AMC NH Chapter Minutes

Meeting Date: November 6, 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 Co-Chair
Doria Harris Biking Co-Chair
✓ Paul Hopkins Conservation & Education Co-Chair
✓ Eric L. Savage Conservation & Education Co-Chair
✓ Kevin Rooney Excursions Co-Chair
✓ David Ross Excursions Co-Chair
✓ Marianne Page Membership Chair
✓ Ron Janowitz Newsletter Co-Chair
✓ Michelle O’Donnell Newsletter Co-Chair
✓ Paul Berry Paddling Co-Chair
✓ John Pilla Paddling Co-Chair
✓ LuAnn Laquerre Programs Chair
✓ “Sam” Ruth Jamke Regional Director, North (NH & ME)
Tony Schmidt Ski Co-Chair
Valerio Viti Ski Co-Chair
✓ Richie Holstein Trails Chair
✓ Joshua Meltzer Young Members Chair
✓ Susannah Hatch AMC Volunteer Relations Coordinator (Guest)
✓ Brian Morin Electronic Communications and Social Media Coordinator (Guest)
Jessica Clifford Graphic Designer for Newsletter (Guest)
✓ Rick Silverberg Outdoor Leadership Development & Training (Guest)
✓ Larry Yetter Excursions Treasurer (Guest)

Call to Order
Wayne Goertel called the meeting to order at 7:00.

Thanks went out to the Trails Committee and Ski Committee for tonight’s dinner.

Upcoming dinner schedule:
   February: Young Members & Biking

Welcome and re-introductions were made among members and guests.

Next Meeting: February 2015

Approval of October Minutes / Beth Zimmer

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

The only comment was regarding clarification of discussion during Bill Warren’s presentation last month. At that meeting, he proposed that leaders conducting “small programs” would be able to use these events towards maintaining their status as “active trip leaders.” Sam Jamke mentioned that the programs she and others conduct are not “small” in nature. Bill clarified that while not small in nature, the larger programs that Sam and others offer would still be able to be applied towards active leadership.

A motion was made by LuAnn Laquerre to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded. There were no additional comments and the motion to approve the minutes was unanimous.

Review of Treasurer’s Report / Rick Desmarais

Rick Desmarais had sent out a treasurer’s report to ExComm members via a prior e-mail. The Chapter is in fine financial shape. Mountaineering has not submitted any receipts this year as of yet. Rick wants to close the books by 12/31/14, so get receipts in as soon as possible. There was no further discussion or comment.

Fall Gathering / Wayne Goertel

Wayne Goertel asked those who attended the recent AMC Fall Gathering in Maine, to summarize their experiences to the other ExComm members.

Wayne Goertel had an opportunity to sit in with Young Member (YM) representatives from Maine.

Susannah Hatch had work-related tasks to accomplish, but she too, met with YM.
Rick Silverberg met with the Chapters Committee. They discussed how events are presently listed (or not listed) in the newly designed Outdoor magazine. Hopefully there will be help coming for listing our multi-day events. Rick added that at the present, our Winter School signups are considerably low in numbers compared with past years.

Sam Jamke attended meetings. She added that the “trip listings” situation in magazine discussion is coming up soon and that this will get fixed.

Bill Warren mentioned that there was a constant amount of work as well as interesting discussions at the Chapter’s meeting. There were some tough items on the table, such as the NH Hike Safe Card.

Wayne Goertel said it was interesting to see what is going on in other chapters, and that he came away with a confirmed knowledge that we are both a vibrant chapter and in “good shape.”

**Electronic Voting / Wayne Goertel**

Wayne Goertel reminded members that during our Annual Meeting, we had a couple of comments or questions regarding our proposed bylaw on Electronic Voting. We had a specific inquiry regarding creating a record of discussion. Beth Zimmer, Secretary, had shared at that meeting that the Chapter would keep a record, or minutes of the electronic voting, in similar fashion as to how we keep minutes of our standard meetings.

Bill Warren explained that we are a private club and not a public entity, so the public’s “right to know” regarding details of our meetings is quite different than that that of public board meeting.

Rick Silverberg noted that he has long-standing experience with private non-profits. We are a membership organization, and therefore, we are private, not public—unless of course we were to take public money.

Paul Berry shared that he would be hesitant to withhold our discussions from the public. Presently our practice is to allow members to sit at our meetings should they desire to do so.

Sam Jamke noted that all of our meetings are open to members (as a courtesy and not by any written rule), with the exception of personnel matters.

There was general consensus that keeping a written record of the e-mail discussion and electronic voting conclusion would be in keeping with our current practices and are sufficient.

**Young Members / Wayne Goertel**
By way of a prior e-mail, Wayne Goertel told members that he would like “Young Members” to be a “focus” area in 2015. As grist for thought, he proposed several questions:

- How we could boost our YM offerings and cultivate more YM leaders?
- Where are our successes and struggles?
- Can all activity leaders turn around leadership in one season for a competent leader candidate?
- Are there opportunities to re-evaluate and streamline the leadership process?
- How can we reduce financial obstacles?
- Can committees explicitly plan/budget to support YM, much like we do now for volunteer recognition?

Wayne continued that in 2002 we kicked off, for the second time, a YM committee. The AMC encourages chapters to have YM groups. Presently, the average age of an AMC member is 57. Our main mission is to conserve the outdoors, and given the age of our members, we need to cultivate our younger demographic.

YM participants prefer to have leaders from their own demographic, rather than leaders their parents’ age. While at the Fall Gathering, it was evident that the Maine chapter has a vibrant YM group. Wayne asked, “How do we get more trips? How do we cultivate YM leaders?”

Paul Berry expressed concern, as it did not appear as if this discussion came from the YM Committee itself. Josh Meltzer, YM Chair, shared that indeed, there has been discussion among YM members.

Susannah Hatch mentioned that YM groups generally need support from the chapter in order to be successful. They need dedicated members, financial support and mentoring support. She sees these patterns – needing support – throughout all chapters.

Josh continued that the camping and hut weekends have been successful in the past. These events tend to draw newer members. Evening socials come and go with their popularity. In the past, when YM had hiking leaders, they led a spring hiking series to introduce individuals to hiking through a series of 10 hikes.

Wayne inquired if the activity committees have active YM leaders or participants on their events.

Marianne Page wondered if we have YM members unable to get on a hike because they lack the gear. Josh answered that while not for three-season hikes, perhaps this might be true for winter hiking. LuAnn Laquerre added that a full set of winter gear can cost about $1000. Beth Zimmer mentioned that she would support subsidizing rentals from EMS or like businesses.
Sam Jamke mentioned that she ran a hut series that was very popular and could provide a logical progression towards hiking the bigger peaks.

Ron Janowitz mentioned that we could run a feature article in the newsletter.

Paul Berry explained that within the Paddling Committee, they have a fleet of boats and they have been outfitting people for years. He wondered if we should have centralized gear for specific hikes or weekend events, and if we should designate dates for introductory winter hikes.

John Pilla commented that the use of Meetup has greatly expanded the number of participants in the Wednesday night paddling series. They already had the gear, but Meetup expanded their presence.

Wayne added that if every committee had a YM event every two weeks, that would generate a vibrant presence.

Rick Silverberg stated that we have scholarships for the winter leadership program at Cardigan, but this is under utilized. We offered a one-day leadership program but this had only one YM in attendance.

Eric Savage noted that we have historically had a problem with getting YM leaders. He asked, “How do we get and keep YM leaders?”

Gene Harding explained that since we started biking there has only been one request from YM for a mountain bike ride. We plan rides around distance and terrain, but that maybe we should plan an event specifically for YM.

LuAnn wondered how do younger adults plan? In general, they do not plan in advance. They plan last minute. That reality may be in contrast to how we operate.

John added that we could promote events over a couple of month targeting YM.

Beth Zimmer asked Josh if YM participants would attend events led by our older and experienced trip leaders. Josh replied that ideally, YM want to attend events led by YM leaders. Beth added that John Greene, a prior YM Chair, had indicated that YM prefer to communicate and “get together” via Facebook, and not via Meetup. She cautioned that we could spend a lot of time planning for a demographic that does not want the plans we might spend time generating.

Wayne explained that regretfully, there was some liability exposure and that we had to discontinue posting events via Facebook.

Rick Silverberg added that we can have a very quick turn around time for trips by posting on our Meetup site. Eric Savage expressed that while this is true, we do not have YM leaders.

Ron Janowitz asked Brian Morin, as a new YM, what his thoughts were. Brian explained that his age typically group does not have plans made in advance, and that he and his friends would be very hesitant to commit four weeks out. He
personally does not make his final plans for a given weekend until that Friday night.

David Ross noted there was a disconnect between the Chapter planning for events for YM and the reality of how YM might prefer to operate. Wayne added that the larger, weekend events, such as camping trips, do indeed fill up.

Susannah cautioned members to avoid generalizations, as there are YM that will plan ahead. In her experience gleaned from other chapters, it’s about generating momentum: get a big event, get a repeat core group, and from that momentum, create the next event. Another important resource is to tap into nearby chapters, to partner with them and help them advertise. YM enjoy meeting people from other states and an inter-chapter approach could be highly successful.

Wayne suggested that we create a focus ad hoc committee to continue discussion on this topic, including Wayne, Josh and perhaps Brian should he be inclined.

**NH Fish & Game Funding via Boat Decals / Paul Berry**

Paul Berry outlined that two weeks ago, NHF&G invited paddling groups to talk about the NHF&G financial shortfall. In the works is a proposal to require a conservation decal for kayaks and canoes. In 2007 when a similar measure went to the Senate floor, it failed to gain traction. A 2014 draft suggested a $10 decal. After input from the paddling community, the wording was reworded that boaters shall “consider financial support.” Paul continued that this proposal would be incredibly burdensome to individuals with multiple boats. A contributing factor is that NHF&G does not own the boat put-ins, so they cannot collect fees via a vehicle decal, as does the WMNF.

Paul wondered if we could consider the optional hike safe card as a model for what is going on within the boating circle. He proposed the idea of a voluntary conservation decal. No one is in favor of mandatory decals. For example, fishermen have a single “license” and do not have to purchase a decal per “fishing pole.” Paul wants to advocate for a voluntary card system and help advertise it through the support of the NH Chapter.

Ron Janowitz mentioned that people feel good with voluntary contributions, similar to the NH conservation license plates.

Paul added that boat owners will not want to put stickers on expensive Kevlar or wood strip boats. He would like to push for a voluntary boat safe card.

David Ross inquired if Paul wanted to promote a license, or boat safe card. Paul continued that the Hike Safe Card covers rescues for a variety of outdoor endeavors. He would like a green light from the Chapter to work with NHF&G.
John Pilla added that at the most recent meeting, providing a positive solution to the boating decal proposal and not just saying “No,” was gaining traction.

Sam Jamke thought that this was a good idea. Regretfully, at our Annual Summit this year, there will not be “staffed tables” but rather, static displays.

Paul Berry made a motion that ExComm support the NHF&G’s voluntary conservation effort. It was seconded.

During subsequent discussion, members expressed confusion if we were being asked to support a voluntary boater card or if we were being asked to support the present Hike Safe card?

John Pilla clarified that if we help sell the Hike Safe card, NHF&G will reap financial support. We can show that voluntary initiatives work, thereby this will help the paddling community perhaps “dodge the bullet” of having to purchase boating decals.

Kevin Rooney stated that if the Chapter endorses the card, we are endorsing a highly controversial issue that at present time, none of the search and rescue groups endorse. Sam Jamke asked Susannah Hatch if the AMC has a position on the Hike Safe Card. Susannah said that this was unclear.

Kevin continued that while he agrees with the effort to support NHF&G, that this particular action is unwise. As the heart of the issue within the search and rescue community, is the thought that if people feel they will be charged, that folks will not call for help until too late.

Paul Berry and John Pilla said that they will promote practices supported by the paddling community and Paddling Committee, but not the Hike Safe Card if this group does not support it. Beth Zimmer stated that she does not feel informed enough to vote to support the Hike Safe Card. Ron Janowitz moved to table the motion and it passed unanimously.

**OLDC Training for the Trainers / Rick Silverberg**

Rick Silverberg shared that last year, there was interest and discussion from around the Club to bring together “leaders who train leaders.” This spring, there will be a Training for the Trainers event, March 20-22, 2015, in CT. This event will be open to entire club and that there is space for 60 participants. There will be one track for folks actively training outdoor leaders within the varied activity committees during which they can share training techniques and ideas. There will be a second track for developing leadership for committees and club units, planning for Chair recruitment and succession, etc.

Also on the agenda will be discussion to promote Club-wide registration tools.

All activity committees are encouraged to send representatives.
Budget Prep 2015

Wayne Goertel offered that this year’s budget process is designed to be a faster and far less painful process. In other chapters, budgets submitted and then passed through an officer review. Controversial topics are brought to the committee for peer review. He suggested that committee chairs look at their past requests and expenditures as a guide.

Paul Berry noted that there is nothing in the bylaws that gives the officers any power to set the budget, and that ExComm has the final authority. Eric Savage inquired if members would get a full, final document prior to February meeting. Wayne assured members that the streamlined approach would only be used to help the budget proposal go through a “first pass,” and that the full outline of requests will be brought to ExComm.

Bill Warren, spoke in support, mentioning that what they are proposing is a “first go-around,” or “hybrid approach.” He noted that we spend a lot of time discussing small, $100 items. He and others have learned from the other Chapters that pre-discussion saves the larger group a lot of time.

Paul added that saving time great, but not if there is a move to grant more authority. Eric clarified that it sounds like the proposal is for “pre-review,” and not “pre-approval.”

Budget submissions are due by January 10, 2015.

Annual Meeting Feedback / Paul Berry

After our NH Annual Meeting, Marie and Paul Berry received a survey from the Grappone Conference Center. Paul commented that they had only one bartender during happy hour, which made for very long lines. We had paid $200 for the AV package, but this did not include a lapel mike, which cost an extra $100.

LuAnn Laquerre added that the transition time from the afternoon event to allowing us to have tables in the lobby was challenging. The lobby should have been set up so we could welcome guests. The dinner was excellent.

Larry Yetter mentioned that it was hard to find the date for the annual meeting in advance if you’re not an ExComm member. Rick Silverberg added that we had a Class 3 & 4 Leadership Training event that same day. Wayne Goertel stated that next year we will attempt to plan the event well in advance to provide notice and prevent scheduling conflicts.

Calendar / Wayne Goertel
In 2015, Wayne Goertel stated that he would like to see both Wilderness First Aid and the Annual Meeting planned well in advance.

**Website Chair / Resignation**

Wayne Goertel shared with members that Tom Todd has resigned from his position as Webmaster. We have been happy to have had Tom’s service over these past years. We will send Tom a departing gift as we have for other departing chairs.

Paul Hopkins mentioned that perhaps we should revisit the ad hoc communications committee. Wayne confirmed that we would.

**Motion to Adjourn**

At 8:54, John Pilla made a motion to adjourn. This was seconded and approved unanimously.

**Future Items**

- Communications Ad Hoc Committee – ongoing discussion (June ’14)
- Clarify a process for allowing a small amount of latitude within the budget expenditures. (February ’14)
- NH Wild – someone to take a leadership role (June ’14)
- Leave No Trace Master Training – update (June ’14)
- Online / direct sales of AMC NH clothing and gear (May ’14)
- WFA training: 1/ Peter Hope’s replacement; 2/ Notice on the Excursions Message Board; 3/ Nubble Bay weekend (September ’14); 4/ set dates in advance (October ’14)
- Newsletter article urging chapter members to sign up for weekly updates (September ’14)
- Set date for Annual Meeting 2015 well in advance (October ’14)
- YM ad hoc discussion group (November ’14)

Minutes: Beth Zimmer
11/6/14