winter that has just ended, but fortunately without any consequences to the electricity supply and the opening of the ski lifts.

Attendance during this period has increased slightly. It should be noted that the graph presented in the activity report shows a sharp drop, however, which can be explained by the termination of the intermunicipal agreement with Nendaz in 2021, as Veysonnaz Tourism no longer receives the figures for overnight stays in establishments located in the municipality of Nendaz, nor the corresponding tourist taxes. These graphs must therefore be considered with a great deal of caution, as the figures are not on the same scale between last year and this year. However, if we put the figures on the same basis, a slight increase in overnight stays can be observed.

**Statistics** presented by Caroline Darbellay

**Commercial overnight stays** : Presentation of the graphs in the activity report, showing overnight stays, months, market origin. An increase in overnight stays of 3.73% between 2021 and 2022 when comparing the figures on the same basis, i.e. without the accommodation providers located in the municipality of Nendaz. An increase in the para-hotel sector but a decrease in the hotel sector, in accordance with a general trend both in Switzerland and in the Valais. In the Valais, the mountain regions have experienced a decrease in contrast to the urban areas.

**Reception and information** : A slight increase in the number of people requesting information from the Tourist Information Office, including the number of requests by telephone.

**Entertainment and activities** : The winter of 2020-21 was still subject to Covid measures which had a strong influence on the decrease in participation in the activities, which was no longer the case last winter, hence a significant increase. The main events and activities in winter are skiing and torchlight descents, and in summer the Bisses shuttle bus service, the Sun & Fun and Oursons club.

**Marketing** presented by Amélie Fartaria

**Statistics of the Internet site [www.veysonnaz.ch](http://www.veysonnaz.ch)** : The decrease in the figures is due to the user's choice to accept or not the website's cookies; if they refuse them, they do not appear in the statistics. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that the time spent on the site and the number of pages visited are increasing, which reflects the attractiveness of the site and its good use.

**Social networks** : At the moment we are working a lot with the networks, especially Facebook and Instagram, which give a lot of visibility and are a very good advertising tool. A very good and constantly growing activity and an increased participation of the people who follow us.

**Special offers and products** presented by Cindy Voide Lüthi

**Trade partners** : The figures presented in relation to the development of the collaboration with the Matterhorn Region (MRAG) reflect a positive trend, which is very promising, in terms of the numbers of journalists, influencers and especially tour operators for the European market. We are also working with Valais Wallis Promotion (VWP) to promote our products on the marketplace, a platform that is beginning to be used more, leading to an increase in bookings through this channel.

**Winter activities** : During the pandemic a growing interest in ski touring was observed and this trend was pursued by creating a new offer called "Dare to ski tour". We have also reiterated some existing offers such as « Dare to ski », « Ski Safari 4 Vallées ».

**Summer activities** : We have once again offered the "Yoga break in the mountains", but with a shorter version than the basic formula, "Nendaz trekking" and, to enhance the autumn outing, the "Mushroom workshops", we have added 1 night and a 3-course game menu to this offer. Three new activities: "Gourmet hike" which completes the « Bisse shuttle bus" offer, the summer season's flagship activity, « Flower tasting excursion » as well as « Secret world of the forest ».

On the Internet site [www.valais.ch](http://www.valais.ch) all these activities are easy to book in just a few clicks and without having to contact the Tourist Information Office.

## **Finances**

### **Accounts for 2022**

#### **Activities**

Key facts in income or accounts for 2022: the municipality of Nendaz no longer grants the SDVE the tourist taxes for accommodation located on its territory, either for holiday properties (flat-rate tourist taxes) or for commercial accommodation (taxes per night). Previously, the SDVE collected approximately CHF 86,000, an amount that no longer appears in the 2022 income. The municipality of Veysonnaz has renewed its contribution of CHF 80,000 in compensation.

#### **Expenses**

The higher than budgeted expenditure on salaries and social charges is due to two employees leaving during the year, which resulted in the payment of overtime which could not be compensated. The additional costs of approximately CHF 6,000 compared to the budget for the item "Publication, information material and website" are due to the publication of a new summer/winter activity card which was not yet planned when the budget was drawn up. The increase in "Activities, events and Sun&Fun » expenses compared to the previous year reflects the much lower number of activities organized in 2021, the period of the pandemic, activities which resumed in 2022. Under the heading "Tourist products", "covid vouchers" were budgeted to be used in local shops, part of which was paid for by the municipality and the other part by the SDVE, a cost that was finally entirely met by the municipality. The difference between 2021 and 2022 in "Sponsorship, subscriptions and donations" is explained by the withdrawal of the sponsorship of the 'Rallye du Valais', a decision taken during the year. Under "Marketing", the aid contribution for tourism partners granted by the Federal Council during the pandemic made it possible to somewhat lighten the financial burden of the contribution to the MRAG. An amount of CHF 85,000 had been allocated to "Tourism development" to improve the Magrappé play area but was finally not implemented. Investments in this area are still possible, but the projects are still under consideration and are not yet sufficiently advanced. In view of the available funds, no amortization was made in the year under review.

#### **Result**

The financial period was closed with a slight positive result of CHF 445.-. There remains a provision of CHF 45'000.- on the Balance Sheet as a precautionary measure.

**Audit** : The floor is taken by M. Olivier Fournier, auditor, who reads the report of the 20th February 2023 drawn up by himself and M. Gustave Grether recommending to the Assembly to accept the annual accounts and to grant discharge to the committee.

#### **Votes**

In the absence of any comments or questions, NFM resumes the floor for the vote:

- Approval of the activity report : unanimous
- Approval of the accounts for 2021-2022 : 3 abstentions
- Discharge granted to the committee : 1 abstention

#### **Annual fees**

The committee proposes to maintain the same amounts as in other years, as follows:

CHF 40.- for private property owners

CHF 60.- for businesses in Veysonnaz

CHF 200.- for businesses outside of Veysonnaz

The proposal is accepted by silent acceptance.

#### **Budget 2022-23**

The budget, briefly presented, was drawn up in line with the accounts for the previous year. In view of the uncertainty on this subject, no account is taken of a possible return of tourist taxes from the Municipality of Nendaz, the Municipality of Veysonnaz maintaining its contribution for an equivalent amount. Expenses are forecast to be similar to those of 2022, which gives a balanced budget with a positive result of CHF 374.-.

#### **Questions from the Assembly** :

Question : for tourist information, does it duplicate the work carried out by VIP? Does VIP do similar promotion or is this done together?

NFM VIP is a real estate agency, whereas the Tourist Information Office on the gondola square oversees distribution of information and promotion of the tourist facilities and activities. These are two different things.

Question : for sponsoring you have 19'000, who does the SDVE support?

NFM : these are mainly events which take place in Veysonnaz and which give our destination visibility, such as the Ski Cross, para-Olympic competitions and the Grand Raid for example.

### Vote

Approval of the budget 2023 : unanimous

### **Committee**

NFM recalls the composition of the Committee, which remains unchanged for the current year.

Members present :

Mme Ann-Kristin Huber, representing the estate agents and accommodation providers

Mme Mélanie Fragnière, representing craftsmen and local businesses, vice-President

Mme Nicole Fragnière Meyer, representing holiday property owners, President

Members excused:

Mme Marylène Volpi-Fournier, representing the municipality of Sion

Mme Laurence Fournier, representing the municipality of Veysonnaz

### **Presentation of the organization of Veysonnaz Tourisme**

Veysonnaz tourism has undergone some changes during the year and is still going through some. Bérengère Fournier, the longest serving member of staff at present, in charge of administration and reception, is currently on maternity leave and will return in September at 60%. Amélie Fartaria, in charge of marketing and events, has held this position on a 100% basis since July 2022. Cindy Voide Lüthi, who is responsible for special offers and sales, is a shared resource, 20% for Veysonnaz Tourism and 80% for Nendaz Tourism. From the 1st of June, a new reception and infrastructure manager will start on a 100% basis, Mme Frédérique Cordonier Schaffner.

A big thank you is extended to all these staff members, as well as to Mme Caroline Darbellay and Mme Véronique Fragnière who joined the staff for a few months, allowing the team to finish the winter and prepare for the summer with competent and reliable people, and to make the transition to a solid and sustainable organization as of June.

Before handing over to Patrick Lathion, NFM reminds everyone of the 'Coupe des Hôtes' which is taking place the following day on the Bambino run in the form of a parallel slalom ski race.

### **Information regarding the local authorities**

Patrick Lathion takes the floor, thanks the committee and staff of VT for the excellent work done with the means available and presents the Assembly with some information concerning the municipality, using a PowerPoint presentation:

1. Municipal tourism funding for the year 2022
2. route de Pra construction site
3. The issue of parking in the resort
4. The Sion-Veysonnaz merger

### **Tourism funding 2022** - main points

- **Skibus** : service fully funded by the municipality : CHF 80'000. Service prolonged to the 2<sup>nd</sup> parking area in the forest towards the Piste de l'Ours.
- **The mayens gondola** : the municipality finances the summer operating deficit, requested by NVRM, and accepted on an ad hoc basis: CHF 35'300.-.
- **Tennis courts and multisport arena** : major work carried out on the carpets which were defective (wrinkled), redone in June: CHF 21'900.-.
- **Maintenance** of footpaths, rando park and play areas : CHF 32'250.-.
- **Special action vouchers for R2**, 1 voucher of 100.-/R2 distributed for a total of 70'000.- ; vouchers cashed in for a total of CHF 38'325.-.
- **Sponsoring events** (Ski/snowboard cross, place aux Mômes) : CHF 22'750.-.

- **Other expenses** : police service, provision of equipment for events, parking, PT staff hours, administration : CHF 64'200.-.

**Municipal tourism funding** (not included in the budget allocated to the SDV) : CHF 294'725.-.

**Funding of the SDV** according to the accounts P&P : CHF 563'725.-.

**This means a total annual investment in tourism of CHF 858'450.-.** As a reminder, the municipal budget is 5 million, which means that a large part of the budget is allocated to tourism.

### **Work on the route de Pra**

Budgeted at CHF 4 mio. (complete refurbishment, road, infrastructure, pipelines, various places, urban furniture etc.), it is the largest infrastructure investment by the municipality for many years. The aim is to give this street back to the shopkeepers, local residents, tourists and property owners, to create space in front of each shop and to make it more user-friendly.

Authorization in force since the end of 2021 : road and signposting. Start of the roadworks on Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup> of April 2022 - stage 1 - from VIP to the Baker's. For the work carried out in 2022, CHF 1.2 mio. Have already been invested (945'000.- road, 133'000.- water, 117'000.- sewage). Balance 2023-2024: CHF 2.8 mio

Presentation of computer-generated images of the project. 2 information panels with visuals to be displayed at the resort. Some figures ; 45 parking spaces, 100 wooden seats, 2 telescopes, 800m2 of green area, 30 trees, 10 decking areas (terraces for shops and businesses), 1 large central square, etc. This street is to become a meeting zone 20km/h, priority to pedestrians with short/medium term parking spaces, of from 30 min. to 3h max with parking meters

Stage 2 – from the Baker's to Greppon Blanc. The work is to be carried out in several stages :

- 1<sup>st</sup> stage : from the 17th of April 2023 to the 7th of July 2023
- Summer break : from the 7th of July 2023 to the 16th of August 2023
- 2<sup>nd</sup> stage : from the 16th of August 2023 to the 15th of December 2023

Traffic will be restricted with temporary bypasses, but pedestrian access to local buildings and shops will be maintained and guaranteed throughout the construction period.

LINK TO THE WORK OF LA ROUTE DE PRA [www.veysonnaz.org](http://www.veysonnaz.org)

### **The issue of parking in the resort**

A strategy has been established with the support of a company specialized in the study of potential parking spaces. We are aware that we need public parking;

- Long-term (weekly) -> property owners, residents, guests
- Mid-term (daily) -> ski, hiking, ...
- Short-term (30 min to 3 h) -> access to shops, businesses, services, ...

3 areas available where the municipality is the landowner and has the benefit of having the right to build;

- Rte de Pra (short to mid-term)
- Area around the gondola station (short and mid-term) – improvements are planned.
- Forest area (mid and long-term) – focus this year on this area -> from VT to the rte du Caboulis. It is a cantonal road, and therefore a project managed by the canton, with drainage and water evacuation work to be carried out with several technical restrictions. The Canton is unable to start work this year with the time required to receive authorization, but advance measures have been negotiated to be implemented this year. These measures consist of lowering the surface of the road, providing sufficient

space above for parking and creating a safe pedestrian path that runs along the bank and not on the road as it does now. The spaces will be marked with 6 charging points for electric cars. Installation of a parking meter, min. 1.-, maximum stay 48h. Price 5.-/12h, 10.-/24h, 20.-/48h. For longer parking periods, guests will have to go to the forest sector further uphill with 72 spaces above/below, maximum stay. 2 weeks, 2.-/12h, 4.-/24h, 10.-/48h, 20.-/1 week., 40.-/2 weeks. The income will be used to recover the investment and to maintain the condition of the infrastructure.

It is also possible to rent parking spaces at the Parking des Grangettes, rental 1'500.-/year, 900.-/season.

### **Merger**

The basic observation, which remains unchanged, is that the municipality is too small to stand alone;

- Difficulty in renewing political authorities
- Increasing need for qualified and specialized personnel
- Limited financial means
- Very low effective autonomy with little room for improvement (numerous inter-municipal conventions)

A reminder of the stages 2019-2020 ;

- May 2019: Consideration and feasibility study initiated
- March 2020: participatory workshops with the population (3 options studied) -> No change (solo route) / merger with Sion / merger with Nendaz
- October 2020: Strategic report presented to the population
- 29th of November 2020: consultative vote with a participation rate of 90%  
Yes to a merger : 87,5%, with Sion: 55%, with Nendaz: 45%.

Stages 2021-2022 ;

- January 2021 : official request to Sion for a merger study
- February 2021 : approval of the Communal Council of the Town of Sion
- 2021-2022 : strategic report established by Sion (in favour of a merger with Veysonnaz)
- April 2022: presentation to the public in Sion and Veysonnaz
- April 2022 : decision of the two local councils to proceed to the operational phase -> merger report to be established
- August 2022: workshops with the population in Veysonnaz (identifying expectations and fears)
- October 2022: strategic orientations adopted by the two councils

Stages 2023-2024 ;

- 30th of March 2023 : presentation of the merger report at a press conference
- 30th of March 2023: public consultation of the merger report (local authorities' internet sites)
- 4th of April 2023: consultative vote of the General Council of Sion
- 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 2023 : presentation to the population in Veysonnaz
- 18th of June 2023: Final vote in Sion and Veysonnaz
- During 2024 : decision of the Grand Council
- Autumn 2024 : election of new political authorities (CC and CG)
- 01.01.2025: the new municipality takes office

The ways in which tourism is concerned, the main points of this merger report are as follows:

- Maintaining the Tourist Information Offices and employment in Veysonnaz and Sion
- Maintaining or boosting budgets for tourism
- Centralization of back-office tasks (HR, admin, accounts)
- Creation of a tourism structure in the form of a limited company, which is being set up with the aim of undertaking large-scale promotion. Its shareholders for the moment; Town of Sion, Bourgeoisie of Sion, the majority of the surrounding municipalities solicited have desired to join (Veysonnaz, the municipality of Adret and lowland municipalities, municipality of the Val d'Herens), the société de développement of Sion.
- Diversification of products (complementarity) and promotion of 4-season activities

LINK TO THE MERGER REPORT [www.veysonnaz.org/fusion](http://www.veysonnaz.org/fusion)

**Question time :**

Question : This means that the association in which we are participating this evening will be dissolved if there is a merger with Sion?

PL : No, the SDV remains in existence, it is a company that exists thanks to members' contributions. So there is no reason for it to stop. The SDV could also become a shareholder in the tourism SA. So it is possible for you to have a representative in this SA, I think it is important to have the voice of the members of the SDV.

Question : In connection with this, the parking spaces you mentioned are located in the municipality of Sion, will you have a retrocession, a sharing of the benefit, how will it be dealt with?

PL : The basic plot is owned by the Bourgeoisie of Sion and we have created a right to use the land, which gives the property to the Municipality of Veysonnaz for 30 years, who can develop these plots as they wish. The municipality pays a rent, if you like.

Question : What about the Sion cable car – Piste de l'Ours ?

PL : It is a project that is underway, well advanced according to the President of the town, it has been put forward for authorization and is facing some opposition which is being dealt with. There is also a modification in the request for authorization concerning the arrival station to make it more functional, a complementary request for authorization will follow. The process of this groundbreaking project is ongoing, this takes time.

Question : on distance heating in relation to the work of the route de Pra.

PL : The company Oiken SA is leading this project. This company is funding and commercializing this innovative heating system using local resources (wood). Oiken has already equipped the Route de Pra in order to take advantage of the roadworks in progress. The distance heating project is moving forward and could be finalized for 2025 or 2026. The Municipality has included in its new zoning regulations the obligation to connect to the distance heating system.

**Miscellaneous**

NFM : thanks PL for his participation. In the absence of any further comments or questions, she closes the session at 20h15. Drinks are served accompanied by a delicious anniversary cake.

LINK TO THE ACTIVITY REPORT : [www.veysonnaz.ch/agsd](http://www.veysonnaz.ch/agsd)