

Monadnock Advisory Commission

Meeting Minutes

Date: September 20, 2018

Time: 4:00 pm

Location: Jaffrey Civic Center

ATTENDEES	AGENDA
✓ Ann Royce (Town of Jaffrey)	1. Welcome & Introductions
✓ Beth Kintz (Monadnock State Park)	2. Review of minutes from previous meeting
✓ Carrie Deegan (SPNHF)	3. MAC Financial Report
✓ Dave Adams (Town of Troy)	4. Division of Parks & Recreation update
<input type="checkbox"/> Don Upton (Town of Troy)	5. Monadnock SP Manager's update
<input type="checkbox"/> Ed Germain (Town of Dublin)	6. SPNHF update
✓ Hiel Lundquist (Town of Fitzwilliam)	7. MERE update
<input type="checkbox"/> Jane Difley (SPNHF)	8. Open
<input type="checkbox"/> John Smith (Town of Jaffrey)	9. Set date for next meeting
✓ Peter Palmiotto (Antioch, MERE)	10. Adjourn
✓ Phil Bryce (Parks & Recreation)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Polly Pattison (Town of Marlborough)	
✓ Robin Haynes (Chair, Town of Fitzwilliam)	
✓ Sterling Abram (Town of Dublin)	
✓ Tara Blaney (Parks & Recreation)	Guests:
✓ Dan Rogalski (Town of Marlborough)	Tom Mansfield – DCNR
✓ Wendy Weisiger (SPNHF)	Matt Rubino – Monadnock State Park

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. Review of minutes from previous meeting

- No comments/questions on the minutes as they are, minutes approved

3. MAC Financial Report

- Balance \$2,770.13

4. Monadnock SP Manager's update

Park Visitation & Revenue (Jan 1st – Sept 6th):

(\$ totals reflect amount collected on site and does not include reservation fees collected by RA)

Headquarters	2018	2017	+/-
Day Use Visitation	51,523	65,656	-14,133
Day Use \$	\$40,206	\$45,511	-\$5,305
Camping	\$6,158	\$10,333	-\$4,175
Retail	\$72,001	\$64,342	\$7,659
TOTAL \$	\$118,365	\$120,186	-\$1,821

Old Toll Road	2018	2017	+/-
Day Use Visitation	8,901	12,657	-3,756
Day Use \$	\$40,718	\$56,989	-\$16,271
TOTAL \$	\$40,718	\$56,989	-\$16,271

Gilson Pond Area	2018	2017	+/-
Day Use Visitation	933	1445	-512
Day Use \$	\$4,081	\$7,078	-\$2,997
Camping	\$8,737	\$10,443	-\$1,706
Retail	\$12,736	\$13,961	-\$1,222
TOTAL \$	\$26,554	\$31,482	-\$4,928

Iron Rangers	2018	2017	+/-
Gap North	\$289	\$308	-\$19
Gap South.....	\$362	\$527	-\$165
Dublin Trailhead.....	\$982	\$1,189	-\$207
Marlboro Trailhead.....	\$363	\$1,059	-\$696
Rhododendron SP	\$771	\$1,876	-\$1,105
TOTAL \$	\$2,767	\$4,959	-\$2,192

TOTAL +/- REVENUE..... -\$25,212
TOTAL +/- VISITATION... -20,224

Average rainfall for the month of August is ~4 inches. Actual rainfall for the month August was ~8 inches. High rainfall combined with an average temperature ~6 degrees higher than the average may contribute to the lower visitation/revenue seen in 2018.

Operations Highlights

- Big summer weekends
 - Memorial Day - GPA campground full
 - 4th of July - GPA campground full
 - Labor Day - GPA campground full
- New Enterprise/Point of Sale system through ReserveAmerica called Store Manager
 - All staffed fee areas are now connected to the internet, however, it has proven inconsistent at the park Headquarters
 - SM allows for easier sale processing and end of the day procedures

Projects

- HQ Youth Group Campground reorganization/consolidation
 - 14 to 10 sites –
 - Bigger sites
 - Groups will no longer need to rent multiple sites
 - Able to fit more reservations
 - Level and squared off parking areas
 - New site marker signs and posts
- GPA enhanced the recycling program by painting the metal collection barrels blue
- New benches at Falcon Spring

Volunteer Program

- Hours logged and reported so far this season:
 - Trail work – 215 hours
 - Park Operations – 44.5 hours
 - Mtn Patrol – 212.75 hours (this does not hikers assisting in a carry down rescue operation)
- Trail open for adoption:
 - White Cross
 - Great Pasture (available for the 2019 season)

Mountain Patrol

- Responded to 18 incidents so far this season
 - 13 walk out assists
 - 4 carryouts
 - 1 lifeflights
- Continuing problems with the designated radio frequency (Miller Repeater)
 - Poor local/in-park communication and a large “radio shadow” on the Mountain where comms are not possible
 - Consistent interference from MA PD dispatch
 - New digital system for Management, Mtn Patrol so that comms can be maintained with local FD/PD, DHART and NH Fish & Game all of whom have already gone to a digital system
 - Very poor battery life, currently working on a solution with DNCR radio personnel
- Held a staff wide Mtn Patrol training
 - Prevention and Screening
 - Rules and Regulations
 - Hiker Preparedness
 - Initial Report of Incident
 - New form created to easy in critical info gathering
 - Common incidents and response needed
 - Medical
 - Trauma
 - Behavioral
 - Hand on learning
 - Patrol room tour
 - Patient care
 - AED/CPR and O2 use
 - Basic splinting and bandaging
 - Litter and belay set up, and carrying techniques

5. SPNHF update

- Monadnock Toll Road Account
 - Balance at the start of FY18: \$127,807.92
 - Total expenses to date: \$52,836.94 (did not hire a pro crew)
 - Revenue: \$38,937.00
 - Projected balance at the end of FY18: \$113,308.98
 - Projected funds available for FY19: \$113,308.98
 - Projected expenses: \$53,050.00
 - Projected revenue: \$40,000.00
 - Projected balance at the end of FY19: \$100,258.98
- Harvesting will resume off of Shaker Farm Road this fall

- Herbicide for buckthorn control will be applied to five plots in the planned 2016/2018 harvest area
 - This application falls within in the organization’s guidelines for buckthorn control
 - This spray will give the native woody plants a “leg up”
 - The Herbicide will be applied to the leaves of the targeted plants by a licensed applicator while the buckthorn sprouts are still manageable
- The harvest planned for Gap Mountain will also resume this winter
- Trails week this year was challenging due to the rain (2.46 inches)
 - Trails worked on include the White Arrow, Thoreau, the Half-way House site, and the cross country ski trails
 - 680 hours of work was logged
 - 22 stone steps on the White Arrow
 - 61 feet of bog bridging
 - 20 new water bars
- Private donation funded VYCC trail crew worked on Gap Mountain South Trail near the summit doing a 300 foot re-route around a section of ledge and build some rock steps
- Hoping to put together a refresher for SPNHF stewards on basic level one trail maintenance this fall or next spring. This will be hosted at Monandock. Monadnock volunteers may attend.

6. MERE update

- The wetter and warmer weather that has been observed this year fits the climate change models for this region and this trend is likely to continue
- Prescribed 10 year sampling of study plots was completed last summer (finding will be presented in April at the Natural History Conference)
 - Slight shift in species composition in the under story but should not be dramatically affected by the 2008 ice event
 - Course woody debris continues to increase but the decay classes are modeling what is expected
 - Fuel load study finding are just about complete with areas of higher fire risk being identified. These determination were found using industry standards and Federal agency guidelines
- Very successful Meet the Mountain Day in April. This event saw attendees who came to that park specifically for that event.
- Summit steward logged 225 hours and created a binder of “ready to go” programs for teachers, group leaders or SCA interpretive interns

7. Division of Parks & Recreation update

- Toilet building addition project is moving forward with a bid opening on the 19th of September
- This new facility will double the current number of toilet fixtures with the addition of a “family” bathroom as well as running water all year. This design can also be expanded at a later date to include the visitor center concept.
- Construction is slated to begin December of this year with a hard completion date of September 1, 2019
 - Winter construction will include foundation and framing
 - Summer construction will include the finish work
 - With the addition of temporary entrances of the existing building the bathroom facility will still be able to be operational during the summer season
 - The exiting well and leach field will be used
 - The main water line from the well will need to be run 6 feet below the surface (currently only 3 feet down) across the parking lot in front of the office to the new building. This may require blasting or other ledge removal techniques.

- The winning bid (Seppala Construction Company) for this project came in at \$813,000
- Other parks have seen a small reduction in revenue this season
 - Last season the parks were up 55% over previous years
- Parks has started a shuttle system in Franconia Notch to assist with the ongoing parking issues
 - So far, this program has lost \$12,000 (rides cost \$5 per person)
- A carrying capacity study is slated to be completed for Mount Washington State Park and Monadnock State Park but this project is currently stalled
- Staffing continues to be a challenge for the Division both financially and finding qualified applicants
 - Staff for the toll booth will always be needed and is “fundamentally American” to have a park ranger in a toll booth to greet you upon entering a park
- The Bear Hill camp (originally built by the CCC in the 1930’s) in Bear Brook State Park is being reopened for public use
 - Cabins are being renovated and will be available to rent
- RTP grant (\$120,000 to \$160,000) is being put together for trail work at Monadnock
 - Using the 2014 Trail Assessment (\$2,000,000 of needed work) and focusing on the White Dot and White Cross trail projects are being put together
 - Trail hardening
 - Steps and rip rap
 - Trail corridor narrowing and control
 - Trail relocation viability study
 - Need of these projects are determined by natural resource protection, visitor experience, and safety
 - This grant will be used to hire professional trail crews however, the availability of these crews is low
 - Division employees may be able to be hired to do trail work

8. Open Floor

- What do the trail adopters do?
 - Routine maintenance and upkeep of the trail system
 - Water bar cleaning
 - “Bootleg trail” barricading
 - Trash pick up
 - Trimming
 - Blaze painting and maintenance
- Are the visitors with park plates counted as they enter the park? Yes
 - Some parks showing a decrease in revenue are seeing an increase in park plates
 - Visitation data for July 1, 2018 through August 16, 2018 and July 1, 2017 through August 27, 2017 for Headquarters and the Old Toll Road was reviewed comparing paid entrance to “non-paying” entrance (this includes “pre-pay” ie – season pass, park plates, etc as well as comps)
 - Headquarters
 - 2018: of the 16,024 visitors, 6.30% did not pay a fee upon entrance
 - 2017: of the 24,157 visitors, 6.52% did not pay a fee upon entrance
 - Old Toll Road
 - 2018: of the 3,028 visitors, 9.18% did not pay a fee upon entrance
 - 2017: of the 4,750 visitors, 9.12% did not pay a fee upon entrance
 - Reduced revenue is a function of high rainfall and not an increase in comp use
 - Monadnock sees more season pass use over park plate use despite plate advertisement
 - Are in-state versus out-of-state visitors counted?
 - No, but zip code surveys are taken
 - These surveys show about half in-state and half out-of-state visitors

- Tracking the license plate state may be tracked for each vehicle entering in the future
- Do we charge out of state visitors a higher rate even though we do not receive general funds for operating costs?
- Are there opportunities to collect fees at other trailheads? Yes, possibly in the future
 - More fee areas would mean a more sustainable revenue stream dedicated to trail resources
 - It is important to maintain some trailheads as non-fee/donation only access points
- Is there evidence of reforestation of the summit? Is the rate increasing?
 - Review of the data from the study plots will need to happen before that question can be specifically addressed
 - There is evidence that would suggest reforestation is happening and White Pine is now making an appearance near the summit at the tree line however, it will never reforest completely
 - Can visitor access be restricted, like in the White Mountains, to promote plant growth?
 - Very difficult to do on a summit cone verses a pass through trail corridor
 - Restoration experiments to limit visitor access have been done in the past with little to no success because the markers were moved and destroyed very quickly
- Should there be a tax on recreation equipment to support trail systems?
 - This has been discussed in a variety of parks and recreation groups and organizations and may be a possibility in the future
 - Could there be an add on fee with the Hike Safe Card?
 - Possibly, but the funds would have to be dedicated and administered
- Have the signs been install on Little Monandock?
 - Yes, May 31, 2018
- What is the status of the Master Plan update?
 - Carrying capacity study needs to be done first the need for changes and adjustments to the plan will come out after the study
 - Resources are going to be spent on items that are known to be needed (ie – new toll booth, parking, bathroom, maintenance yard)
- Who mowed the parking lots at Gap Mountain?
 - Unsure, but thank you

9. Set date for next meeting

- Spring meeting – Thursday, February 21, 2019 from 4pm to 6pm at the Jaffrey Civic Center

10. Adjourn