AMC NH Chapter – Minutes

Meeting Date: November 4, 2013

Meeting Location: Holiday Inn, Manchester, NH

Members in Attendance:

√ Wayne Goertel Chair
√ Bill Warren Vice Chair
√ Rick Desmarais Treasurer
√ Beth Zimmer Secretary
√ Karen Thurston Past Chair
√ Paul Hopkins Conservation
√ Eric L. Savage Education Chair
Jennifer Varney Excursions Co-Chair
David Ross Excursions Co-Chair
√ Lu Ann Laquerre Hospitality Chair
√ Marianne Page Membership Co-Chair
√ Ed Parker Membership Co-Chair
√ Jim Kent Mountaineering Co-Chair
Tom Sintro Mountaineering Co-Chair
Ron Janowitz Newsletter Editor
√ Michelle O’Donnell Newsletter Editor
Susan Englert Newsletter Editor
√ John Pilla 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
√ Joshua Meltzer Young Members Chair
√ Sally Leonard Guest / Paddling Treasurer
Guest /
Guest /
Guest /
Call to Order

W. Goertel called the meeting to order at 7:04. As new members were present, introductions were made.

Marie and Paul Berry were thanked for all of their work at annual meeting. Paul Hopkins was thanked for his photographs, which were presented as gifts.

Gene Harding (Biking) was thanked for tonight’s dinner of homemade beef stew! The Programs Committee volunteered to provide dinner at our next meeting in February.

Approval of September ‘13 Minutes / Beth Zimmer

Beth Zimmer had sent out minutes to ExComm members via a prior e-mail.

A motion was made by Marianne Page to approve the minutes as presented; it was seconded; there was no discussion or comment and the motion was approved unanimously.

Review of October ‘13 Treasurer’s Report / Rick Desmarais

Bill Warren had sent out treasurer reports to ExComm members via a prior e-mail, reflecting finances through the end of October. The reports were received without question or comment. We’re in great shape, financially. With resources coming in and budget planning around the corner, we should keep in mind volunteer appreciation.

Calendar / Volunteer Appreciation at the Currier Gallery – December 5, 2013

As of tonight, the volunteer appreciation event at the Currier Gallery has 35 registrants; there is space for 75. ExComm members were asked to spread the word within their respective committees. As a reminder, the event is free for the volunteer but there is a small fee for any guest.

Calendar / Winter events

Jim Kent shared that the mountaineering committee has a full agenda this coming winter with ice climbing, mountaineering avalanche awareness and glacial travel, etc.

The Ski Committee Chairs were not present tonight.

The Excursions Committee is again presenting the Winter Hiking Series and they are conducting two winter weekend sessions at the Cardigan Lodge.
Calendar / Miscellaneous

November 31, 2013 – Deadline for the AMC NH Chapter’s January / February Newsletter

January 10, 2013 - Committee budgets due to Rick Desmarais, Treasurer

January 25, 2014 – AMC’s 138th Annual Summit (business meeting, awards, dinner and guest speaker)

February 6, 2014 - Our next ExComm Meeting

Fall Gathering

Bill Warren spoke about his experiences at the AMC’s Fall Gathering. There was an Outdoor Leadership Development Committee (OLDC) meeting chaired by AMC NH representative Rick Silverberg. A lot of time was spent on discussion of the new release form. There is a “big push” for membership and all trip leaders are being asked to use the new form. There was consensus that if people are engaged in chapter activities, they are more apt to join the Club as members. That said, the new non-member waiver form is not mandatory, but a waiver must still be signed by all participants.

This past fall, there was an OLDC sponsored “Train the Trainer” meeting at Nobel View, which was well attended. Much time was spent discussing the fifth pillar - “Excellence in Outdoor Skills and Leadership.” There is a need for more and better technology, communication tools and training that is more in line with our current members. One example might be developing an app for smart phones, etc. Better IT is being sought for transferring information among leaders, etc.

Also in the works are discussions regarding training all of the leaders within the AMC organization. Presently, leadership training and approval is not consistent among the varied chapters, and thus, establishing a “baseline” for the Club as a whole is a target goal. Also being considered is trying to reach out to volunteers and bring them up to leadership status. The direction sought will be one of establishing base line guidelines, such as having a mentoring program, but it will still be up to individual chapters to define what their mentoring program will be or what it will look like.

Ed Parker attended the membership discussions. In this group too, use of the new waiver form was discussed. The new form is a way for the Club to follow up with prospective members. To date, there are approximately 12,500 NH members. In reviewing membership metrics, the NH Chapter is ranked #1 and/or #2 in the areas of renewals and retentions. With regards to communication, every new member gets a welcome letter; every renewal gets a thank you letter; and the NH Chapter has an opportunity to put a message on the back of these letters. Members get a series of e-mails in response to joining or renewing. There was also discussion about perhaps establishing some form of a “multi-year renewal.” A discount offered to a multi-year renewal might be offset when you factor in the cost of soliciting the renewal. A different relationship is established with multi-year agreements and you can change your “message” beyond that of merely another “transaction.” Auto pay or auto renewal was also discussed.
Wayne Goertel mentioned that at the Chapters Committee meeting, representatives were shown a much “amped up” link to information on the Northern Pass issue, which now includes a virtual “fly through” which allows users to see the impact of Northern Pass on the vista.

Meetup Tools

Jen Varney from Excursions will report back to the Committee at our March meeting. At the fall gathering, representatives from other chapters shared that they are using similar tools and they offered strategies for managing Meetup.

Programs Committee

Paul Berry shared that on December 7, Chapter volunteers will be at the Winter Expo at NHTI in Concord, NH. Paul asked for representation from the different committees and several committee members volunteered. In February, a pot-luck program is being slated for the Nashua area, with a speaker TBD. On April 12 at Makris Restaurant in Concord, NH, Sam Jamke will be presenting a program on Patagonia. Regarding our fall annual meeting, Paul emphasized that it is the draw of the speaker that truly brings in the guests; the ‘price point’ for tickets can be discussed further during the budget process. The most recent joint partnership with Audubon - which was a presentation on tar sands - went well; it not as well attended as hoped, but it was a good start. Paul would like to have a sign and/or digital photo frame that will inform folks that most of the chapter activities are free and open to the public.

Fleece

Rick Desmarais, Treasurer, has the fleece inventory. We sold some at the annual meeting and there were some additional sales after the meeting. Presently there are 78 fleece items still in stock. Discussion followed regarding what our future model should be, which is to either remain in the fleece business and replenish stock, or look towards an “on-demand” model. After discussion, Beth Zimmer made a motion to liquidate the present inventory by selling remaining fleece units for $25; this was seconded and approved unanimously. Volunteers were sought to form an ad-hoc Fleece Committee whose job it will be to recommend some form of “on demand” sale of Chapter fleece and/or other types of clothing. Wayne Goertel, Rick Desmarais, and Tom Todd volunteered to be on this ad hoc committee.

Budget Prep for 2014

Bill Warren, in reference to the treasurer’s report, that generous balances are left in most committees. He reminded committee members that if monies are not spent, funds couldn’t be carried over into 2014. As we come into budget planning, he reminded committee chairs that
the “narrative” or written explanation of what an item is, is equally important to the “number” or dollar amount being requested.

There was brief discussion about reimbursing leaders for different types of training. It was felt that this decision should be in the hands of the respective committee chairs. If a leader has given value to a particular committee, perhaps it would be okay to reimburse them for the training, even if there is no guarantee of that leader remaining active within the committee. On the other hand, perhaps there may be a committee or situation where we will not reimburse a leader unless a service or certain amount of service is given. Again, this decision is best left to individual committees.

Wayne Goertel provided members with a suggested template, or model for budget preparation. The model included “past budget” and “actual spent” and the approximate numbers of participants / audience. Budgets must be submitted to Rick Desmarais, Treasurer, by January 10th; the February 6th meeting will be devoted to creating our 2014 budget. Wayne will send out the template and memo to committee chairs. Wayne emphasized that use of a standard template will help ensure a smooth process. As a reminder, based on the ad hoc budget committee, if a committee has anything that is out of the ordinary (unusual expenses), please separate that out within your budget. Bill Warren reminded chairs to emphasize leadership development and recognition within budget proposals.

**Gunstock Facility Use / Jim Kent**

Jim Kent raised a concern regarding use of the Gunstock facility for some of the mountaineering training events (April Crevasse Rescue). In the past, Gunstock has allowed the Chapter to use the grounds free of charge after the ski area has closed. The Events Manager at Gunstock has indicated that they may now consider applying a fee for the use of the grounds. Jim reminded all that the activities held there do NOT utilize any power, utilities or facilities. Gunstock is a county-owned parcel, and he questioned whether we should be paying a fee to use public lands. Jim would like to see someone at the Club level engage with Gunstock. Sam Jamke will inquire who within the AMC Club might be point person on this issue. Some questions were raised as to whether there are other alternatives; Jim spoke about how access, terrain and other features make Gunstock a more ideal alternative to other areas.

**Biking Committee / Gene Harding**

Gene Harding reported on some feedback he has received after the last two rides. While there are numerous biking clubs in northern pockets of the state, it would appear that they are not interested in being part of AMC NH Chapter activities. Many of the local leaders do not want to become bike leaders for the AMC but prefer to ride locally.
Adjournment

At 8:45, Beth Zimmer made a motion to adjourn. This was seconded and approved unanimously.

Minutes: Beth Zimmer
11/4/13