

**Friends of Lapham Peak (FLP)**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**January 15, 2026**



**Location: Lapham Lodge**

**Time: 3:05 PM – 5:20 PM**

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the Friends of Lapham Peak Board of Directors was called to order at 3:05 PM.

**Attendance**

Board Members Present: Christine Ciszek, John Hillmer, Kris Maki, Rita Keber, John Kolbe, John McCarthy, Anne Riendl; Karl Timm  
Others Present: Mike Ring (Wisconsin DNR)  
Guest: Becky Fedak, Executive Director, Tall Pines Conservancy

**Guest Presentation – Tall Pines Conservancy**

Becky Fedak provided introductions and a short informational update regarding Tall Pines Conservancy’s recent land acquisition and potential next steps. She explained how the acquisition was made possible. Mark Fischer will serve as a Friends of Lapham Peak contact, with coordination through the DNR, via Mike Ring unless Madison staff become involved.

**Appointment / Election of Officers for 2026, the following slate was approved unanimously:**

- President: John Hillmer (continuing)
- Vice President: Melissa Jarecki (continuing)
- Secretary: Becky Burton
- Treasurer: Karl Timm (continuing)
- Assist. Treasurer: Anne Riendl (continuing)

**Approval of Previous Minutes**

Minutes from the December 2025 Board of Directors meeting were approved by consent of all members present.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Treasurer reports were presented and discussed. Items included a transfer of funds from Habitat to the HNC related to October 2025 Square transactions. We discussed a large donation to the General Fund and reviewed some of the strong balance funds (including the General and the Garden Brick Fund). Board members were asked to consider possible projects or services that could utilize these balances for future discussion.

**Old Business**

Updates were provided on Lapham Lodge improvements, snowmaking operations, ski events (including Loppet), habitat projects, butterfly garden, garden bricks, membership, Colorama, Fright Hike, Feel the Burn, Candlelight Hike & Ski and Lapham Peak Unit status (Mike Ring). Of note:

1. Lapham Lodge

- New sinks have been installed.
  - Fireplace timer installed.
  - Starlink Wi-Fi installed in January, with discussion regarding router capabilities; feedback forwarded to the Building Committee.
2. Snowmaking
- Good snow conditions reported.
  - New pump is functioning well.
  - Electrical pedestal issues identified, interim power solutions in place until summer repairs.
3. Ski League / Series / Loppet
- Ski Series: 92 adults first Wednesday Night and 73 the second; there were HS and Middle school students the first night.
  - 77 preregistered participants; day-of registration will be available.
  - Kris checked out Tracside timing of Southern Conference race held at Lapham on Tuesday night January 13<sup>th</sup>.
4. Habitat Crew Report
- Habitat is ordering **30 small oak trees** for spring planting.
  - Plans are underway to obtain **two** additional **48-inch fire rings**, potentially for:
    - Mike Fort (replacement of a sunken wheel)
    - WRSB (new ring to be placed inside existing stone configuration).
5. Butterfly Garden
- Requested additional volunteer assistance.
  - Interested volunteers will be directed to Rita Keber to coordinate scheduling with Liz.
6. Membership
- **227 lifetime members**, including **2 new lifetime members**.
  - **19 yearly renewals** and **1 new yearly member** reported.
7. Fright Hike
- Net proceeds allocation as follows:
    - **75%** to the Habitat Restoration Fund (over 400 volunteer hours in 2025).
    - **25%** to the Snowmaking Project (approximately 80 volunteer hours in 2025).
  - Treasurer Karl Timm was asked to distribute funds accordingly.
  - **2026 Fright Hike dates:** October 23–24 (buildings reserved).
8. Candlelight Hike & Ski
- Rita is coordinating Jan 31, 5pm-8:30pm (hikers should be done around 9pm).

- As of 1/15/26: 132 cars (434 people) have registered, if 80% come: 106 cars (347 people).

## 9. Park Supervisor’s Report

- Discussion of an **Eterra mower attachment**:
  - Approximately **\$25,000 raised** to date.
  - Quotes are being obtained; an additional **\$10,000** may be needed.
- Attendance statistics:
  - Dec: **12,976 cars**, estimated **45,416 people** (second-highest December since 2020).
  - Annual attendance: **649,323 visitors**, comparable to last year.
  - Seven-year average: **627,957**, representing ~3% growth.
- Herbicide/Pesticide Use Report completed.
- Lapham Peak is now 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> busiest park in the state.
- Park’s office sold the 2<sup>nd</sup> most number of annual passes in the state (2<sup>nd</sup> only to Devils Lake)
- 2025 FLP Volunteer hours reporting will soon be finalized.

## New Business

### 10. Grants

- **K.N. \$10,000 Lodge grant payout** remains pending; Madison has been reminded
- John McCarthy applied for a **K.N. Grant** for a new ADA-accessible fishing pier
- **Federal Recreational Trail Program (RTP) grants** discussed:
  - John McCarthy will explore funding for a trail/path to the planned fishing pier
  - Melissa Jarecki will explore options for access to the HNC from the trail system

### 11. FLP Reserved Dates – 2026

- Confirmed FLP use dates:
  - **Feel the Burn, July 11**
  - **Fright Hike, October 23 & 24**
- John McCarthy will consult with ski club regarding potential additional needs

### 12. 2025 Volunteer Hours Summary, volunteer hours contributed by FLP in 2025:

- |                                      |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| • Board Administration:              | 3,031 |
| • Fundraising Events:                | 3,270 |
| • Maintenance & Restoration:         | 9,599 |
| • Lapham Lodge Capital Improvements: | 1,397 |
| • Snowmaking Operations:             | 1,606 |
| • Scouting Projects:                 | 425   |
| • Hausmann Nature Center:            | 591   |

- **Total Hours:** **19,919**
- **Estimated Volunteers:** 375 individuals
- **Estimated Volunteers at Events:** 2,200 people
- Comparison: **2025: 19,919 hours**
  - 2024: 18,272 hours
  - 2023: 18,408 hours
  - 2022: 13,697 hours

### 13. Website & Communications

- Review of FLP-related websites and social media platforms:
  - [laphampeakfriends.org](http://laphampeakfriends.org)
  - [laphampeaksnowmaking.org](http://laphampeaksnowmaking.org)
  - [laphampeakinteractive.org](http://laphampeakinteractive.org)
  - [frighthike.org](http://frighthike.org)
  - [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#) (Friends of Lapham Peak)
- A committee may be formed to review website usage and coordination with Snowmaking.
- Board members were asked to review sites to be able to provide feedback at a future meeting.
- Trail Conditions page updates were discussed; DNR will review posting schedules and content management.

### 14. Upcoming Events

- January 17: Loppet
- January 31: Candlelight Hike & Ski
- Early February: Tall Pines Conservancy partners kickoff meeting (Zoom; date TBD)
- February 24, 6:00 PM (Zoom): Friends of WI State Parks – *Digital & Social Media Marketing*
- February 26: FLP Board Meeting (moved from February 19 due to Birkie)

### 15. Eagle Scout Projects

- Ongoing and potential projects reviewed, including signage, kiosks, firewood racks, box steps (IAT), and accessibility enhancements. Tree Identification project has been completed.
- Reminder: Eagle Scouts must track **all volunteer hours** associated with their projects.

### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by consent at **5:20 PM**.

Minutes recorded by:

John Hillmer, President Friends of Lapham Peak

## Action Summary (Summary of Board Follow-Ups)

Action Item	Responsible Party	Timing / Notes
1. Engage with Tall Pines Conservancy and DNR	Mark Fischer / Mike Ring	Ongoing coordination
2. Monitor and propose potential uses for strong General Fund and Butterfly Garden Brick Fund balances	All Board Members	Ideas to be discussed at a future meeting
3. Relay Wi-Fi router capability feedback to Lapham Lodge Building Committee	John McCarthy / Rita Keber	Completed / follow-up as needed
4. Arrange interim power solutions for snowmaking pedestal outages	Snowmaking Team	In place until summer electrical repairs
5. Secure additional 48" fire rings for Mike Fort and WRSB	Habitat Crew / Mike Ring	As time allows
6. Coordinate Butterfly Garden volunteer support with Liz	Rita Keber	Ongoing
7. Distribute 2025 Fright Hike proceeds per 75% / 25% split	Karl Timm	From 2025 Fright Hike balance
8. Coordinate Candlelight Hike & Ski volunteers and schedules	Rita Keber	Prior to January 31 event
9. Prepare and install informational signage as discussed	Mike Ring	As soon as possible
10. Follow up with Madison on pending K.N. Lodge grant payout	Mike Ring	Ongoing
11. Pursue Trail grant application for ADA fishing pier and accessible paths	John McCarthy / Melissa Jarecki	2026 grant cycles
12. Review FLP and Snowmaking websites and social media usage	Board Members	Feedback to be shared in future meeting
13. Review Trail Conditions page posting schedule and content	Mike Ring	Ongoing