

RATC Board Meeting Minutes

May 7, 2018

Glenvar Branch Library, 3917 Daugherty Road

In Attendance:

Board members: Jim Beeson, Brian Boggs, Diana Christopulos, Jonathan Eagle, Scott Karns, Butch Kelly, Josiah Leonard, Bob Peckman, Julio Stephens, Susan Terwilliger, Jim Webb

Others: Mark Farrell

Meeting was called to order by Jim Beeson at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of April 2 Board Meeting Minutes (Susan Terwilliger):

Corrections: None

Approved: A motion was made to approve the minutes, it was seconded, and the motion passed.

Treasurer's Report (Terri McClure):

Terri was absent but previously emailed the March and April 2018 financial reports (Monetary Assets and Treasurer's Report) to the board. Jim Beeson presented these reports. Per Jonathan Eagle, monthly minutes and financial reports will be posted on RATC website and will not require a password to view.

Financial activity since last board meeting (as of 5/7/2018):

Total in Checking: \$53,521.09

Total Assets: \$68,238.64

Receipts: \$2,020.30

Expenditures: \$2,817.34

See RATC website <https://www.ratc.org/financial-reports/> for full financial reports.

Membership Report (Chris Means):

Chris was absent; no report.

Updates and Action Items

1. PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Jim Beeson):

- a. Status of RATC online store and Press Press Merch: There is a problem with the women's V-necked shirts, which may require another vendor. The store, which is currently closed, will open by June 4, at least for men's merchandise. Jim reminded the board that Press Press Merch will be a fulfillment center and handle all orders (taking \$3 for each order). Diana Christopulos is checking on the possibility of selling Triple Crown jewelry.
- b. Upcoming board meetings through September: June 4, August 6, and September 5 (Wednesday after Labor Day). Diana confirmed all dates with Glenvar library. The Corn Boil is on July 21 (no board meeting that month).
- c. ATC Volunteer Leadership Meeting (August 10-12): ATC will pay for two RATC members to attend. Others may go if the RATC budget allows. This is an opportunity to learn how the ATC works and to meet leaders from other trail clubs.
- d. Corn Boil: Scott Karns, new social chairman, has received some guidance from Linda Akers and is currently planning this event.
- e. Outdoor store collaborations: Jim reported that Walkabout Outfitters wants to get more involved with RATC. They might provide a gift card for trail maintainers; offer a "secret shopper" program, where RATC members shop at the store, complete a survey about their experience, and the club gets \$15 for every purchase; or pay for some item needed by RATC. Tina Miller, a store representative, will provide

more details at the June 4 meeting. Back Country Ski & Sport also gives discounts to RATC members. We need to explore other store collaborations as a way to recognize trail maintainers, Ridgerunners, and other volunteers.

- f. Troutville Trail Days (June 2): Chris Means plans to go.
- g. NPS recognition: Diana Christopoulos noted that all volunteer hours should be submitted to Jim Beeson to be eligible for NPS recognition gifts. These include hours doing trail work, participating in the McAfee Knob Task Force, leading hikes on the AT, and doing administrative work.
- h. MVP update: Diana summarized the tree sitter situation.
 - Red and Minor Terry have descended from their trees; other tree sitters (Peters Mountain, Pocahontas Road, and Little Teel Crossing) remain.
 - USFS and MVP personnel illegally drove ATVs on the AT (West Virginia side of Peters Mountain) for 19 days, buzzing at least one hiker in the process. Although USFS claimed the ATVs were used for “wellness checks” to monitor the health of the tree sitters, the vehicles were more likely used for shift changes in security personnel tasked with preventing the tree sitters from receiving food and water from their supporters. Damage from ATV use turned part of the AT into a muddy trail 6 to 8 feet wide and may have ruined a spring (water source). USFS officials later apologized for the trail damage, but it is unclear whether the ATV drivers will be punished for breaking AT use laws.
 - NPS and most other agencies did not condemn this incident and have failed to support MVP protesters. Andrew Downs (ATC) has spoken out against MVP and ATV use but has limited power to act. Diana plans to use GPS to determine exactly how much of the AT was harmed by the ATVs.
- i. LL Bean visit: A group from LL Bean plans to walk part of the Appalachian Trail (Licksillet Road to VA 620) in an effort to document the AT.
- j. PAL (Park Archaeological Laboratory) Register of National Historic Places: A group from PAL plans to hike RATC’s section of the AT and other trails the week of May 7 to document the trail and identify historic sites. They have been advised to use Guthook’s trail guide apps, ATC guides, and other maps.
- k. Ridgerunner reports on Facebook: The board decided that Ridgerunner reports with time-sensitive information about water sources should be posted on RATC’s Facebook page. Dave Youmans will handle.
- l. Mill Creek Nature Park request: The Narrows Now hiking club (through David Jones) has requested that RATC grant permission to open a connecting trail between the Mill Creek Nature Park trails and the Appalachian Trail. Currently, an uncleared and unmarked quarter-mile section of old woods road lies between the AT and the Mill Creek trails. A representative from the Narrows club will present this request at the June 4 board meeting. Kathryn Herndon-Powell (ATC) will also attend. The board will vote on whether to allow the trail connection at this meeting.
- m. Down Home Bed and Breakfast: Jim Beeson received an email from the proprietor of this former B&B offering storage space for RATC items. The structure is located near the Andy Layne Trail off VA 311 and VA 779. Jim will follow up.

2. RECONSIDER REQUIREMENTS FOR RATC MEETUP PROFILE (Anne Kohinke, Chris Means):

RATC currently requires a full name and personal photo to join our RATC Meetup group, but this requirement may change. Currently, when someone wants to join the RATC Meetup group, he or she sees the following: "On your profile, provide a picture that is a recognizable photo of your face. Also provide your first and last names, for security and social reasons....We cannot accept you to this Meetup unless you provide these."

Action requested: Change the RATC Meetup acceptance requirements to read (proposed changes in boldface): "On your profile, provide a picture that is a recognizable photo of your face. Also provide your first name and **at least the first initial of your last name**, for security and social reasons....We cannot accept you to this Meetup unless you provide these." Anne and Chris were absent; a decision on this policy change was deferred to the June 4 board meeting.

Regular Reports

Trail Supervisor's Report (Jim Webb):

Trail crews have been working in the Rocky Gap area. The Konnarock trail crew is arriving the week of May 7 and will be working at Sinking Creek. The crew will be in our section for a total of five weeks.

Hikemaster's Report (Susan Herndon-Powell):

Susan was absent. She has received a quote from Pachner & Associates for two insurance policies: one that covers general liability (for hike leaders) and one that covers directors and officers (for RATC board members). Yearly premium is \$1,871 for both. Board members are asked to review these policies and decide whether to approve them (and bind coverage) at the June 4 meeting. Jim Beeson noted that other companies offer similar quotes. RATC is already covered for Ridgerunners and trail maintainers, but NOT currently for group hike leaders. The board briefly discussed the merits of adopting the policy(ies). Julio Stephens pointed out that a higher deductible may lower the yearly premium.

Conservation Supervisor's Report (Butch Kelly):

On March 18-19, Radford University volunteers removed and thinned trees to enhance Burruss Tract viewshed. On March 31, a Roanoke College student group treated garlic mustard. Other invasive-weed removal crews worked on April 18-19, April 20 (re-treating ailanthus, or tree of heaven, and autumn olive at Sinking Creek), April 22 (removing 180 pounds of garlic mustard north of Campbell shelter), and April 28 (Miller's Cove). In the fall, Butch and volunteers plan to treat ailanthus on the McAfee Knob fire road. Also, on May 26, the Roanoke Valley Bird Club will journey to Falls of the Dismal to look for golden-winged warblers and loggerhead shrike.

Shelter Supervisors' Report (Homer & Therese Witcher):

Homer and Therese were absent but reported that the nine new fire rings previously ordered should arrive on May 8. The Witchers plan to reroof the Niday shelter on June 10.

McAfee Knob Task Force Report (Brian Boggs):

- Ridgerunner updates: Ridgerunner kickoff event held in Roanoke on April 13 was well attended. On May 5, seven new Ridgerunners were trained. Upcoming McAfee Knob orientation hikes are on May 11 and 27.
- Catawba Valley fire: Brian Boggs and Diana Christopulos reported on the fire, which started in eight different places and temporarily closed parts of the AT, and RATC's quick response. On Sunday evening, April 29, Jim Beeson got a call from emergency dispatchers asking for RATC's help in evacuating hikers off the McAfee Knob trail because of fire in that area. Dave Youmans, Bill Neilan, Bruce Davidson, and Jim Beeson responded. Brian and several other RATC volunteers stationed themselves in the 311 parking lot for much of April 30 and May 1 to keep hikers off the trail. Jim praised the seamless coordination among trail volunteers, shuttle drivers, USFS personnel, and firefighters. News media reporters helped inform people on fire conditions. Shelters along the McAfee Knob trail were mostly unscathed except for an area around Johns Spring shelter that was used as a firebreak. Diana reported that RATC's McAfee Knob Facebook page had more than 35,000 views (and many likes) during this time.

Land Management Supervisor's Report (David Youmans):

Dave was absent and had no significant land management updates.

Newsletter Editor's Report (Bob Peckman):

Bob requested that all Blazer information be submitted to him by the second week in June. He will be unable to attend the June 4 board meeting.

Webmaster's Report (Jonathan Eagle):

- Jonathan Eagle and Terri McClure are redesigning the Financial Reports page on the RATC website so that the club’s latest financial information will always be available at the same unchanging (and therefore bookmarkable) link.
- Membership database: Jonathan warned that the RATC membership list is a prime target for data hackers and web crawlers. The list contains personal information that could be misused. He recommended either removing the membership list from our website or creating a password-protected database accessible only to users with proper credentials. The board decided to take the membership list off the website. Terri , as the club treasurer, will send new/updated membership lists to board members as an attachment. Terri is solely in charge of entering data onto the list.
- Big IT forms (plug-in): This website plug-in software creates forms that will go to multiple people instead of just one person/one email address. There is a one-time fee of \$19 (personal level) for the service. Currently, only one form is being used. Jim Beeson will follow up.

Calendar:

TBD	RATC Partnership Meeting
June 2	Troutville Trail Days
June 4	RATC Board Meeting
July 21	RATC Corn Boil
August 6	RATC Board Meeting
August 10-12	ATC Volunteer Leadership Meeting – ATC Membership Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.