

GUNSTOCK AREA COMMISSION MEETING
July 20, 2022 at 6PM
Belknap County Complex, Meeting Room #1
APPROVED MINUTES

GAC: Peter Ness (Chairman), David Strang (Vice-Chairman), Doug Lambert (Secretary), Gary Kiedaisch, Jade Wood (arrived- 6:04)

Gunstock Personnel: Tom Day, Cathy White, Peter Weber, Robin Rowe, Patrick McGonagle, Becky LaPense, Tami Dubois

Chairman Ness called the meeting to order at 6:03PM with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Secretary Lambert.

Chairman Ness announced that change to seating configuration in the meeting room and public comment has been moved to the end of the agenda. Tom Day, President/GM asked why there was a change to the seating configuration, to which Chairman Ness replied that it was consistent with other commissions and boards.

Tom Day responded that he is handing in his resignation with a two week notice as he feels that his role has diminished and is not needed anymore and will work the next two weeks to help with any transitions. Cathy White, CFO, stood and announce her resignation. Peter Weber, Snowsports Director, stood and announced his resignation. Robin Rowe, Resort Services Director, stood and announced her resignation. Becky LaPense, Human Resources Director, stood and announced her resignation. Commissioner Kiedaisch announced his resignation from the Gunstock Area Commission.

Commissioner Wood suggested that the GAC have a short recess. Chairman Ness announced the GAC would recess for 10 minutes.

At 6:18pm Chairman Ness called the meeting back to order and announced that he was going to discontinue the current agenda and move into a non-public meeting according to RSA 91-A:3, II (a).

Frank McDonald spoke out that he was astonished at the powerplay that resulted in the management team doing what they did tonight. The team presented an operational budget and have been doing so all along and he didn't understand what the end game is. He encouraged the GAC to not accept the resignations and added that as a result of this action Gunstock is going to be set back for years to come.

ACTION

Motion: Commissioner Wood made a motion to entertain public comment for 3 minutes each for a total of 30 minutes.

Second: Secretary Lambert

Vote: All in favor. Motion passes.

Public Comment

Skip Murphy (Gilford)- Stated that securing the physical plant is secondary and that the GAC needs to get ahold of the IT manager first to secure accounts and he hopes that the back up system is working very well. This was a political stunt rising to Saul Alinsky and Mayor Daly. After watching and reading about the situations this is a power play but with the advent of the

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Citizens for Belknap County led by Brian Biehl. While this does point to really bad things, I am not surprised and was expecting as I entered the room. How are you going to deal with the power play?

Frank McDonald asked what the plan is going forward and how does this get fixed.

Chairman Ness stated that public comments will be taken but the GAC needs to meet to discuss the next steps before announcing anything to the public.

Denise Conroy (Alton)- Stated her business background including former CEO and that her husband a ski instructor at Gunstock. She said she found it interesting that the GAC are hiding behind the subterfuge, and they were expecting this because they were hounding this management team. She stated that the financials are excellent, and she is amazed by how dismissive they can be about this situation. She told the GAC to “ask yourself who is getting paid, what is the big game, it’s not just about making the executive team miserable.”

Chairman Ness replied that none of GAC members make any money at this. He added that there is not plan to sell Gunstock but that is an issue for the Belknap County Delegation.

Judy Seltzer (out of state)- Stated that she works for the ski school at Gunstock and that it’s a haven for former CEO’s a whole cross section of people who have been brought together by working at Gunstock with the ski school as the common denominator. She stated that she drives 3 hours round trip to work at Gunstock because of the team.

John Decker from the Laconia Daily Sun asked Chairman Ness if he had any comment about his attempt to sell his software.

An unnamed member of the public state that they love Gunstock and how much they have seen the mountain grow from skiing to ziplining, etc. It’s well run and during COVID when everything was horrible the team did a phenomenal job at keeping people safe and keep people skiing.

Alex Deluca- Thanks the management team and employees and “I love each one of you”. He stated he is shocked at what happened tonight and urges the commission to do the right thing.

Rep. Juliet Harvey- Bolia (Tilton) - Stated “I believe that the right thing will be done and thank you do the employees and don’t know what happened but I thank them for their service”.

Rep. Mike Bordes (Laconia)- stated to the GAC “You chased away the best thing that happened to Gunstock. Thank you for ruining the mountain.”

Tom Brown (Laconia)- State that he works for the Gunstock Ski Learning Center and that for 16 years he taught at various Vail owned resorts. He stated to the GAC that instead of being focused on customers they are focused on the fight between themselves and the senior team and the delegation. Community members are happy but they are dissatisfied with the fight between both parties and who are they going to find to replace Tom Day to continue the fight.

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Chairman Ness replied that there is a ongoing review of why a lawsuit was filed with the county delegation and there is legal advice that is public record and none of GAC had anything to do with that.

Secretary Lambert- Stated that the GAC is going into a non-public meeting to discuss personnel matters and they are getting accused of driving these people away but we are doing our job. I am distressed because I have had conversations with Tom Day and others and I try to impress upon them that we are doing our job as commissioners, like looking at the master plan that will cost millions of dollars and that will be asked of the country for bonding and if there isn't a high level of confidence of those presenting that it won't happen. Before I was a commissioner, I didn't have confidence in the former GAC. We have one meeting a month and I don't see anything wrong with asking questions like we have done. There are improvements that Tom Day has done but we are tasked to do a job that involves questioning and understanding. I came into in the meeting excited to finalize the plan for the Stockade Lodge and instead this happened, and I am disappointed. We have not accepted their resignation. I worked for 21 years I don't think I could have thrown my career away like that. I am disappointed that they have done this, and I hope they reconsider and it's a shame that they throw their career away because of a seating change.

Commissioner Wood stated that emotions are high, and they will do their best for those who have given their resignations and those who remain and please be patient and information will be forthcoming.

Gretchen Casey (Gilmanton)- asked to confirm the RSA allowing the GAC to go into a non-public meeting since it was on the on agenda.

Chairman Ness replied and that he has made the decision to terminate the meeting as stands and go into non-public to address the events that took place this evening.

ACTION

- Motion:** Commissioner Wood made a motion to amend the agenda and terminate the current agenda and to move to a non-public meeting to address the employment concerns, following public comment.
- Second:** Chairman Ness
- Vote:** All in favor.

Public comment closed.

ACTION

- Motion:** Commissioner Wodd made a motion to move to non-public meeting according to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) at 6:52pm.
- Second:** Chairman Ness.
- Roll call vote:**
- Vice-Chairman Strang- Yes
 - Secretary Lambert- Yes
 - Chairman Ness- Yess
 - Commissioner Wood- Yes

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Commissioners entered back into the public meeting at 9:31

ACTION

Motion: Vice Chair Strang moved to empower Chairman Ness with short-term interim decision-making authority for day-to-day GMR operational and management issues until the next GAC meeting.

Second: Secretary Lambert

Discussion: Chair Ness would receive reporting from Commissioners on site during the upcoming days and respond to any issues that might need direct action.

Vote: All in favor. Motion passes.

Discussion involving the logistics of the following day's expected activities took place and Chairman Ness agreed that Secretary Lambert and Commissioner Wood would be on site at Gunstock in the morning to obtain keys, credit cards, and observe the removal of personal items from each person's respective office. Vice Chair Strang would notify the Belknap County Sheriff Department that the GAC would like an officer on hand to maintain an orderly and peaceful presence given the gravity of the situation.

ACTION

Motion: Chairman Ness motioned the Commission retain the firm of Foster McLean & Middleton to advise on matters of RSA 91:A compliance.

Second: Vice Chair Strang

Vote: All in favor. Motion passes.

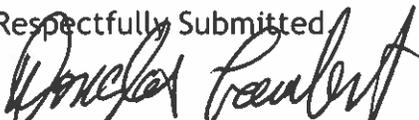
ACTION

Motion: Chairman Ness made a motion to adjourn the nonpublic meeting of the Gunstock Area Commission at 9:44 PM.

Second: Commissioner Wood.

Vote: All in favor.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Douglas Lambert, Secretary
Gunstock Area Commission