

*The other side of the story...*

## The King's Men Want a Lot More

Snow King has a place in our hearts. It's the ski area Wyoming grew up with—the first in the state and the hill many locals learned to ski on.

But we can't be over emotional. Too often, the new and very wealthy billionaire owners have 'cried-poor' and demanded new entitlements. At times, they've threatened to shut down the lifts if they didn't get their way.

And it's not just the new owners. The threat of closing the lifts has been going on for decades. Fearing the worst, our electeds have made concession after concession, year after year. Developer wins, taxpayer loses.

We need to sit down at the bargaining table like businessmen. Make no mistake; these new owners are very shrewd businessmen.

First order of business? Let it be known the era of secrecy is over. The "King's Men" must reveal their existing contracts and agreements if they want new deals. No more hiding behind LLCs like SKRMA as a means to avoid full disclosure.

If we are to believe the hill is going bankrupt, as is sometimes claimed, let's see the books. They may need to be audited. No transparency, no new deals.

This is fair. Remember, it's the Snow King entities that want a new deal with new entitlements and new concessions. They want the benefits so they need to be open to a negotiation.

And what do locals want? What they've always wanted: Keep the ski hill open, updated and running smoothly. So in the give and take of negotiations, that should be Town priority #1.

Call it a challenge and present it to the developers. No new deal without ski hill funding. It's not hard; charge a Common Area Fee spread across the other Snow King entities. That is what the oft-ignored SKRMA is supposed to be doing.

Our electeds represent the public, but at times they've been too friendly with Snow King Owners.

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Town could benefit by engaging an experienced business negotiator to interact with the developers on their behalf. Two key deliverables would be a project completion disclosure package and an impact statement. No votes would be taken before these documents had a public airing.

Snow King currently enjoys some sweet deals, like pitifully low lease rates on town properties. But they turn around and charge the public just to walk up to the peak. How is that fair?

Town hill is dear to us all. We have a say. Let's not be afraid to speak up about what we want.

And it can't be over emphasized: Snow King owners are no longer locals with a stake in the community. They are shrewd mega-millionaire developers with deep pockets. They build projects and sell them off.

Our electeds shouldn't forget who they work for.

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