

GUNSTOCK AREA COMMISSION MEETING

July 23, 2019 AT 6:00 PM

Lakes Region Adaptive Sports Center, Gunstock Mountain Resort

APPROVED MINUTES

Notice of the meeting was posted at the Belknap County Courthouse, Gilford Town Hall, County Commissioners Office, Gunstock Area, and at GUNSTOCK.COM.

**GAC:** Bob Durfee, Gary Kiedaisch, Brian Gallagher, Russ Dumais

**Gunstock Personnel:** Greg Goddard, Mike Roth, Robin Rowe, Patrick McGonagle, Cathy White, Becky LaPense, Tami Dubois

**BDC:** Rep. Howard

**Public:** Lorraine Sanborn

Chairman Durfee opened the public meeting at 6:01pm and noted that Commissioner Nix was absent but may arrive later. Chairman Durfee also announced that there were requests from Commissioners Gallagher, Durfee, and Kiedaisch for a non-public session per RSA 91-A 3 II (a) and (c).

Minutes

The minutes of the June 26, 2019 Gunstock Area Commission meeting were reviewed.

**ACTION**

**Motion:** Commissioner Kiedaisch made a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

**Second:** Commissioner Gallagher.

**Vote:** All in favor.

Commissioner Kiedaisch asked that the minutes record or highlight action items requested from the meetings to ensure follow up. He noted there was one request made in June that had not been completed and suggested sending out the draft minutes earlier so that pending action items could be better tracked. Becky LaPense, HR Director, noted that the draft minutes are usually complete within 5 business days of each meeting. **She offered to send them out to Directors and the GAC with highlighted action items as soon as the draft is complete.**

The minutes of the non-public session of the June 26, 2019 Gunstock Area Commission meeting were reviewed. Chairman Durfee noted that the Commission had failed to approve the non-public meeting minutes in May and asked to have that added to the August agenda for review and approval.

**ACTION**

**Motion:** Commissioner Dumais made a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

**Second:** Commissioner Kiedaisch.

**Vote:** All in favor.

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#### Correspondence

- a. *Outbound Sylvia Letter* - General Manager, Greg Goddard, included a copy of a letter drafted on behalf of the Gunstock Area Commission to the Belknap County Delegation Chair, Michael Sylvia. The commissioners are seeking state funding for a proposed storm water management project for the main parking lot. The letter is asking that a LSR be filed with Rep. Huot as a prime sponsor. GM Goddard has not had a response from Chairman Sylvia. **Chairman Durfee added he will have an updated estimate for the project at the August GAC meeting.**
- b. *Pappas Letter* - GM Goddard shared a letter from Congressman Pappas offering congratulations on Gunstock's Best of NH awards.

#### Public Presentations

None

#### Action Items

- a. *Retirement Plan Investment Fund Change* - Commissioner Gallagher reported on the annual Investment Committee meeting held in June with Retirement Plans Manager, Dirk Richardson of Bank of NH. The Investment Committee completed the fiduciary and plan asset review and are recommending one fund change in the 457 (b) and Profit Sharing Plans. Based on the recommendation from Bank of NH, the Investment Committee requested a vote to replace the underperforming Harbor International Fund with American Funds Europacific Growth Fund. Brief discussion ensued about the performance of the funds in the plans and overall plan assets. **Human Resources Director, Becky LaPense, noted that the plan assets were recorded in her written report and she will request additional copies of the investment review documents for distribution to the rest of the commissioners.**

#### ACTION

- Motion:** Commissioner Dumais made a motion to replace the Harbor International Fund with the American Funds Europacific Growth Fund.
- Second:** Commissioner Kiedaisch.
- Vote:** All in favor.

- b. *Execution of RAN Documents* - Director of Finance, Cathy White, distributed RAN documents for signatures from each of the Commissioners. **GM Goddard will be following up with the banks that did not send in a bid for some insight behind why they did not respond.**

#### Written Reports

**Financial Report: June** - A written report was provided. Director of Finance, Cathy White, summarized the financial statements and asked for questions. Chairman Durfee asked who provides the comments on each of the reports. Cathy explained that the Department Managers write the own comments which are then shared with their Director for review and/or revisions.

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**Marketing and Sales Report** - A written report was provided. Commissioner Kiedaisch asked about marketing and advertising efforts on the lake, specifically in the Weirs Channel area. Marketing and Sales Director, Mike Roth, replied that they have stepped up local advertising efforts in print, radio, and brochure racks but that billboard space takes longer to secure. Commissioner Dumais asked if Gunstock had any tourism data on guest visits or attendance at other attractions in the state. Mike replied that he does not have any current data to compare Gunstock's season-to-date visits. Discussion turned to proposed redesign of the monument sign at the resort entrance to come in line with the new brand scheme. Commissioner Kiedaisch asked for discussion about the need for a new sign compared with other capital needs around the resort. He suggested this may be an opportunity for corporate sponsorship to help with the costs. Chairman Durfee thanked Mike for sending the photos of old resort signage, noting that he was taken back by how many different styles and "brands" were scattered throughout the resort. There was consensus among the Commissioners that they would like to see the development of a corporate sponsorship proposal to help offset the costs of the rebranding efforts. Discussion also focused on the design of the monument sign, including materials and sponsor logos. **Commissioner Kiedaisch asked that Mike solicit feedback and input from other parties on the monument proposal and present some other design concepts for the Commission to consider. Chairman Durfee also asked that Mike research the resort naming policy to see if there are any restrictions on sponsor logos.**

**Resort Services Report** - A written report was provided. Resort Services Director, Robin Rowe, summarized the Resort Services performance for June. The new Discover Zone attractions have been popular and the area looks more professional with the new fencing installed. Robin added that the name change for the retail shop to Gunstock Ski and Sport has sparked a few phone inquiries about what products are carried in the shop. Commissioner Kiedaisch thanked Robin for the "#1" hat mock-ups and offered some ideas to enhance the design. Robin reported that the Grounds department had done a lot of repairs and improvements to some of the basic camp sites, and she thanked them for their efforts. She is waiting on Fluet Engineering Associates for the upgrades to the utility infrastructure at the campground lanes. Commissioner Gallagher asked about Soulfest reservation projections. Robin responded that reservations are down for the slope side and mountainside basic sites. The camping variance is trending with ticket sales, which are down about 10% so far. The weather and the line-up are the two major factors suspected behind the slow sales.

**Mountain Sports Report**- A written report was provided. No further questions.

**Human Resources Report** - A written report was provided. Human Resources Director, Becky LaPense, informed the Commissioners that there will be a rate hold with the benefit renewal, due to good medical loss ratios. She added that since January, there have been 10 new year-round employees hired to replace turnover or for new positions. Turnover for 2019 is currently at 18% which is about average for the hospitality industry. She stressed that retention will be the key strategy for meeting workforce needs going forward. Commissioner Dumais asked about the 10% increase in the number of active employees compared with last summer. Becky explained that some are on an on-call status to help with special events, which is different from past protocol. **Commissioner Kiedaisch asked that she add year over**

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year department payroll dollars with the HR monthly complement report for better comparison.

**Facility Operations Report** - A written report was provided. Facility Operations Director, Patrick McGonagle, reported that the maintenance teams have an aggressive R&M schedule that will level out for a few weeks after Soulfest until after Labor Day, when the project schedule gets very active again. The Commission reviewed the project Gantt chart and Commissioner Kiedaisch asked Patrick which projects might cause some problems down the line. Patrick explained he has contingency plans for each large project and will be able to pull some internal employees from other departments to help with some tasks such as painting. Commissioner Kiedaisch asked GM Goddard for a project update on the trail brush activity. GM Goddard said he will email it to the Commissioners after the meeting for their review.

**General Manager's Report** - A written report was provided. Chairman Durfee asked about the historic marker for the bridge culvert project and has some proposals for the location and wording. GM Goddard said FEMA had some proposals as well and both parties will work together to determine location and wording on the marker. Commissioner Gallagher added that he is pleased that Sean Sullivan agreed to be part of the endowment funding subcommittee and asked that he be invited to an upcoming GAC meeting to present a brief report of activity after meeting with the attorney. Chairman Durfee asked Endowment Funding be added to the Old Business section of agenda as a subheader under *Grants and other Funding*.

#### New Business

a. Chairman Durfee asked GM Goddard for a response to the week's news of Vail Resorts acquisition of Peak Resorts. GM Goddard explained that the acquisition includes 17 ski areas, including several in NH and VT. He said any impacts to Gunstock will likely be in the season pass market because those resorts will now be part of the EPIC Pass, which creates both challenges and opportunities for smaller, "feeder" resorts like Gunstock. Commissioner Kiedaisch said the mega passes have changed the way skiers buy day tickets and is concerned about how Gunstock will handle this challenge. He suggested that the GAC and senior management team schedule an off-site strategic planning session on this topic. Chairman Durfee asked GM Goddard if he thinks that Gunstock should be doing something in reaction to the news. GM Goddard said he did not believe a public response was needed and that Gunstock will continue to maintain a competitive price point and stay aware of what other resorts are doing.

Commissioner Dumais was dismissed from the meeting at 8:05pm due to a prior commitment.

b. Commissioner Kiedaisch has been asked if Gunstock would be interested in expanding terrain into the Weeks Farm land should the sale go through to a current interested party. Chairman Durfee replied that the Commission would welcome the discussion and asked that the inquiry to be treated as a proposal and put on an upcoming GAC agenda. Commissioner Kiedaisch agreed to follow up with the potential buyer with the Commission's response and propose next steps.

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#### Old Business

- a. *Historic Single Chair Project* - Nothing to report.
- b. *Study Committee: Gunstock Business Model* - The study committee had drafted a memo with revised MOA language, but due to Commissioner's Nix absence further discussion was put on hold. Chairman Durfee said that Commissioner Nix and Commissioner Kiedaisch will present again on the subject at the next GAC meeting
- c. *Doug Irving Memorial*- GM Goddard has another meeting in a week and at the time of the meeting nothing new to report.
- d. *Main Parking Lot Paving*- Nothing to add that wasn't discussed earlier in the meeting.
- e. *Grants and Other Funding Options*- Nothing to add that wasn't discussed earlier in the meeting.

#### Other Business

***BCD Gunstock Subcommittee*** - Rep. Ray Howard added that he will not schedule and executive meeting until a presentation is ready for the Forestry Management Plan. GM Goddard reviewed the process needed for approval of the plan documents so they can move forward with cutting. Rep. Howard replied that if a presentation is ready he will schedule a meeting at a later date. GM Goddard said the plan has been ready many months and noted that they are running out of time for some aspects of the plan to be implemented.

***Affiliated Agency Reports*** - None.

***GNA/Ski Jumps*** - Commissioner Kiedaisch and Chairman Durfee have been making inquiries from some of their contacts and have scheduled a restart meeting with the GNA, next Monday, July 29<sup>th</sup> at 6pm to gauge interest in revitalization.

#### Miscellaneous

#### Public Comment

Ms. Sanborn commented on a few of the hiking trails including one trail from the wetlands along the brook that has a clump of trees on the trail path that make it unusable. Rep. Howard suggested that a local scout troop might be interested in cleaning it up as project. Facility Ops Director, Patrick McGonagle said they have done some clean up in that area but knows the area she is talking about and will look into getting it cleared away.

#### Non-Public Session

- Motion:** Commissioner Gallagher made a motion to enter a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A 3 II (a) at 8:39pm.
- Second:** Commissioner Kiedaisch.
- Vote:** Roll call vote - All in favor

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**Motion:** Commissioner Kiedaisch made a motion come out of non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A3 II (a) at 9:58pm.

**Second:** Commissioner Gallagher.

**Vote:** Roll call vote - All in favor. Commissioner Dumais and Nix were absent.

Adjourn

ACTION

**Motion:** Commissioner Kiedaisch made a motion to adjourn the GAC meeting at 9:59pm.

**Second:** Commissioner Gallagher.

**Vote:** All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Gallagher, Secretary  
Gunstock Area Commission