

## RATC Board Meeting Minutes

November 6, 2017

Glenvar Branch Library, 3917 Daugherty Road

### In Attendance:

Board members: Bruce Agnew, Jim Beeson, Blanche Brower, Diana Christopulos, Butch Kelly, Anne Kohinke, Chris Means, John Miller, Bob Peckman, Terry Shipley, Susan Terwilliger, Jim Webb, Homer Witcher, Therese Witcher, Dave Youmans

Others: Meagan Cupka, Ann Hackworth, Bill Hackworth

Meeting was called to order by Diana at 7:00.

### Approval of October 2017 Minutes (Susan Terwilliger):

Corrections: None

Approved: John Miller moved to approve the minutes, Anne Kohinke seconded, and the motion was passed.

### Treasurer's Report (Blanche Brower):

Reviewed current budget expenditures (see below and detailed summary at the end). Several life members joined this past month.

Financial activity since last board meeting (as of 11/6/2017):

Total in Checking: \$51,217.78

Total Assets: \$65,846.89

Receipts: \$ 2,294.00

Expenditures: \$ 2,892.90

(Full report included at the end of the minutes.)

### Membership Report (Bruce Agnew):

- RATC currently has 574 active members with 692 on the drop list (including people unpaid or deceased). Go Fest attracted 16 new members for RATC and several for ATC. Twenty-one RATC new member packets were sent out the week of Oct. 30.
- RATC Meetup: Of the 1,300 who have signed up, about 30% participate in group hikes. Nonmembers who respond to Meetup are being asked to consider joining RATC.

### PROGRAM (Bill Hackworth and Meagan Cupka, Blue Ridge Land Conservancy): "Preserving Land in Virginia":

Two officials with the Blue Ridge Land Conservancy (BRLC), Meagan Cupka (assistant director) and Bill Hackworth (president), spoke to us about BRLC and its mission. BRLC is one of 1,400 land conservancies in the U.S. and one of eight in Virginia. The main thrust of the local conservancy, whose motto is "We save land," is conservation easements. Working with landowners, BRLC keeps land safe from development and enforces certain conditions. The group is interested in working with RATC and ATC to protect the Triple Crown area and its viewsheds. BRLC's Board of Directors includes a wide range of professionals, among them biologists, lawyers, and physicians. A stewardship fund (financed by landowners) helps pay legal costs and defend easements. Blue Ridge Land Conservancy has preserved more than 18,000 acres, including Carvin's Cove and Mill Mountain.

### External Updates and Action Items (Diana Christopulos):

#### 1. President's Report

- MVP status update: Although FERC has issued a permit, many hurdles remain for MVP. The U.S. Forest Service has not issued its final record of decision, and the Bureau of Land Management has yet to approve the pipeline. By law, cultural and historic resources (such as the AT) also must be recognized. Delays help postpone project, especially as winter approaches. Gentry Locke, a Roanoke law firm, is representing

landowners on the pipeline route, contending that MVP's use of eminent domain amounts to unconstitutional taking of private property.

- Speaker for December 2 holiday potluck: No one yet confirmed. A couple who through hiked with a baby has been asked. We plan to recognize certain members at the potluck.
- Nominating committee update: Still need to confirm which board members agree to serve next year. We especially need people who are comfortable with social media.

## **2. UPDATING AND UPGRADING THE RATC STORE (Jim Beeson, Chris Means, Terry Shipley, Diana Christopulos):**

RATC needs a new and attractive way to sell its merchandise (hats, T-shirts, patches, etc.) online. We need to more effectively manage online merchandise orders. An exploratory committee (Jim, Chris, Terry, and Diana) has found a promising solution for RATC using a local vendor: Press Press Merch. This business (which operates like Amazon) handles the merchandise and fulfills orders. RATC would receive a portion of the proceeds. Press Press Merch charges \$50 to set up the website interface and \$25 per month thereafter. RATC would receive \$9 from the sale of a \$20 shirt. There is great potential to sell shirts and other goods to Triple Crown hikers, other hiking groups, and the public. Press Press would submit a monthly report that summarizes orders, online activity, and other details.

The board voted to do a preorder with Press Press to try it out and see whether the investment is worth the costs. Order should be received by the March 2018 annual meeting.

## **3. DISCUSS ESTABLISHMENT OF ENDOWMENT FUND (Diana Christopulos):**

At its October 2, 2017, meeting, Alan Ronk, executive director of the Foundation for Roanoke Valley (FRV), talked with the RATC board about establishing an Agency Endowment Fund.

FRV and RATC have since discussed an agreement wherein:

- RATC would establish an Agency Endowment fund with a minimum amount of \$25,000.
- RATC would receive an annual payment based on interest earned in the account.
- RATC would be free to solicit donations and bequests to the fund, paid either directly to the fund or to RATC, and to add surplus funds at any time.
- RATC would be free to withdraw any amounts over \$25,000 as long as the withdrawal is properly authorized by RATC and RATC remains a 501.c.3 organization.
- FRV would manage the fund within its investment portfolio, include it in its annual audit, and send official thanks to donors who contribute directly to the fund.

Since that meeting, RATC members who are experienced with endowment funds have expressed concern with the composition of FRV's investment portfolio.

### Actions requested:

- Discussion and next steps: Diana recommended waiting until the January 2018 meeting to decide whether to commit funds to FRV. She has discovered that the foundation has investments in numerous fossil fuel (oil and gas) companies. These investments do not match RATC's mission and philosophy as an environmentally activist organization. We may need to find another firm that has environmentally sound investments (invested in renewables, not fossil fuels). Diana will explore other investment firms and report back to the board in January.

## **Regular Reports**

### **Trail Supervisor's Report (Jim Webb):**

Trail work crews have prepared bridge #2 on the McAfee Knob trail and the bridge on Route 624; they also put up signs at the AT - fire road crossing. Updated information is needed in the kiosks, especially about bears and bear/human interactions. Jaime Sajecki (Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries) is a good source of bear-related information and often speaks to groups.

**Hikemaster’s Report (Susan Herndon-Powell):**

Susan has submitted our liability insurance application (for hike leaders) and is awaiting information about quotes.

**Conservation Supervisor’s Report (Butch Kelly):**

Thirty people showed up for a work day at Tilson Tract, which was strip mowed to preserve the viewshed. The National Park Service has awarded a \$25,000 grant to manage invasive plants over the next year at Tilson Tract, Burrus Tract, Sinking Creek, Rice Field, and other areas (also including Sawtooth Ridge and McAfee Knob).

**Shelter Supervisors’ Report (Homer & Therese Witcher):**

Doc’s Knob shelter work hikes were October 19, 21, and 22. The deck is 90% complete. Work on the Pine Swamp Branch shelter is on hold. The Wapiti shelter will get a new tin roof.

**McAfee Knob Task Force Report (Dave Youmans/Brian Boggs):**

Dave Youmans, the paid Ridgerunner, has finished this year’s season. New gates are up on the McAfee Knob trail. Camping on top of McAfee has become very popular. Ridgerunners will need to strategize how to discourage this next season.

**Land Management Supervisor’s Report (Dave Youmans):**

No report.

**Newsletter Editor’s Report (Bob Peckman):**

December 7 is the deadline for Trail Blazer submissions.

**Calendar:**

December 2, 2017	Holiday Potluck
January 8, 2018	RATC Board of Directors, 7 pm, Glenvar Branch Library
February 5, 2018	RATC Board of Directors, 7 pm, Glenvar Branch Library

**Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:40.**

**RATC Treasurer's Report Info for Minutes  
(as of 11/6/2017)**

Balance in Checking	\$51,217.78
Bequest from Robert L. Trimpi Trust//Pine Swamp Shelter***	\$4,905.03
McAfee Task Force Fund***	\$1,164.52
ATC LL Bean Grant VT Leave No Trace***	\$2,365.28
Grant: Katharyn Elizabeth Fell Demaree/Memory Malcolm & Jimmie Black**	\$23,242.05
NPS/ATC Port-a-Johns McAfee Knob***	\$3,760.00
Total Assets:	\$65,846.89
Total Equity:	\$65,846.89

\*\* Amounts are included in balance in checking

Net Loss for Period:

Total Income during Period: \$2,294.00

**Significant Items:**

Dues	\$2,220.00
Donations	\$35.00
Roanoke Valley Gives Fundraiser	\$0.00
Receipts Donation Box (McAfee/Tinker)	\$0.00
Stickers (\$2.50 each)	\$0.00
Patches RATC (\$5)	\$0.00
Patch 113 Mile (\$3)	\$0.00
T-shirt (\$20)	\$0.00
Hat (\$10)	\$0.00
Go Fest Sales (hats, patches, stickers)	\$39.00
Amazon Smile	\$0.00
Interest Income- Savings	\$0.00
Interest Income – Checking	\$0.00
Refund Service Charge	\$0.00
Interest Income-CD-Yearly Int. 2016	\$0.00
Extra from PayPal	\$0.00
ATC LL Bean Grant VT Leave No Trace	\$0.00

Total Expense during Period: \$2,892.90

**Significant Items:**

Treasurer of Rke. County (Glenvar Library rm & projector)	\$25.00
Bruce Agnew (new mbr packet \$30.59/RATC banner \$94.05)	\$124.64
Jim Webb (McMaster-Carr/galvanized wire cable bridge Rt. 624)	\$32.38
Handy John Handy Rentals (1 reg, 1 handicap port-a-john McAfee lot)	\$190.00
Lowes (bridge Rt. 624 \$312.82/Andy Layne Trail \$33.64)	\$346.46
USPS (\$225 renewal #509 permit-mailing/\$150 postage for Blazer/PC)	\$375.00
BB&T (vista Print-1,000 business cards)	\$41.47
Willis Ridge Supply, Inc. (supplies for Doc's Knob deck; from Black grant)	\$1,757.95