

**STATE PARK SYSTEM ADVISORY COUNCIL (RSA 216-A: 3-k)**  
**August 26, 2009 9:30 AM.**  
**DEPARTMENT OF RESOURCES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Members present:

Richard Ober, NHCF, Chairman  
Susan Arnold, AMC  
Ted Austin, Director of Parks & Recreation  
Paul Doscher, SPNHF  
Jeffrey Gilbert, Business community  
Rep. Susan Kepner, RR&D Committee  
Kathleen Reardon, Citizens Bank  
Bill Roberts, Friends of Pisgah  
Maggie Stier, NH Preservation Alliance  
Rep. Leigh Webb, House  
Craig Mayo, NH Snowmobile Association  
Sen. Bob Odell, Vice Chairman  
Rep. Christopher Ahlgren

Members absent:

Sen. Margaret Hassan, Senate  
Ruth Griffin, General public  
Dick Huot, NH ATV Club

Others present:

Benjamin Wilson, Historic Bureau Program Specialist  
Johanna Lyons, Planning and Dev. Specialist  
Jane Carey, Division Administrative Assistant  
Gail Wolek, Parks Division Deputy Director  
Grant Goulet, Parks Retail  
Michael Housman, Supervisor Parks Operations  
Joel Anderson, NH House Staff  
Kevin Landry, Nashua Telegraph  
Paula Tracey, NH Union Leader  
Rep. Jeffrey St.Cyr  
Rep. Ricia McMahan  
Don Davis, No. Sutton Improvement Society  
Steve Enroth, No. Sutton  
Rep. William Butynski  
Joel Harrington, The Nature Conservancy  
Anika Clark, Keene Sentinel

Welcome: Chairman, Dick Ober opened the meeting at 9:37 PM. He asked for introductions around the room including the general public attending.

Approval of July minutes was unanimously approved after a few changes were noted.

Director's Report Ted Austin reported park occupancy is down slightly to last year. To develop a three year or a five year average would be more valuable to serve as a gauge of performance while accounting for the variations of weather.

A State Park System Finance Report Overview Presented by Deputy Director, Gail Wolek. Parks earnings are approximately \$5.8 million to \$6.6 million annually against expenses of \$6.6 million. Since fiscal year 1999 expenses have always exceeded revenues. There has been a carryover deficit since 1991, the first year of the State Park Fund, because the fund started with no balance. Shown was a break down revenues and expenses from day use, camping, leases of towers and lands, Hampton meters and the Flume. Park Fund revenues are divided among various expense accounts, Parks Administration, Field Operations including field staff, maintenance, utilities, equipment, vehicles, supplies, travel and other field expenses. The Design, Development and Maintenance at the Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) is paid by parks for 53% of their resources. Unemployment compensation and Workmen's compensation is another expense. A more in depth expense breakdown of current

costs was explained followed by a total review of the Division's financial responsibilities. The conclusion of the presentation showed a potential funding scenario including general funds. The presentation was sent to all SPAC members after the meeting.

Revised Draft of 10-Year Development Plan The Council discussed the revision of the 10-Year Development Plan at length. Ted distributed the Outline/Table of Contents for review by the council. A few revisions were suggested. The plan will present graphic representation of the most significant data gathered by Tom Kokx and Associates and the planning team. The full data sets will be in the appendices. The plan will not include a ranking of parks. It may set forth a process for assessing each park over time to determine appropriate management..

Preface Distribution Chairman Ober distributed a draft Preface for the 10-Year Development Plan. The preface will include Findings and Principles and will be the one section of the plan that is solely written by the State Parks System Advisory Council. It was discussed and adopted with minor revisions. The Legislative Requirements for the Strategic Plan a – 1 were reviewed as stated in RSA 216 – A: 3-c. There was extensive discussion about the conflicting legislative statutes that guide the Division of Parks and the purpose of the park system. The legislative members of the Council agreed to work on recommendations about the most effective ways to review and revise statutes as appropriate. Joel Anderson, policy staff for the House of Representatives, offered his assistance.

Schedule for revised draft Director Austin reported that the Division intends to complete the draft of the Plan by November 1<sup>st</sup>, conduct public sessions during the month of November and December, and to submit the Strategic Plan on 1/1/2010. The Council recommended that Commissioner Bald inform the Governor, the Speaker of the House, and the President of the Senate of this schedule. Current statute requires the plan to be completed by September 30, 2009.

Meeting adjourned 11:50

Respectfully submitted by Jane Carey, Clerk