AMC NH Chapter – Minutes

Meeting Date:        April 3, 2014

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
√     Gene Harding   Biking
√     Paul Hopkins   Conservation
Eric L. Savage Education
Jennifer Varney Excursions Co-Chair
David Ross Excursions Co-Chair
√     LuAnn Laquerre Hospitality Chair
Marianne Page Membership Co-Chair
√     Ed Parker      Membership Co-Chair
Jim Kent Mountaineering Co-Chair
Tom Sintros Mountaineering Co-Chair
Susan Englert Newsletter Editor
√     Ron Janowitz  Newsletter Editor
√     Michelle O’Donnell 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
√     Larry Yetter   Guest (Excursions’ Treasurer)
√     Wanda Rice     Guest (Family Group)
Call to Order

Wayne Goertel called the meeting to order at 7:01.

Ron Janowitz and LuAnn Laquerre, from the Newsletter and Hospitality Committees, were thanked for tonight's dinner.

Upcoming dinner schedule:
- May: Excursions
- June: Membership
- September: Mountaineering
- October: Paddling
- November: Ski & Trails
- December: Young Members & Biking

Approval of March '14 Minutes / Beth Zimmer

Beth Zimmer had sent out minutes to ExComm members via a prior e-mail. A motion was made by Paul Berry to approve the minutes as presented; it was seconded; there was no discussion or comment and the motion was approved unanimously.

Review of Treasurer's Report / Rick Desmarais

Rick Desmarais had sent out treasurer reports to ExComm members via a prior e-mail. Invested reserves from Joy Street are up. Currently we have in assets over $92,000. There was no further discussion or comment.

Active Leader Discussion (Continuation from March 2014)

Wayne Goertel referred members to a document that Beth Zimmer had sent out via e-mail, summarizing ExComm’s prior discussions regarding leadership recognition and benefits. On September 2013, an ad hoc committee had recommended that the various committees “determine what rewards and incentives might occur at varying levels of leader participation.” In the 2014 budget cycle, approximately $18,000 is dedicated towards leader training and certification.

Paul Berry wondered if it would perhaps be more appropriate for ExComm to consider creating a unifying definition as to what an active leader is; we could add a provision that a committee could create their own definition, but that a “unifying definition” could serve as a baseline of sorts.

Representatives from the Paddling Committee shared that they had had a recent conversation, and agreed that if someone is “active” they can get certification and training. Members of this
committee would be uncomfortable with having a “mandate” that resulted in their having to create by-law changes.

Wayne Goertel acknowledged that this is a challenging topic and that we may not easily find a unifying or “default” definition that could be applied across all of the committees as varied as newsletter, paddling and hiking.

Bill Warren noted that we have service committees and activity committees and that it would be hard to put these types of committees into the same category.

Ron Janowitz offered that it didn’t seem that onerous for committees to come up with their own definition of what constitutes an active leader.

There was general agreement that volunteer service within a committee could count towards receiving benefits.

Gene Harding offered that if certain people give lots of hours, that it sounds appropriate to have the committees consider what is appropriate in terms of recognition, etc.

John Pilla expressed that perhaps we should further clarify, perhaps require, that if you are going to get money from the chapter you must be willing to offer a definition of how one qualifies for a benefit, (i.e., training); but if a committee is using their own funds, they would not have to submit to this process with the Chapter.

Bill Warren expressed that if each committee had a definition in their bylaws, it would not need to be an ExComm bylaw. Paul Berry urged that the group consider staying away from by-laws, as to change by-laws in the Paddling Committee requires a discussion and vote at the large summer cookout/gathering, which includes white water enthusiasts and not merely Committee members.

Paul Hopkins wondered if we should consider this as a “standing rule.”

A motion with amended language was offered, that, “All standing committees, shall establish criteria as to what constitutes an active leader;” Bill Warren moved the motion; it was seconded and supported unanimously. ExComm would ask that this definition be due to ExComm at the June Meeting.

Communications Topics

Wayne Goertel began, “How we reach out to constituents?” We have some room in a section of AMC’s Outdoors magazine. The Club would like to engage more people online, and that they will be shrinking the trip listings section in the back of the magazine. Wayne wondered if there continues to be utility of this venue given the online presence. Trips are largely full by the time the magazine is published. The Club did an analysis, which showed that only 9-20% use the magazine to engage trip listings. He added that the Club will continue to promote large activities such as winter school, white water school, activities that cost money and adventure travel, etc., but that it plans to move away from the individual trip listings.
Wayne Goertel outlined all of the different venues for posting and advertising: OTL (online trip listing), Outdoors magazine, Facebook, Meetup, e-mails, etc. He added that how we manage all of these venues could be interesting. Some chapters are using Meetup exclusively.

John Pilla shared that Paddling manages a database of 1200 names, with approximately 20% of members being active paddlers. There is a newsletter on top of this. They have also transitioned to Meetup, which will be replacing both the newsletter and email. Some paddling leaders are now using Meetup for trip registration. Spring meeting attendance was up and they have attracted new members since using Meetup. You can “push out” information to anyone who is a Meetup member. John Pilla stated that the use of the Meetup tools have had a positive impact on Paddling. He added that if the Chapter or a Committee wanted a media venue for “communication” purposes only, that the establishment of a Yahoo or Google Group might be more appropriate. Meetup has more tools and this is only a “complement” to what a leader already does; leaders will continue to determine how people sign up for trips.

Larry Yetter and Beth Zimmer shared that Excursions has recently begun using Meetup to advertise and register hikers for trips. Leaders still conduct the requisite screening. The Meetup tools allow for leaders to ask pre-screening questions, etc.

Wayne Goertel asked if the group wished to consider a few strategic goals. For example, do members think about using Meetup as a Chapter tool or as a Committee tool? The same could be asked about Facebook. And should we coordinate platforms?

John Pilla explained that paddling using Facebook for connecting socially, posting photos, listing items for sale and linking articles of interest, but Meetup or our OTL is for trip management.

Larry Yetter reminded members that regardless of the venue, all trips MUST be in OTL.

Ron Janowitz asked for clarification, as it has been implied that the Outdoors magazine may not be available for trip advertising in the future. Sam Jamke confirmed that this indeed is imminent; the magazine is losing advertising and they have to cut costs. This change will take place in this calendar year.

Ron Janowitz offered that we should keep the Committee-level Meetups separate and that we should not have a Chapter site; paddlers do not want to see hikes, etc.

Wayne Goertel summarized that after discussion, it looks like the Chapter will be sticking with our website and not expanding into other tools.

Beth Zimmer inquired, that if the Chapter will now only get a few inches of space in the Outdoors magazine, might we use this space to link individuals to our website and various committee-level Meetups, etc. Wayne Goertel shared that our path will likely be a hybrid approach of pointing participants towards these venues as well as advertising the unique and special offerings within the Chapter, such as Spring School, Whitewater School, etc.

Wayne Goertel asked if anyone has any regret that we are moving in this direction and the answer was, “No.”
Paul Berry offered that the average age of a member is perhaps older, and he wondered if we will lose members with this transition?

Wayne Goertel continued that we are talking mostly about day trips, and the reality is that these trips are already full before the magazine comes out.

Bill Warren inquired if on the Outdoor trip listings, if they will give Chapter advertising and Club advertising similar status. For example, if both the Club and the Chapter offer a Presidential Range hike, will these trips get equal status, size, and font? Will the Club eliminate trip listings equally? Bill continued, that he wonders if the Chapters will get the short end of the stick versus the Club protecting its own offerings.

Wayne Goertel shared that all of the Chapters want the “big trips” they offer to “look” like the Club trips in font and format. Wayne added that it has been indicated to him that as the magazine reduces space, they may do so in varying degrees based on Chapter size, etc.

Wayne Goertel had one last question for the group, which was about these topics: our online presence; the ability to send member and non-member e-mail blasts; our communications outreach; and promoting our NH Chapter Brand; many of the other Chapters have a Communications Committee which affords a consistency of message, including e-mails and newsletters. We have an opportunity to fold a few related efforts together, (website, membership, newsletter, and Meetups, etc.) and he would like to get input via establishing an ad hoc discussion group on this topic. Ron Janowitz and Tom Todd expressed interest; others interested contact Wayne.

2014-15 Term

Wayne will be reaching out to committees about their leadership for next year.

Adjournment

At 8:38 Beth Zimmer made a motion to adjourn. This was seconded and approved unanimously.

Future Items

- June Meeting: Committee report out regarding parameters for what they consider to be an “active leader.” (April)
- Ad hoc Communications Committee (April)
• Clarify a process for allowing a small amount of latitude within budget expenditures

• New Member Postcards (March)

Minutes: Beth Zimmer
4/3/14