

Hiking/Backpacking Committee - Boston Chapter, Appalachian Mountain Club

Minutes: February 9, 2016 - Monthly HB Meeting

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, February 9, 2016

LOCATION: Woburn, Hosted by Bob Knudsen

In Attendance: Alex Nedzel, Stephen Conlin, Casey Ajalat, Jeff Carlson, Robert Freed, Carl Gustenhoven, Bob Knudsen, Elizabeth Ryan, Paul Terenzi, Keith Watling, Pam Wilmot, Rosa Zhang (guest), Robert Zoletti (guest)

Come to order: 7:05PM

January Draft Minutes approved.

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

Executive Committee Meeting - Paul Terenzi

Annual Summit Recap, reported by Joe Princi: It was well attended with 450 people total. Still doing specific capital campaigns for specific projects. 100 Mile Wilderness received International Dark Sky Designation, first in US to get this designation. Trip Talk Cards introduced - for AMC trip leaders - to be mailed to every active leader in database.

There is a new outdoor center, Harriman Outdoor Center, in New York State (NYS). AMC signed a 40 year lease with NYS and refurbished the onsite cabins. The park is the second largest state park in New York, and it is accessible via mass transit. Should be viewable on AMC website on July 1. New Board chair is Raul Fessenden. The ongoing issue of increasing diversity within the AMC was also a popular topic. Joe states his broad goal for the chapter is to get volunteerism higher within the membership and recruit younger members. Joe asks committees to think about how they can grow and diversify their member base.

Joe mentioned that leader background checks may be coming. The AMC is trying to sort out how this will be implemented.

Chapters Committee Central Fund

The Boston Chapter pays \$1500 a year into this fund. It started in 2008 and was intended to help out other chapters at the discretion of the regional directors. Boston is the only chapter to honor the \$1500 for 5 yr commitment. There is \$7200 in the fund now that is not needed. Joe asks that the chapter think about how we would want to potentially use a portion of these funds.

Leadership Training - Steven Conlin

- April 14th and 21 and weekend of April 29 are the Leadership Training courses. People already signing up.
- May 5 Chapter Wide trip planning meeting - Steven asks that this get communicated to all committee leaders via the committee chairs

- One day leadership program likely later in May. exact date TBD.
- Steven embarking on AT trip in March. Good luck Steven!

Training Expense Reimbursement Special Committee update from Carl Gustenhoven.

As of Jan 31, 9 of 14 committees had reported back. The data is uneven. Basic Conclusions: 2012 Total Expenses were only \$700, 2013 expenses were around \$1700 , 2014 was around \$3800, and 2015 was \$5700. Total training expenses were around \$12,000 over 3+ years. The subcommittee is still working to determine:

1. Are there required courses to be a leader in each activity committee?
2. What is current reimbursing policy in each activity committee?
3. How much financial exposure does the chapter have here if it will help out?

Further data is required before final conclusion is reached, likely March or April.

Membership Update (Lamar Winters)

New Members welcome event is planned for May, maybe at the American Legion in Watertown, date TBD. Lamar Winters needs commitment from committees for staffing for this specific event. Please contact Lamar directly on this. Rough idea is to include dinner and intros from each committee present. Joe Princi advocates that these socials are important for retaining members and volunteers are necessary. Great opportunity to showcase what committees do. Let Joe know if you can volunteer your time.

Treasurer's Report - Fred Smith

Cash on 2/8/2016 is \$16,134 at Bank of America and \$1,263 at Paypal, for a total of \$17,397.

Cash into B of A is \$6,337, including receipts or surpluses from Cardigan, Harvard Cabin, Highland Center weekend, AWFA and WFA.

Payments out of B of A are \$3,615 to SOLO, \$600 to Cardigan, \$440 to Harvard Cabin, and \$1,534 of misc reimbursements.

Cash in the Paypal account is SHP receipts, 24 member and 5 nonmember, totaling \$1,310 less \$47 of Paypal fees.

Webmaster Report - Casey Ajalat

REGI

- Program Trips pages
 - Modified code to automatically sort program trips by date
 - Added a table around program trips
- Trip Leader ordering
 - Re-did to sort to show LEADER first then CO-LEADER by order of registration
- Trip Feedback
 - New Feature to enable TRIP FEEDBACK after a trip is completed
 - Will create a more specific trip feedback form and link to it (DONE)
 - TRIP FEEDBACK now appears on the REGI event page after trip completes
 - Visible only to APPROVED/ENROLLED status only
 - Linked feedback to a new form based on Elizabeth's original trip feedback
 - Created a google script to automatically send emails after Trip Feedback submission
 - Prefilled the form with REGI Trip Link, Event Name, and Date
 - To Do

- Plan to work on the backend to enable emailing participants after hikes are over
 - Created an automated daily backup of the REGI Database

Feedback Form

- Published to HB Website
 - Located on the left side off the main page under "Trips & Activities"
 - I will need emails to route the responses to as it does not work with @hbbostonamc.org email (thinks they are spam).

HB Website

- Made several content updates
 - Added the SLP/SHP links to the left menu
 - Updated content of SHP/SLP to reflect 2016
 - Removed the Calendar
 - Removed the two columns and made them one on the main page so an articles' word wrap is readable.
 - Uploaded/Updated link to new Leader Application that was approved in Jan
 - Corrected POC from Bob Asch to Pam Wilmot under "Leader's Corner"
- New Website
 - Enlisting help from Alberta's sister (Tira) to migrate content

Trip Reporting Form

- Tracked form owner (Julie LePage)
- Received editing rights
- Corrected form to reflect Fred Smith as treasurer

Issues

- Fred reported an email forward wasn't working. Checked the site and noticed the aliases I created and tested were reverted to pre Jan 11 settings. I've sent an email to Lyons asking for an explanation
- No feedback from Lyons Hosting. I changed the settings back again to Fred

Harvard Cabin - Bob Knudsen

Harvard Cabin 15-27 Jan, Report to be submitted

Next trip 26-28 Feb, Korabelnikova/Conlin

Trip Coordinator's Report - Carl Gustenhoven

January Trip Update

- 3 backpacks
- 16 hiking trips
- 1 event
- 2 WFA classes

Year to Date Postings

- 5 backpacks
- 47 hikes
- 6 events
- 4 instructional events
- 2 WFA classes

Leader Applications - Pam Wilmot

Two incomplete applications were received. They will be deferred until March or when the applications are complete.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Winter Hiking Program - Fred Smith

No updates

Spring Hiking Program - Elizabeth Ryan

A planning meeting was held on January 19 and was attended by over 20 people.

Relevant marketing materials have been created and will be distributed.

Boot Night has not been scheduled yet, but is in process.

All but two presenters have confirmed. There are two open trip slots that will be sent out to the leader's list soon.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Leadership Appreciation Dinner - Stephen Conlin

Planned for February 29th at Common Ground in Arlington. A "Save the Date" has gone out, an RSVP will be sent out on 2/10/16

Robert Freed will send an email blast and an HB Announce with reminders to vote. So far only 5 people have submitted votes. Voting will close on February 16th.

Costs came in at \$25 per person for the venue.

Requirements for Leadership - Stephen Conlin, Alex Nedzel, et al.

Stephen provided a detailed document outlining the current published rules, the October 2012 Amendments, and proposed amendments to these rules.

The goal is to ensure that leadership applicants have enough experience with the way trips are run within Boston HB, as well as to ensure that applications can demonstrate the necessary hard and soft skills.

The committee discussed this proposal at length. Some discussion points included:

- Require More Trips
 - Do multi day trips count as a single trip or multiple trips? The consensus is that it depends on the way the trip is posted to REGI. Some leaders post as two separate event, with two separate waivers. Others post as a single event (car camping, backpacks, hut trips, etc.).
 - Record keeping of the required number of hikes is on the honor system. We can track it within the HB Committee, but hikes done with other committees or chapters cannot be tracked.
 - It was proposed to increase the number of co-leads and double down on the current application requirements rather than require a number of hikes in general.
- Requirement for different leaders for the co-leads
 - Do we have enough leaders to support these requirements?
- Winter Leadership
 - Should there be a requirement to include above treeline experience and/or backpacking trips? Referencing the NH requirements, this may not be necessary. The sheer number of trips required should allow for enough experience without that requirement.

- A discussion was started whether we should have two levels of winter leadership, one below and one above treeline. There are some peaks that would be difficult to classify. The spirit of these amendments is to ensure that applicants have enough experience to know their limits.
- General
 - Why are we doing this? What do we see is broken in the current system? - There are been instances where a leader took on more than they should have in a trip and complaints came back to the committee. There have also been leadership applications that have come in front of the committee which met the minimum requirements but would have benefited from more experience.
 - Jeff Carlson relayed a conversation he had with the New Hampshire chapter regarding how they were seeking to reduce their requirements to try and draw a younger leadership demographic. There is dedicated leadership group, but they are struggling to bring in new and younger leaders because of the time commitment required to complete the necessary hikes.
 - The point was raised that the proposed requirements were too stringent for three season, but increased winter requirements would be preferred.

Adjourned to Executive Session at 9:06PM

Discussed aspects of a leadership application. No action taken.

Came out of Executive Session at 9:28PM

Adjourn: 9:30 PM

NEXT MEETINGS

1. Tuesday, March 8 - Casey Ajalat, Billerica
2. Tuesday, April 12 - Elizabeth Ryan, Somerville
3. Tuesday, May 10 - Carl Gustenhoven, Andover
4. Tuesday, June 14th - Faith Pulis, Concord