

RATC Board Meeting Minutes

June 4, 2018

Glenvar Branch Library, 3917 Daugherty Road

In Attendance:

Board members: Jim Beeson, Brian Boggs, Diana Christopulos, Jonathan Eagle, Susan Herndon-Powell, Butch Kelly, Josiah Leonard, Terri McClure, Chris Means, Julio Stephens, Susan Terwilliger, Jim Webb, Homer Witcher, Therese Witcher, David Youmans

Others: Kathryn Herndon-Powell, David Jones, Tina Miller

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

Approval of May 7 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 presented the RATC general fund budget thru 5/31/18, broken down into specific categories (e.g., business, maintenance, membership, and social). Financial reports are divided into (1) monetary assets and income and (2) expenditures. These reports are on the RATC website and are continually updated.
- Terri emailed the updated membership list to board members as a PDF attachment 6/2/18. She will send current membership lists to the board once a month. Active members are those who have paid dues within the last two years. All others will be considered inactive and may be removed from the membership list.

Financial activity since last board meeting (as of 6/4/2018):

Total in Checking:	\$51,357.52
Total Monetary Assets:	\$66,075.13
Receipts (YTD):	\$8,215.07
Expenditures (YTD):	\$9,082.29

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

Membership Report (Chris Means):

Chris reported a good turnout at the Walking Appalachia Film Fest held at the Grandin Theatre on May 9. Troutville Trail Days on June 2 was also a success. Fifteen new member packets have gone out during the past month. RATC currently has around 600 members.

Updates and Action Items

1. PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Jim Beeson):

- a. Status of RATC online store and Press Press Merch: The store is currently set up to sell hats and men's merchandise, but the design problem with women's shirts is still unresolved. Store is not yet open but will be soon. Jim asked that the link on the RATC website to outdated merchandise be removed.
- b. ATC Volunteer Leadership Meeting (August 10-12): Susan Herndon-Powell and Jim Beeson plan to attend.
- c. Corn Boil: Scheduled for July 21. Scott Karns, social chairman, is in charge.
- d. Walkabout Outfitter presentation (Tina Miller): Tina, whose husband is a former through-hiker, outlined some ways in which Walkabout Outfitter could support RATC and reward its members for trail work and other contributions. The store may issue gift certificates based on work hours or come up with some other reward system. Tina discussed Walkabout's secret shopper program in some detail. This program would involve having shoppers fill out a survey about their shopping experience as a way to evaluate and improve customer service. For each completed survey, RATC would receive \$15. Board members

will try out the secret shopper program initially, with the option to expand it to other interested club members.

- e. RATC liability insurance (Susan Herndon-Powell): Susan presented liability insurance options offered through Pachner & Associates. These would cover general liability (for hike leaders) and a directors and officers policy (for RATC board members). Yearly premium is \$1,471 for both (\$871, general; \$600, directors and officers). Susan noted that this type of policy does not allow a higher deductible for a lower premium. After some discussion, Jim Beeson recommended binding insurance coverage. Diana Christopulos moved to accept both insurance policies, Josiah Leonard seconded, and the motion passed.
- f. RATC conflict of interest policy (Diana Christopulos): Diana explained the importance of adopting a conflict of interest policy for the RATC Board of Directors. (This was originally discussed at the February 2018 board meeting.) This one-page document states that any board member who could benefit financially from some action of the club must disclose this fact. Further, this “interested” person cannot participate in discussions of these matters and cannot vote on them. Each RATC board member will receive by email an annual conflict of interest statement that he or she must sign and return.
- g. Conservation award: The Blue Ridge Land Conservancy has identified RATC as an award winner for conservation and outdoor education efforts. A celebration will be held on September 9 to honor RATC and other winners.
- h. Mill Creek Nature Park proposal (David Jones): David presented a request by the Narrows Now hiking club to grant permission to open a connecting trail between the Mill Creek Nature Park trails and the Appalachian Trail using an unmarked and uncleared quarter-mile section of old woods road.
 - o The main issue in deciding whether to allow the connection between Mill Creek Nature Park trails and the AT is that some of the Mill Creek Park trails are multiuse and allow bicycling and horseback riding as well as foot traffic. A connecting trail might encourage cyclists and riders to encroach on the AT. However, David noted that the proposed access point between the two trails is steep and remote, which would discourage most cyclists and riders. He recommended allowing the connection as a show of good will toward the Narrows Now group. Kathryn Herndon-Powell (Appalachian Trail Conservancy) noted that one possible solution is to make the part of the Mill Creek Trail close to the AT foot traffic only. To allow the board time for further consideration, David Youmans suggested deferring a vote on whether to allow the connection. Per Jim Beeson, the RATC board will vote on the Narrows Now request at the August 6 board meeting.
 - o Great Eastern Trail (GET) officials have made a separate request to coalign part of the GET with the AT. GET lists itself as an AT partner and its maps currently show colocation with the AT, but this is not officially recognized. Diana Christopulos, who fielded a similar request in the past, favors keeping the GET in its current location west of the AT to relieve some of the hiker pressure on the AT. Kathryn Herndon-Powell noted that the GET request is an issue for the ATC board and would require permission from USFS and NPS.
- i. ATC Letter on FERC natural gas policy review (Jim Beeson): RATC has been asked to sign onto a letter to the commissioners of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) regarding FERC’s approval policies. FERC is reviewing its 1999 policy statement and is accepting review comments on its natural gas certification procedures. Suzanne Dixon, president of the ATC, wrote a response with five key recommendations to modify FERC’s policies. A motion was made to sign onto the ATC response letter, it was seconded, and the motion passed. (Josiah Leonard abstained from voting.)

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

Several years ago, RATC started requiring full name and personal photo to join our RATC Meetup group. Some problems have emerged with this approach. Anne has been making the approvals and has documented the situation. 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 was absent; a decision on this policy change was deferred to the August 6 board meeting.

Regular Reports

Trail Supervisor's Report (Jim Webb):

Not discussed at meeting.

Hikemaster's Report (Susan Herndon-Powell):

Not discussed at meeting other than the liability insurance policies described above.

Conservation Supervisor's Report (Butch Kelly):

Not discussed at meeting.

Shelter Supervisors' Report (Homer & Therese Witcher):

The Witchers plan to reroof the Niday shelter on June 10.

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

Not discussed at meeting.

Land Management Supervisor's Report (David Youmans):

Not discussed at meeting.

Newsletter Editor's Report (Bob Peckman):

Bob was absent; he needs all Blazer information by the second week in June.

Webmaster's Report (Jonathan Eagle):

Jonathan said there is a plug-in on RATC website that displays RATC's 14 AT hikes together with trailhead locations and driving directions. Google now requires that we associate a credit card with API account (which is currently in Jonathan's name). The maps will not be available after June 11 without credit card. Jim Beeson and Jonathan will discuss this further.

Calendar:

June 5	RATC Partnership Meeting
July 21	RATC Corn Boil
August 6	RATC Board Meeting
August 10-12	ATC Volunteer Leadership Meeting – ATC Membership Meeting
September 5	RATC Board Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.