

## **Annual Meeting, Burke Mountain Clubhouse –**

**East Burke Vermont, April 4, 2022**

Call to Order – NEKGMC President John Predom welcomed all attendees to the 2022 NEKGMC Annual Meeting. Attendees at the meeting were Cathi Brooks, John Predom, Paul Trojano, Gordon DuBois, Kevin, Williamson, Sue Winsor, Andrea Kane, Geoff Commons, Doug Lamb, Hope Crifo, Michael DuBois, Chris Gagnon, Mike DeBonis, Luke O'Brien and Jon Kenney. John opened the meeting addressing the topic of volunteerism. At the next Main Club Annual Meeting in June a number of NEK volunteers will be recognized.

Secretary's Minutes – NEKGMC Secretary Michael Chernick presented a summary of the minutes from the January 2022 NEK Quarterly Meeting.

MOTION [Brooks/Trojano] move to accept minutes

Approved unanimously

Before proceeding to the Treasurer's Report GMC Executive Director Mike DeBonis introduced himself as did other attendees.

Treasurer's Report – In the absence of NEKGMC Treasurer Angela Smith, NEKGMC Director to the Main

Cathi Brooks summarized the report.

Treasurer's Report Northeast Kingdom Section ~ Green Mountain Club

Quarterly Financial Statement

As of April 2, 2022

Operating Account

Beginning Balance (as of 01/21/22) \$4,664.94

Income

Dues Sharing

December \$717.50\*

January \$235.00

February \$120.00

CNB Donation (Community Circle) \$100.00

March \$350.00\*\*

\*Deposit that hasn't been deposited by main club. Angela sent Rick Dugan an email requesting clarification as to where our deposit is. \*

\*\*Deposited into bank account but Rick hasn't sent the spreadsheet yet\*\*

Expenses

None

Ending Balance \$6,187.46

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Certificate of Deposit

CD#1 ...4489/Matures 01/12/2023 @.40% \$1,590.85

CD#2 ...3785/Matures 06/27/2022 @.40% \$1,751.87

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Grand Total All Monies \$9,530.18

Angela Smith ~ Treasurer

Cathi Brooks – Main Club Report – The most recent GMC Main Club Board meeting occurred on March 19 and as has been the practice since the pandemic started was conducted by Zoom. As of 3/19 GMC finances were in excellent shape. Costs have increased this past year, such as contracting for helicopter support services. Notwithstanding this reality budgeting is still on target. The FY23 budget projects revenues of \$2,262,514 compared to the FY22 amount of \$1,750,597. As for expenses the projected

FY23 figure is \$2.68 million. The FY23 contribution goal is projected to increase by \$140,000, and the FY 23 Field Program Fee for Service amount is anticipating an increase of \$276,000. Endowment distribution is slated to rise to \$238,529 and field staff base compensation will be set at \$14.00 per hour (The Vermont minimum wage for calendar year 2022 is \$12.55).

Cathi reported that the GMC Annual Meeting is scheduled for June 11 at Main Club in Waterbury. Membership now stands at 9800 As of 3/19 only \$70k left for the Capital Campaign to reach its goal. Personnel hours for campaign work will be reassigned upon the campaign's completion. COVID relief funding continued. Wages are up this year to be more competitive. Recruitment for the field season has been intensive.

Herrick Building reconstruction, which will consist of a total rebuild is scheduled for later this year. The COVID backlog on field programs is still trickling down. Housing for seasonal staff is an issue the Club is attempting to address. Some of the field supervisory positions have been filled. There will be two to three trail crews in 2022.

Beaver Dam Camp will be rebuilt starting this fall. Cathi provided a brief history of the Wheeler Pond Camps, including the continued pattern of Beaver Dam sliding towards the pond and the decision to rebuild. The new site is further away from the water. It is a handicapped accessible site with a less severe trail access. Hadsel Mares will be used as a crew headquarters during reconstruction. This will require a three -month public closure. The section supplies the wood for the heating. The new cabin will include some external insulation.

The Main Club has been increasing volunteer support for trail projects through new chainsaw certification and various first aid classes.

A major treadway project on Camel's Hump on the Burrows Trail, a multi-organizational project will be a highlight of the busy FY 2022 field season.

Main Club is continuing its diversity inclusion and developing a new policy on this matter. A new harassment/discrimination policy is also in the development phase.

The issue of naming trail facilities (be they built structures, trail segments, or natural locations) has ensued. The AMC is no longer naming facilities after individuals. This concern is resulting from removing names of individuals, whose past history has led to a trail club's decision to no longer honor

that person.

Confusion arose on naming a new shelter after Dave Hardy, the late GMC Field Programs Director. However, that naming did proceed a Stratton Pond area shelter). Cathi Brooks read the new policy which includes the option of a dedication instead of an actual naming. The new GMC naming policy does not exclude the possibility of naming a facility after an individual. Specifically, its philosophy provides in part:

When naming a feature after a person, the GMC recognizes the importance of honoring people who have made significant and long-term contributions to the Club and the Long Trail, and to maintain a sense of history along the Trail. One way the GMC accomplishes this is by naming trails, shelters, and other facilities primarily for those who have dedicated time and energy to the Club and Trail.

The philosophy further provides:

Dedicating a trail or feature to such a person, even though the trail or feature is not named for that person, is a way of recognizing their interest and commitment.

The naming policy itself provides for a Trail Management Committee recommendation subject to Main Club Board approval with an agency partner approval if the facility is on public land.

As Cathi referenced, the issue of renaming is also part of the naming policy. The renaming guidelines state (in part):

The Club should acknowledge and assess the complexity of human actions before it reaches judgments. Historical evidence is typically complex and often ambiguous. Too-ready renaming, especially when passions are high, may or simplify, revise, or erase history.

Today's decisions about naming and renaming may become controversial in the future. Thus, today's decision makers should give the same respect to previous decision makers that they would like their decisions to be accorded in the future.

The above being stated factors in renaming should include:

The harm caused by retaining the name

The harm caused by renaming

Notwithstanding the heightened controversy on naming facilities after individuals, the NEKGMC has enthusiastically endorsed the naming of the new Beaver Dam Camp in honor of the late Jean Haigh. The Camps Committee (which as the camp is within that committee's jurisdiction and not Trails Management's and is located on Club and not publicly owned land) has supported this recommendation. It is now before the Main Club Board for consideration.

Cathi also reported that major rework is scheduled on Belvidere Mountain this summer. One trail section is very wet, and the segment will be relocated to a dryer zone. Production of the 23rd End to Enders Guide is now completed. The hope is to reopen the Visitors' Center to the public later this year. But even with its COVID-related closure, over \$13,000 of online orders were placed in this current fiscal year. The Club is discussing a new volunteer and staff code of conduct.

New Business

COVID Policy- Most meetings have been remote. The Club follows the CDC guidance and is not requiring vaccination. Main Club will probably be mask optional. On the vaccination issue, it will be left to the discretion of sections. This has resulted in some disharmony. This remains an active issue. An update will come from the Main Club to the sections

NEKGMC Executive Committee

## Elections for 2021-2022

Susan Winsor moved that the exiting slate of officers be approved for reelection on a single vote.

The slate includes:

John Predom -President

Paul Trojano- Vice President

Angela Smith -Secretary

Michael Chernick - Treasurer

Geoff Commons seconded the motion, which the membership approved unanimously.

Cross Cycle Fitness - Chris Gagon, a local entrepreneur who owns the Cross Cycle Fitness business (located on Kirby Road in Burke), and which offers event programs, presented his activity schedule of running and biking. The NEKGMC will link digitally to Chris' events. Efforts will be made to not conflict with NEKGMC events.

NEKGMC Trail Topics – NEKGMC Trails Adoption Coordinator Kevin Williamson reported that three persons are scheduled from the section for GMC chainsaw training. Participation is NEKGMC-GMC subsidized. Luke O'Brien, (DFPR Regional Recreation staffer) mentioned that the NorthWoods Stewardship Center and VYCC also running chainsaw training sessions There will be a Trail Work Day on Sunday May 1 (meet at 9 AM at Burke Mt Clubhouse) The work site will be Cow Mountain Pond NorthWoods will also work on the site. Kevin reported that between last year's adopters and new individuals that the adoption situation may be in good shape. The National Trail Day hike will be held at Groton State Forest (possible leaders for this event are either Andrea or John).

NEKGMC Membership - As of 3/11, the NEKGMC membership stood at 276. Much of the credit for this number is attributable to NEKGMC Membership Coordinator Beth Barnes. The Main Club is starting a membership group and Beth will participate.

Camps- Paul Trojano, who chairs the GMC Camps Committee, reported the hope of Beaver Dam construction this fall, as did Cathi, and that Camps Committee voted to name the new camp for Jean.

As a section, the NEKGMC periodically updates the wood stacking at the camps. When the second camp is built, the wood capacity will need to be doubled. The upper shed can only support Hadsel Mares. The lower wood stacking facility would stay as is and the upper doubled. The picnic table area needs improvement and can this be addressed during the new camp's construction.

Trail Management Committee – Cathi, who serves on the Trail Management Committee, reported there is a consensus that hiker numbers are increasing. Federal funds are currently available for new trail work grants. Long distance AT traffic has mostly been northbound. Through hikers constitute less than one percent of AT use. The Green Mountain National Forest is converting several temporary positions into permanent posts. DFPR has added new staff positions and is increasing mud season publicity. Cathi reported on various, partnerships in which GMC participates.

As of 2022, only 6.25 miles of the LT lacks legal protection for the treadway and adjacent lands. Cathi referred to the corridor management program to explain this figure. The Wander Trail near Stratton will not be delisted but improved. GMC has a delisting /relocation policy. As Cathi stated there are policies for everything.

Kingdom Heritage Trail -There are two known water sources. There will probably be two camping sites

TMC has approved. The sites also have State approval. Wyerhauser approval is further along than the Sweet Tree (Gore Junction) site's landowner approval. One is near Middle Mountain and the other near Pine Brook.

Brighton Trails Day – Scheduled for June 25 (Saturday) Last year there were five hikes This year will probably have staggered start times to end all the hikes at approximately the same time. John is envisioning four hikes. State permits and landowner approval will be required Bluff Community, Middle Mountain, Bluff Trail, North Branch, Moose Bog are all potential hike locations. John has secured volunteer leaders.

FPR (Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation) Funding - Luke requested funding for multiple projects. A lot of general maintenance requests are accounting for much of funding. The big project is the Burrows Trail on Camel's Hump (GMC, VYCC, NorthWoods, DFPR). Major projects in the NEK are boardwalks, South Pisgah, and a new roof on the Bald Tower. The results of the Statewide Tower Assessment on State lands will be share with partner organizations, including the GMC. Also in the NEK, attention will be directed to the Kingdom Heritage Trail, on Burke, the Willoughby Shore Trail (including adjacent land restoration) and the Peacham Bog Trail. Westmore (Town) is financing repairs to Bald Cabin (NorthWoods will perform the work).

FPR will be working Cold Water Brook Camp. There will need to be a KHT campsite monitoring plan Placement of a roof on the Wheeler Kiosk and the Mad Brook plowing [plan has been settled] are also settled items. A question was raised on Moose Mountain plowing. Funding was not granted for the Gore Mt bridges. Luke will continue to try to secure the Gore project's funding. Luke is still trying to connect with Glover Rescue for area rescues. He had a great meeting with Brighton Rescue.

The Monadnock situation remains frustrating with no immediate result envisioned. But the Northern Forest Center (which works on town issues) will be meeting with Town of Lemington officials. DFPR is prepared to help financially. Potentially there could be added campsites on KHT in the future. Work continues on the CCC Willoughby site.

Westmore Challenge is schedule for September 24

Crag VT (Climbing Resource Access Group) – This organization is seeking corridor monitor status similar to GMC's on the Kingdom Heritage Lands. It ([mountainproject.com](http://mountainproject.com)) reports possibly 70 rock climbing routes on Black Mountain. There will be a public meeting later this spring on the corridor monitor application.

History Project - Andrea updated the project's planning. She outlined her proposed chapters. The project's goal is to document and promote the NEKGMC and protect future hiking resources. The volume will include glossary of stakeholders

#### Future Hikes & Events

Gordon Dubois will lead a map and compass session. Gordon is also developing a 100 highest NEK list.

Sue Winsor is scheduling a group for older women.

Michael Chernick offered a June 12 hike up Gore Mountain.

Next Meeting - The next NEKGMC meeting will be held on Sunday July 17 at a location to be determined.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00 PM

Michael Chernick – NEKGMC Secretary