

Tom Day, former general manager of Gunstock Mountain, today announced that he and other former senior managers would not be attending today's 1:30pm meeting of the Gunstock Area Commission (GAC). The stated reason is that until GAC Commissioner Dr. David Strang resigns, the management team is unwilling to return to the resort. They previously stated they would return upon the resignation of commissioners Peter Ness and Strang. Ness resigned at a GAC meeting last week but Strang has refused to heed calls for his resignation, leading to the continued closure of Gunstock.

Today's meeting was called by Strang with the meeting agenda stating that he would be remaining on the commission and asking Day and Director of Facility Operations Pat McGonagle to return to their management roles ahead of this coming weekend's Soulfest event. Day reiterated that until Strang resigns, he and his fellow managers will not be returning to the mountain. "It was disingenuous of Strang to call this meeting today expecting us to come back to work for Soulfest knowing our terms for returning have remained the same throughout this process - both he and Ness need to resign."

Day also indicated it was always communicated that "We resigned as a team and would need to return as a team." Day said he never communicated or discussed an option that would bring back only Day and McGonagle.

A recent development that imperils Soulfest is the imminent cancellation of Gunstock's insurance coverage from insurance carrier Safelhold Special Risk. In an email to GAC Commissioner Lambert, Safelhold indicated it has reservations about the Resort's Liability and Property Insurance coverage.

Their primary concerns are lack of leadership, knowledge and accreditation of various operations at the resort. They stated that they underwrote the resort's policy considering past and present knowledge of mechanical and physical equipment as well as know-how of daily operations. They also contemplated a leadership team in place to provide direction and to help facilitate strategic emergency plans, should any be needed.

Without a leadership team in place, Safelhold will cancel their insurance this coming week, resulting in the inability of the resort to host Soulfest or to have any employees allowed on site at the resort for any operations.

Soulfest has stated its intention to hold Belknap County liable for any interruption to the event and will sue the county if this happens.

Day stated, "Strang's continued refusal to do the right thing and resign is now on the verge of shutting down Soulfest, as well as imperiling winter operations for the resort. We want to get back to work this week to protect Soulfest, protect Belknap County against potential lawsuits, and ensure that Soulfest's final year at Gunstock is successful. When Strang resigns, we will come back to work to run Soulfest and get the mountain back on track to open for winter."

Day also reiterated that the leadership team had provided two weeks notice, which would have provided time for them to create a transition plan. Instead, the GAC commissioners called the Belknap County Sheriff to remove the team from their offices the morning after their resignation, leaving the resort in chaos.

It's hard to overstate the importance of Gunstock's economic impact to Belknap County and the entire Lakes Region. It accounts for millions of dollars in income to area hotels, food and retail establishments. The former senior management team understands the impact to our staff and the region and are anxious to return to oversee the successful operation of Gunstock Mountain once again.