AMC NH Chapter – Minutes

Meeting Date: April 4, 2013

Meeting Location: Holiday Inn, Manchester, NH

Members in Attendance:
✓ Karen Thurston Chair
✓ Wayne Goertel Vice Chair
✓ Bill Warren Treasurer
✓ Beth Zimmer Secretary
✓ Gene Harding Bike Chair
Paul Hopkins Conservation
Eric Savage Education Chair; Past Chair
Leon Tokatlian Excursions Co-Chair
Jennifer Varney Excursions Co-Chair
✓ Patty Anderson Hospitality Chair
✓ Mitch Manseau Membership Co-Chair
✓ Marianne Page Membership Co-Chair
✓ Jim Kent Mountaineering Co-Chair
✓ Tom Sintros Mountaineering Co-Chair
✓ Ron Janowitz Newsletter Editor
David Phillips Newsletter Editor
Susan Englert Newsletter Editor
✓ Sally Leonard Paddling Co-Chair
Marcy Stanton Paddling Co-Chair
✓ Paul Berry Programs Co-Chair
✓ Marie Berry Programs Co-Chair
✓ "Sam" Ruth Jamke Regional Director, North (NH & ME)
Tony Schmidt Ski Co-Chair
Valerio Viti Ski Co-Chair
✓ Richie Holstein Trails Chair
✓ Tom Todd Webmaster
✓ John Green Young Members Chair
✓ Roger Scholl Guest / AMC Staff Liaison
✓ Rick Silverberg Guest / Outdoor Leadership Development
✓ Susan Arnold Guest / AMC VP for Conservation
Call to Order

K. Thurston called the meeting to order at 7:05.

Approval of March ’13 Minutes / Beth Zimmer

B. Zimmer had sent out minutes to ExComm members via prior e-mails. A motion was made by T. Todd to approve the minutes as presented; it was seconded by T. Sintros; the motion was approved unanimously.

Review of March ‘13 Treasurer’s Report / Bill Warren

B. Warren had sent out treasurer reports to ExComm members via prior e-mails. The reports were received without question or comment. B. Warren noted that membership continues to grow, which will result in an increase in monies coming to the chapter.

Report-out from Director’s Meeting / Sam Jamke

There has been discussion among the Chapter Directors relative to “financial planning.” The NH chapter has been asked to make a presentation at the next Chapter Director Retreat about our financial planning practices (reference last month’s report by the ad hoc budget committee). S. Jamke shared that this will be very helpful to the other chapters.

Next Meeting: Date and Food

The next meeting will be on Thursday, May 9, 2013.

Thanks go out to the Membership Committee for tonight’s meal chili, cornbread and sandwiches. Next month, food will be provided by the Paddling Committee.

AMC Conservation Update / Susan Arnold, VP for Conservation
S. Arnold gave Excomm members an update on priority NH legislative issues. She began that conservation can be viewed as a 3-legged stool including: basic scientific research; policy and advocacy which is shaped by research; and stewardship / trails.

1/ LCHiP: The NH house just past its budget including some monies for the Land Conservation and Historic Preservation program (LCHiP) which over the last 4-6 years has been underfunded. In the recent few years, two thirds of the monies that were intended to be dedicated to LCHiP have gone into the general fund. This year Governor Hassan’s budget continues this practice for one more year, but returns (most) money from the general fund back into the dedicated LCHiP fund in year two. LCHiP is an important tool, matching funds often required when trying to compete for or acquire federal monies for projects.

2/ Search & Rescue: The search and rescue fund has been perennially underfunded. Many feel search and rescue should be a government responsibility. The limited monies that are available come first through boat and ORV registration. Beyond that, additional funds come from Fish and Game sources (hunter licenses, etc.). Gov. Hassen put an additional $200K into the biennial budget for Search and Rescue. There was a bill introduced to implement some of the recommendations from a study committee; this bill has been retained, for further study and discussion. One aspect being considered is a voluntary “hiker card.” Modeled on a concept from Colorado, hikers may voluntarily purchase a “hiker card.” Monies from the card are dedicated to the search and rescue fund. Search and rescued costs are covered for hikers who have purchased the card. While not required, hikers without the card would have to reimburse S&R costs. As the bill is still in study, there is an opportunity to help shape this concept and get involved in the discussion.

3/ [Energy] Site Evaluation Committee: The Site Evaluation Committee determines where all energy facilities get sited (think: Northern Pass, wind farms, etc.). This committee is comprised of 15 members from various state agencies that sit on this committee above and beyond their full-time jobs. The committee is not obliged to take local input. The committee has no support staff. Over a dozen bills are being introduced around energy-related issues. The Site Evaluation Committee is overwhelmed. Their mandate is not current and does not adequately help them deal with the new technologies coming in. One element greatly lacking is a fixed criteria for the evaluation of large projects (ex., Northern Pass). The committee is not in a position to handle a project of this scope and scale. AMC is trying to help this committee develop specific criteria for wind power (this was at the request of a legislative committee); that was in 2007 – and now 6 years later, there has been no progress.
There are three proposed wind power projects in the Newfound Lake area, two of which will impact the view-scape from Mt. Cardigan. AMC position is that more renewable energy is needed and that we need an overall cleaner ‘energy economy.’ The AMC is not against wind power and alternative technologies per se, but the AMC is advocating that governments generate specific criteria and standards for measuring the impact in rural communities so that projects are implemented in a thoughtful manner.

A question was asked regarding AMC’s policy on nuclear energies. S. Arnold replied that the AMC is not against nuclear energy, but would not support further development until there are solutions regarding waste disposal. S. Arnold added that the AMC’s approach is three-pronged: conservation; distributive energy (such as solar arrays on homes); and appropriately sited wind and solar (renewable energy.)

4/ Trails and funding for trails. There will be a beefed up campaign to seek funding for trails. In the past, funding has come through some federal programs such as the AT Conservancy and US Park Service, etc. With sequestration, trail funding sources (cost share grants) are in question. The present White Mountain trail crew is at “12,” which is down from “36.” This is critical, making such efforts as “adopt-a-trail” much more important. Trail volunteers, too, are increasingly important. Funding is in dire straits and we are still dealing with the impact of Hurricane Irene, etc. Thus, appeals for money, support and volunteering will be increasing.

5/ Energy Plan: There is a piece of legislation proposing that NH develop an energy plan, or road map of where they want to go. AMC is in support of the State developing such a plan.

6/ Members are encouraged to sign up for NH Conservation Alerts: http://conservationnh.org/

Calendar Review

- April 6-8: Young Members Inter-chapter Weekend
- April 20-21: Cardigan Spring School; White Water School; Glacier Travel; Wild NH Day; Willem Lange Dinner
- May 17-19: AMC Chapters’ Retreat
- Nominating time of year
- Our last meeting prior to summer break will be in June.
Key Dates for 2013-14 ExComm

- August 1: Submit article, slate, and web-link to Mountain Passages with cc to Web
- September 5: ExComm Meeting - Annual Reports and Final 2013-14 Slate due to Beth Zimmer, Secretary
- September 25: Beth Zimmer sends Annual Report including 2013-14 Slate to printer/web
- October 26: NH Chapter Annual Dinner at Canterbury Woods Country Club

NH Chapter Response to Recent AMC Membership Drive Efforts

K. Thurston began that the Club has an obvious need to keep memberships renewed. She had received five notices spread over time to various addresses or variations of her name; the root cause is having different addresses over time and the AMC practice of renting lists. Two notices were for renewals; two were for becoming a new member. Some members see this as not a big deal, but other members are frustrated and their views have gone viral on Facebook.

J. Kent explained that we lost a mountaineering member (treasurer/winter school instructor). She was leaving the country and had paid her membership. The system did not receive this; they bounced her out and told her she was not eligible to be trip leader; she is now taking a break from the club. R. Scholl stated that he had information about what had happened (the other side of the story) and that he would share that privately.

J. Kent received four renewals in mail. He was displeased. Renewal notices started in December when his membership expired in March. He feels Joy St. is not considering [Chapter] input to the technology and systems that we are required to use. J. Kent expressed that there should be some recognition of Club volunteers, and that the organization and computer systems should know “who I am and what I do.”

K. Thurston asked if there should be a motion to write a letter to the Club, to research a better, more sophisticated system renewal system. She wondered if people will leave club and wondered if we are not hearing from people who have been affected.
R. Scholl mentioned that there are approximately 85,000 members. Each year about 20,000 leave and 21,000 join. These are large numbers for a database system to manage. T. Todd had concerns that there were 20,000 individuals leaving each year, but R. Scholl explained that AMC membership conversion is better than standards from similar organizations.

S. Jamke noted that the membership renewal software and its data-base, is linked with the On-line Trip data-base.

R. Scholl has talked with Teri Morrow (AMC Membership). If Chapters / volunteers want a constructive dialog, the AMC is ready to engage in dialog. There is a 7-tiered renewal process. Any member can suppress all but one notice by calling the office, but this is not well known. In discussion or consideration for trip leaders is a 3-year renewal process with a discount. Club wide, there are 2300 trip leaders. Three to four hundred give gifts to club in excess of dues to the amount of $33,000. Lastly, there are many members who thank the AMC for the many reminders. True, a minority finds the renewals offensive, but many find the renewals helpful. There is also discussion about perhaps using the OLT database to send out fewer e-mails and/or to use the OLT for different level of communications. It is time to do something different for committees and trip leaders.

P. Berry too feels some annoyance, but felt it didn’t rise to a sense of urgency. He suggested letting the issue go to the Chapters Committee especially knowing that R. Scholl is working on it.

As no further discussion was noted, there was no motion. Conversation regarding this topic will be ongoing. And there was general recognition that T. Morrow does the best she can with the resources and system purchased for her.

R. Scholl felt that the best option was to speak with one voice. He suggested we readdress the topic next month and that we bring this topic to the May Chapter’s Retreat. R. Scholl and S. Jamke will both try to get this on the agenda. Chapter representatives can then speak to their chapters, and perhaps make some decisions at the October retreat.

R. Scholl
Report from the Program Committee

A luncheon at Pease Golf Course & Grill28 is set for Saturday, June 8, 2013.

Paul and Marie Berry provided members with a sheet that outlined preliminary efforts and inquiries regarding our fall annual meeting which is scheduled for October 26, 2013. Tentative talks have been held with a number of venues, including Alan's of Boscawen, the Grappone Center, and Audubon/Common Man catering. Costs (for example, buffet versus “plate”) and benefits of a variety of options were presented. There was some discussion about dates and if there was any leeway with the date (as some venues are scheduling fall weddings, etc. and might not be available on 10/26). If the event needed to be moved to November 2 or 9, we would be able to adjust the ExComm meeting schedule. It was felt that it was not the role of the ExComm to vote on a specific proposal per se, but that the Program Committee had the approval to move forward and make a commitment on behalf of the Chapter. The Committee was extremely appreciative of the time and effort P. and M. Berry have put into the Annual Meeting planning.

There was preliminary discussion regarding the degree to which the Chapter should, or should not, subsidize ExComm members at the Annual Meeting. As this topic has a past practice or history, and as there was likely to be considerable input and discussion, this topic was tabled until the next meeting.

As a reminder, Michael Tougias, author of several books, is lined up to be our guest speaker. The chapter has had him at two prior annual meetings; attendance at his most recent appearance was 125 participants. M. Tougias’ most recent book is A Storm Too Soon: A True Story of Disaster, Survival and Incredible Rescue.

*A subsequent e-mail from Marie and Paul Berry confirmed that the Annual Meeting will occur on Saturday, October 26, 2013 as planned, and will take place at Canterbury Woods Country Club.
Future Topics

- Microsites vs Orphan Sites: What’s the best structure to balance both committee content and chapter website?
- Mountain Passages: what is the future direction of our newsletter.
- Subsidizing ExComm members at the Annual Meeting
- Ad-hoc Education Committee report
- Clothing and fleece, vision of branding
- How to or “if” to offer CPR to trip leaders
- Huts Nights: Should this activity fall under Excursions? To what extent should the Chapter underwrite participant costs?

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 9, 2013.

Adjourned

At 8:55 a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by W. Goertel; seconded by R. Holstein; and approved unanimously.

Minutes: Beth Zimmer