

**Mount Washington Commission  
Meeting Minutes of December 4, 2006  
DRED, 172 Pembroke Road, Concord**

**Members in attendance:**

Paul Fitzgerald, Public (Chairman)  
Wayne Presby, MW Cog Railway (Vice Chair)  
Rep Gene Chandler

Howard Wemyss, MW Auto Road  
Chris Thayer, AMC designee  
Bill Dauer, WMNF designee

**Members absent:**

Senator John Gallus  
Paul Ingersoll, Public

Guy Gosselin, Public  
Jack Middleton, MW Observatory

**Other present:**

George Bald, DRED Commissioner  
Allison McLean, Director, Div Parks & Rec  
Paul Leary, DRED Communications Admin  
Mike Pelchat, MW State Park Manager  
Torene Tango-Lowy, Clerk, Div Parks & Rec  
Tom Mansfield, DRED Architect  
Anne Edwards, Attorney General's Office

Scot Henley, MW Observatory  
Ken Rancourt, MW Observatory  
Mike Housman, Supv Park Operations  
Gail Wolek, Deputy Director  
Paula Tracy, NH Union Leader  
Edith Tucker, Coos County Democrat  
Anthony Blenkinsop, Attorney General's Office

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I. Welcome Chairman Paul Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. Members and attendees introduced themselves.

II. Power update In the interest of time and priority, Mr. Fitzgerald moved this agenda item up. He requested an update on the easement between the State and Cog Railway. Mr. Presby said he had minor changes to the easement. Mr. Fitzgerald requested that the interested parties adjourn themselves to finalize the agreement. Mr. Presby, Ms. Edwards, Mr. Blenkinsop, and Mr. Mansfield adjourned.

III. Report from partners AMC. Mr. Thayer reported a quiet start of the winter season; programs start at Christmas. AMC is beginning its 2007 planning, including upgrades to the Pinkham Notch facility. USFS approved bringing the Carter facility to full service in June 2007. AMC has seen a 15% growth in its school programs.

*Auto Road.* Mr. Wemyss reported a warm winter start; however, summer ended with a strong finish. Paving has been delayed to Spring 2007, due to weather.

*Observatory.* Mr. Henley reported great media coverage for MWO, including The Weather Channel, National Geographic, CBS, Time and Reuters. Daytrips by snow tractor has sold out, although overnight trips are lagging. School outreach programs have doubled from last year with video conferencing.

*State Parks.* Mr. Pelchat reported a 2% increase in retail. Parks is addressing deficiencies found from the DES fuel handling report. Safety systems remain a concern as the generators enter their fourth winter season. Parks is coordinating with the local WHOM engineer for emergency communications. The septic system was installed in 1990 and is beyond its lifespan; rehabilitation costs are estimated at \$50,000-100,000. By separate mailing, Parks distributed the power rates spreadsheet to commission members; the rates are set for cost recovery and to break even.

*WMNF.* Mr. Dauer reported that the Forest Service hired a new ranger, Jeff Lane. The Natural Resource Conservation Service will be conducting a forest-wide soil survey and AMC has expanded its citizen monitoring program for alpine areas. President Bush has signed the New England Wilderness Bill.

IV. Recess Mr. Fitzgerald called a recess to check on the easement negotiations. The meeting returned to order at 2:55 p.m.

V. Power update Easement negotiations. The State and Cog Railway came to agreement in word and principal on the easement for the transmission lines and associated facilities. The AG's office will put the agreement in final form tomorrow and Mr. Presby agreed to sign it by Friday, December 14, 2006. Mr. Fitzgerald, on behalf of the Commission, expressed gratitude to the representatives of the State and the Cog Railway. Although the process was challenging, their efforts will be well worthwhile when electrical delivery is through permanent grid power. Mr. Fitzgerald thanked Mr. Presby, Commissioner Bald, Director McLean and the Attorneys General. Members applauded.

*Construction.* Mr. Mansfield provided an update. The project funding end date will need to be extended. Phases II (transmission lines) and III (summit building and wiring) will be rebid in Spring with work scheduled to start in August. The project is scheduled for completion by September 2007 with grid power operational by winter 2007. Mr. Mansfield responded to Rep. Chandler's inquiry that the budget is adequate with a \$1.8 million balance. Rep. Chandler suggested that DRED consider language for an extension within the capital budget bill.

Mr. Pelchat responded to Mr. Henley's inquiry that Parks recommends keeping one wall of the covered walkway to serve as a windbreak after the temporary generators are relocated to the summit electrical building. A storage area may also be needed for winter operations use. Mr. Fitzgerald suggested that the walkway return to its original purpose.

VI. Approval of minutes Mr. Presby motioned to accept the October 13, 2006 minutes; Mr. Wemyss seconded. Motion carries unanimously.

VII. Any other business Commissioner Bald expressed his appreciation for the work of the Commission and their continued commitment to the State.

VIII. Adjourn The meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m. The next meeting is at the call of the chairman.

*Submitted by T. Tango-Lowy.*