

**MOUNT WASHINGTON COMMISSION**  
**DECEMBER 23, 2015 MINUTES** *(Approved on 03/18/16)*

A regular meeting of the Mount Washington Commission (MWC) was held at the AMC Pinkham Notch Visitor Center on December 23, 2015.

**Call to Order.** Chairman Walter Graff/AMC called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Members present were Director Bryce/Div Parks and Rec, Mark Ericson/Townsquare Media, Martha McLeod/for Public, Jack Middleton/MWObs, Rep Karen Umberger/House, Tom Wagner/WMNF, and Howie Wemyss/Mt Wash Auto.

Also present were Allen Brooks/AG Office, Ed Bergeron and Brian Fowler/MWObs, Clare Mendelsohn/WMNF, Mike Pelchat, Donna Sanborn and Stephanie McCann/MWSP, Edith Tucker/Coos County Democrat, and Torene Tango-Lowy/MWC clerk.

**Minutes.** Ms. McLeod moved to accept the minutes of July 7, 2015; Mr. Ericson seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

**Master Plan.** Director Bryce reviewed the statutory duties of the MWC pursuant to RSA 227-B:6, including the preparation of a 10-year master plan for the summit. Members discussed the framework and scope for an updated Master Plan, such as determining the carrying capacity of the summit facilities, improving the visitor experience, a SWOT analysis, and goals and objectives. A MWC master plan subcommittee was established whose members are Mr. Bergeron, Rep. Umberger, Ms. McLeod, Mr. Ericson, Mr. Pelchat, Mr. Wagner and Mr. Graff. The subcommittee will meet on January 11, 2016 at 10 a.m. at the MWObs Weather Discovery Center in N. Conway.

**Fee Collection.** Dir. Bryce reported that DRED is reviewing the initial report on the market analysis of DRED's communications leases on the summit. The final report will be distributed to the MWC once it is completed.

**Capital Improvements.** Dir. Bryce has a call in to Dir. Cheney regarding the fire suppression and alarm initiative. The state fire marshal is reviewing the Yankee Building plans. Although grant funding opportunities will be sought, monies from the Mt Washington Fund may be needed to help support this initiative. A report on the status of summit capital projects by the Parks Division and Parks operations was presented by Mr. Pelchat.

**State Park Operations.** As part of his presentation, Mr. Pelchat reported: • over 330K visitors during the 2015 summer season using the door counter; • the hire of a UNH engineering intern to assist with the wastewater treatment plant operations; • construction of an emergency exit from the MWO bunkroom; • summit expenses include \$63K for wastewater management and \$100K in general maintenance expenses; • there were no bid responses to the RFB for cement repairs; • Bretton Woods Communications may take over the fiber optic line; • future projects include handicap accessibility to the viewing deck and installation of a water tank next to the Sherman Adams Building.

Dir. Bryce presented Donna Sanborn with a 25-year service pin and Mike Pelchat with a 35-year service pin, and thanked them for their dedicated service to the state parks system.

**Negotiations of leases, agreements and franchises.** Upon a motion by Ms. McLeod, seconded by Rep. Umberger, and approved by roll call vote, the MWC entered into nonpublic session to discuss a confidential business and financial matter between the MWObs, the Cog Railway, and the State arising from an agreement between parties [RSA 91-A:3, II, (d) and (j)].

Upon a motion by Rep. Umberger, seconded by Mr. Ericson, and approved by roll call vote, the MWC exited from nonpublic session at 12:35 p.m. Upon a motion by Ms. McLeod, seconded by Mr. Middleton, the MWC by unanimous vote sealed the nonpublic session minutes [RSA 91-A:3, III].

**Partner Reports.** MWObs. Mr. Fowler gave an update on summit staffing and the good working relationship with Park staff. Summit weather instrumentation and IT improvements are providing more robust and reliable reporting. An app is being developed to provide weather forecasts to hikers.

Auto Road. Mr. Wemyss reported that the Stage Office project is scheduled for next year. The Auto Road will provide guided tours to tree-line this winter.

Townsquare Media. Mr. Ericson reported on WHOM building and PKQ line repairs and maintenance work. He expressed concerns about the roof leaks in the Yankee Building.

WMNF. Mr. Wagner reported on that Katie Stuart, Androscoggin District Ranger, is retiring after 13 years of service. The federal omnibus budget was approved, but it did not contain monies for fire suppression. Phase One of Dolly Copp Campground improvements to the water and sewer systems are scheduled for next year.

AMC. Mr. Graff reported a blockbuster summer for the huts. Outreach and school programming has resulted in more participation by kids, especially in the Coos County region.

Other Business. The 2016 meeting schedule is as follows:

- March 18 at 10 a.m., MWObs Weather Discovery Center, No. Conway
- June 17 at 10 a.m., Tip Top House (weather permitting)
- September 16 at 10 a.m., Tip Top House (weather permitting)
- December 16 at 10 a.m., location TBA

Adjourn. Mr. Middleton moved to adjourn; Rep. Umberger seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

*Submitted by T. Tango-Lowy, MWC clerk.*