

MAC Meeting Minutes

Date: April 15, 2021

Time: 4:00 pm

Location: Remote via Zoom meeting

ATTENDEES	AGENDA
✓ Ann Royce (Town of Jaffrey)	1. Welcome & roll call
✓ Will Kirkpatrick (Monadnock State Park)	2. Review of minutes from previous meeting
✓ Carrie Deegan (SPNHF)	3. Division of Parks & Rec & Monadnock update
✓ Dave Adams (Town of Troy)	4. SPNHF Update
✓ Don Upton (Town of Troy)	5. Division of Forests and Lands update
<input type="checkbox"/> Ed Germain (Town of Dublin)	6. MERE update
<input type="checkbox"/> Hiel Lundquist (Town of Fitzwilliam)	7. Open
✓ Dan Rogalski (Town of Marlborough)	8. Set date for next meeting
✓ John Smith (Town of Jaffrey)	9. Adjourn
✓ Peter Palmiotto (Antioch, MERE)	
✓ Phil Bryce (Parks & Recreation)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Robin Blais (Chair, Town of Fitzwilliam)	
✓ Sterling Abram (Town of Dublin)	
✓ Tara Blaney (Parks & Recreation)	Guests:
✓ Brian Hotz (SPNHF)	Logan Thorner – Monadnock State Park
<input type="checkbox"/> Wendy Weisiger (SPNHF)	Claire Joyce – Parks and Recreation
✓ Matt Scaccia (SPNHF)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Scott Rolfe (Forests and Lands)	

1. Welcome & roll call

- Roll call
- Remote Meeting Disclosure Statement read.

2. Review of minutes from previous meeting

- Minutes from 9/26/19 were not approved at 12/17/20 meeting due to technical difficulties.
- Both 9/26/19 and 12/17/20 minutes approved

3. Division of Parks & Recreation/ Monadnock update

- **DNCR (Phil):**
 - Gearing up for spring and summer. A lot more interest in our parks, but much less stressful than last year, knowing that it's coming.
 - 2020 – We lost money last spring, but mostly made up for it during the summer/fall. Mid-week park use was very high. Cannon was a different story with no Tram (summer and fall are the busiest times for that), and we were down at the Flume.
 - Governor's press conference – he's dropping the mask mandate. We have to figure out what that means for Parks.
 - Biggest challenge right now has been hiring enough staff. This has been our most aggressive recruiting year yet, and it's still challenging.

- Last week we were approved to spend capitol funds (had been frozen), as well as \$1.5 million from operating funds.
 - Working on a contract to work with a pro trail crew (Tahawus). Needs to go to the Governor's office and Executive Council, but we're working on it. SPNHF is providing the match, which helps a lot.
 - **Monadnock (Will & Tara)**
 - Busier than normal winter, but still mostly experienced hikers, few issues.
 - Projects include clearing blowdowns from winter storms, inventorying trail signage & bridges.
 - About to start working on turning water on at GPA and HQ.
 - Mtn. Patrol had their first carry-down 3/12/21. Other incidents have been minor, able to be assisted over the phone or by assisted walk-out.
 - Park opening dates:
 - 3/12 Miller, Bear Brook, Pawtuckaway started charging on weekends for hiking
 - GPA opened for hiking on weekends only 2 weeks ago.
 - All campgrounds in the South Region opened up on 4/2 at least partially.
 - 4/30 all campgrounds including GPA will be open with full facilities.
 - Still using the reservation system everywhere, it's been a great success.
- Had a Teams Meeting with SPNHF to discuss remote trail heads;
- Overuse at trailheads, parking issues, angry neighbors. Park Staff put up "Parking Full" signs, monitored as best we could in 2020.
 - Thinking to have staff there on weekends this year, and to turn on the reservation system for those areas as well. Staff will be able to inform public, promote other hiking areas as alternatives, clean portable toilets, help solve parking issues.
 - 1 staff person at each trailhead (Marlborough and Dublin), Friday Saturday and Sundays.
 - John thought the signage that was done last year did make a big difference.
 - Sterling said that the overflow parking wasn't that bad, people were mostly out of the road...the bigger problem was increased litter. A staff presence would help with that too.
 - Question- will we notify public by newspapers, TV, etc.? We would staff the area first before we start reservations, to let returning visitors know. We would also provide signage with a start-date for reservations. And we would make it as clear as we can on our website.
 - (from Phil) We need an agreement with the Forest Society – we have one for OTR but it doesn't include the other locations. Handling it like OTR is what we'd like to do (\$ collected would go towards improvements to SPNHF-owned areas after expenses).
 - a. (From Carrie) Right now Iron Ranger money from those locations does go to the OTR fund, and we do order toilets for those locations from that money already, so it may not be difficult to do.
 - b. But we can do an additional agreement if needed (but it would have to go to the Governor and Council)
 - Where are day-use reservations currently? At the Main Entrance, OTR, and GPA.
 - a. But we're anticipating that we *will* be using that system at Marlborough and Dublin trails this summer.

- Some debate over whether \$15 per vehicle is appropriate for those trails with almost no facilities. It's \$5 per car at Livermore Falls. Maybe \$10? Needs to be thought through, and we'll have to go to the legislature for a fee package.
 - a. It does seem steep for 2 people. Maybe use \$5 per person instead?
 - b. Consistency in park fees is also important – we don't want one fee structure at one trailhead and a different structure at another.
 - c. Why not keep the \$5 per person, but add \$5 for the vehicle?
 - i. Our fee structure is legislated, we don't have total control
 - d. We should consider road quality too.

4. SPNHF update

- The Forest Society also hopes to hire a pro trail crew – Erin Amadon for some heavy rock work on either the White Arrow or the Dublin Trail, still being determined.
- Monadnock Trails Week is back on! July 30 – Aug 3. Andy Crowley is heading it up, has started talking with Will. It will look a bit different, no big gathering, but smaller groups meeting at their specific sites.
- Update on timber harvesting:
 - Looking at harvests on the north side of Monadnock and Gap. No timing or logistics yet, definitely not before this winter.
 - Harvest on Gap South is done, working on trail rehab.
 - Gates for Gap S. are closed, but Gap North is open.
- Lease extension for Monadnock with the State is signed, so we can keep working on updating the lease.
- Did SPNHF know about the local effort to improve drainage on the beginning of the Pumpelly Trail?
 - No, but SPNHF doesn't own that land, they wouldn't have come to us. We did know about the parking issues, but again there isn't much we can do, it's all private and town land.
- The property at the start of the Pumpelly is for sale – Sterling contacted the realtor to invite any potential buyers to meet with him, hoping to continue amiable relationship for the trail.
 - Unless the Forest Society is interested...it's \$3.5 Million.

5. Division of Forests and Lands update

- No representative present.

6. MERE update

- Only 1 summit Stewart this year. Otherwise writing technical bulletins. Will be in touch with Park Manager regarding updates language.

7. Open Floor

- We need a sign for the Dublin Trail to point which direction to go to reach the summit...Sterling heard of 2 cases where people ended up hiking north on the M-S Greenway.
 - Carrie said SPNHF can make a sign.
- From Ann: Carrie Deegan is a wonderful writer and informative scientist. Just wanted to acknowledge that.
- Has there been a conversation with the Hollisters about the cut at the Toll Road (Eversource power line cut)? Not yet, but Brian is planning one in June.

8. Set date for next meeting

- Thursday, November 18, 2021. Location TBD – we'll use the Town Offices or the Park if in person, or Zoom if remote.

9. Adjourn