

**MOUNT WASHINGTON COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes of September 28, 2005**  
**Mount Washington Observatory – Weather Discovery Center**

**Members in attendance:**

Paul Fitzgerald, Public (Chairman)	Jack Middleton, MW Observatory
Wayne Presby, Cog Railway (Vice Chair)	Guy Gosselin, Public
Rep Gene Chandler, House	Paul Ingersoll, Public
Howard Wemyss, Mt Washington Auto Road	David Neely, WMNF designee

**Members absent:**

Sen John Gallus, Senate	Walter Graff, AMC
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**Others present:**

Ken Rancourt, Mt Washington Observatory	Allison McLean, Director, Div Parks & Rec
Will Abbott, Mt Washington Observatory	Chris Gamache, Supv Park Ops, Div Parks & Rec
Bruce Sloat, Mt Washington Observatory guest	Mike Pelchat, Mt Washington Park Manager
Peter Crane, Mt Washington Observatory	Tom Mansfield, DRED Architect
Robert Kischko, Dufresne-Henry	Edith Tucker, Coos County Democrat
Allan St. Peter, Dufresne-Henry	

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Call to Order Chairman Paul Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

I. Approve minutes The Commission motioned and accepted the June 30, 2005 minutes, as written.

II. Power line project Cog Railway agreement – Indemnification is still an issue should the line be installed along the trestle. Burying the line is feasible and without impacting cost. Crossing the Ammonoosuc is the last hurdle; the line could be buried.

*Overall project status* – Dufresne-Henry had distributed the “Electrical Alternatives Summit Power Distribution” report to Commission members. DRED plans to submit the contract to G&C in March with construction starting in the Spring and completed by October 2006. A USFS permit is not needed if the line is on Cog Railway land; the one crossing of the Appalachian Trail is not an issue. The Cog Railway has a culvert project planned in 2006; DRED will coordinate with the Railway in burying the line. A permit from the Coos County Commission may be needed, but it shouldn’t be a problem. The State Electrical Inspector is providing oversight.

An excavator with large rubber tires will be used to dig the trench, but there will be about 1000’ of handwork required. All work will occur in the Cog Railway ROW. Dufresne-Henry provided schematic and technical details. Burying the line simplifies the project and will increase reliability, but will make winter repairs more difficult.

Bob Kischko reviewed the power distribution options, recommending Options A (rebuilding the temporary enclosure) or B (Yankee building) based on cost, constructability, complexity, and adding a new structure. Tom Mansfield hopes for a decision in the next week or two to meet the time constraints. The project budget is \$2.6 million; \$460,000 has been spent. The Commission discussed the various options at length then took a poll. The Commission prefers Option F (underground electric room @ Sherman Adams building), with consideration for Options A and H (a new modular building in a different location from the Yankee Building).

III. Generators and related items Dartmouth property appraisal – Director McLean said that Dartmouth has withdrawn their participation on the appraisal effort and communication has broken

down. DRED's contract appraiser will finalize his report in the coming weeks without Dartmouth participation.

*PUC letter* – There is no new information to report, however DRED will coordinate its end-user electric costs formula with the PUC. There is an October 4, 2005 forum on Rural Electrification Service that may have funds available.

*Channel 8 tower* – Paul Leary of DRED is still reviewing options for the tower; an update is expected next month.

IV. Organization reports AMC – No report available.

*Auto Road* – Mr. Wemyss reports an average summer season; foliage season will determine the year's outcome. Retail sales are down by 5% and stage customers are down 3-4%.

*Cog Railway* – Mr. Presby reports a similar season to the Auto Road. The first oil-fired locomotive was tested in mid-October. Biodiesel engines are planned for the future.

*Observatory* – Several events are planned, including a White Mountains Chamber of Commerce meeting on October 18 and a book signing on October 16. The EduTrips program is on schedule, which is posted on the website.

*State Parks* – Mr. Pelchat reports that it's been a busy summer; up by 7% over last summer. The emergency exit door construction is near completion and a fire alarm has been installed in the Yankee Building. Parks was able to avoid the Verizon rate increase and expects a refund of overpayments for the 466 exchange. There will be three cell carriers installed in the flag poles located at the hotel next year. There is a need for increased cell carriers on the summit. Fuel cost is currently at \$1.88/gal. The Made-in-NH products are selling well and we have gotten positive feedback from guests.

*WMNF* – Mr. Neely reports that a Record of Decision has been signed by the Regional Forester and the Forest Plan is at the printers and will be available in October.

Any other business Director McLean thanks the Commission for their input and is optimistic that Parks will finalize the power project.

Meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

*Meeting notes by C. Gamache; compiled by T. Tango-Lowy, Division of Parks and Recreation.*