**White Mountains Interpretive Association
Board of Directors Meeting
August 13, 2015**

The meeting was held at the Saco Ranger Station and began at 5:30 pm. In attendance were: Bob Smith, Ken Rancourt, Carol Felice, Doug Somerville, Kathy Somerville, and Tiffany Benna for the USFS. Kathy Somerville filled in as Secretary. Absent were Bruce Miller and Maxine Booth.

The Minutes for the previous meeting of July were accepted unanimously.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Ken Rancourt presented a summary of the Treasurer’s activities:

* The impact of unbudgeted reimbursement for travel for the volunteer at Lower Falls was discussed. With the tourist traffic at the re-designed site and the need for swift water rescues at the Falls it was acknowledged that the volunteer there plays an important role.
* The sales at Saco are going well
* The sales at Andro are up $900 over last year at this time.
* We presently have a $41,000 balance in our checking account
* Paying the program presenters is going faster this year as the reports are being emailed to the Outlook account.

**Participating Agreement**

* Bob Smith reported that the agreement has been signed by USFS and WMIA
* There was some discussion about the extra charge to repair the Internet connection at the Campton office. The funds can come out of our cooperative agreement, but that would reduce the funds for interpreters. Tiffany will investigate the best method of payment.

**Membership and Donations**

Kathy Somerville reported that 19 families have renewed their membership since July 1st and there are 2 new memberships. Donations have been going well with $490 collected from the Donation Box at the Russell-Colbath House and a donation of $300 from the Passaconaway Valley Civic Association (PVCA) in memory of Don West and designated for evening programs.

**Retail**

In a written report, Maxine Booth stated that we had sold 28 of the Dolly Copp t-shirts in less than 2 weeks which was an excellent starting volume for our new item.

Gary Gustafson presented two proposed designs of Mount Chocorua for a new poly-pro t-shirt in red with white screen print design. The design was prepared and donated by Sara Eastman, the art teacher at Kennett Middle School. The Board voted to select the “Mount Chocorua” design. Doug volunteered to assist Gary in setting up the order in the POS system.

Tiffany Benna led a discussion about ordering fleece jackets and vests for the FS employees. Up to this point she had received only 6 orders and she suggested the price was a deterrent. We decided to reduce our profit and the cost to $35 as a service to the employees. Tiffany will take new orders.

**Sales Analysis** – by Doug Somerville and Gary Gustafson

Doug reviewed his data showing an increase in profit in some retail categories and a decline in others. Possible reasons for the change in sales were discussed with some suggesting the new store layout and the use of “Sale” signs may have helped. Clothing sales have increased the most.

Gary presented his data showing:

* Margins are down, which is a concern.
* Saco has more visitors, which leads to more sales
* Sales of merchandise is up 5%
* Cost of Goods Sold is up 29%

Tiffany said that Alisoun has requested a circular clothes rack, postcard stand and notecards for the Campton store. Tiffany and Gary will research available racks for sale. Bob made a motion to authorize up to $300 to be allocated for the purchase of display racks at Campton, seconded by Gary and passed unanimously. Gary and Tiffany will try to have racks in place in September.

**Russell-Colbath House Report**

Kathy Somerville presented a summary of the activity at the RC House over the past 2 months. Of note is the front doorway was re-built and repaired and the front of the building stained by volunteers Bruce Miller and Gary Gustafson. The garden is much improved since Bob Smith and Carol Felice turned it over and weeded, and Kathy Somerville and Pat Glover planted vegetables. The public has responded enthusiastically.

Deb Cottrell’s and Gloria Aspinall’s interpreter contracts were reviewed and signed.

The Operating Plan for the Russell-Colbath House, prepared by Edward Wright and Carol Felice, was reviewed with no changes suggested. Ed is also working on a maintenance plan for the Barn.

**Brickett Place**

Bob Smith stated that the visitor numbers at the house are higher than ever. John Bender has been volunteering successfully in spite of some physical handicaps. Bob announced that he will not be coordinating volunteers at the Brickett Place next year as the Forest Service will not be renewing their agreement with Chatham Trails. After a discussion was held of possible ways to staff the Brickett Place, it was concluded that future staffing will be organized by Tiffany.

Advertising for staffing at both Interpretive Sites will be planned for this fall, offering a campsite and job description. Bob Smith will draft an ad which will be discussed at our September meeting.

**Forest Service Business**

* Joe Phillips has prepared a grant application for the Boulder Loop Interpretive plan which was reviewed by the Board. Joe needs additional financial information from Ken and Doug to complete the application.
* Tiffany Benna reports that there will be significant changes to the parking pass system in the near future and we will be informed of the changes when they are confirmed.
* Clare Mendelsohn has been selected as the new Deputy Forest Supervisor.
* A group of Foresters from India are expected to visit the 3rd week of September and Tiffany is requesting additional merchandise be transferred to the Campton site to be made available as souvenirs of their trip. Tiffany will work with Maxine to select items and manage the transfer.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

**Next meeting: Thursday, September 10, 2015 at 9:30 am Saco Ranger Station**

 This will be a Retail Meeting including VIS representatives from each of the 3 retail locations. Future meeting dates will be set at this time.