

RATC Board Meeting Minutes
August 6, 2018
Glenvar Branch Library, 3917 Daugherty Road

In Attendance:

Board members: Jim Beeson, Diana Christopulos, Anne Kohinke, Josiah Leonard, Chris Means, Susan Terwilliger, Jim Webb

Others: Graham Glynn, David Jones, Bill Neilan

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

Approval of June 4 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. Jim Beeson reported that the club's current financial information (Latest Income & Expenses; Current Monetary Assets) is posted on the RATC website. The biggest recent expense was payment of the club's new liability insurance policy (\$1,471). The club recently received a check for \$250 from Global Giving, a New York-based agency that coordinates donations to nonprofits. Some individuals learned about the springtime Catawba fire through detailed, timely information on our Facebook pages and were inspired to donate through Global Giving. The board recognized Diana Christopulos and Brian Boggs for their efforts in coordinating publicity about the fire.

Financial activity since last board meeting (as of 8/6/2018):

Total in Checking:	\$48,978.70
Total Monetary Assets:	\$63,555.48
Receipts (YTD):	\$9,066.56
Expenditures (YTD):	\$11,411.00

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

Membership Report (Chris Means):

Since the June meeting, Chris has sent out around 10 new member packets, bringing the total club membership to approximately 620. Chris suggested including information about lifetime membership on the pamphlets and offering different payment options, such as PayPal or Square, to prospective members. Chris will consult with Diana Christopulos on these issues.

1. RECONSIDER REQUIREMENTS FOR RATC MEETUP PROFILE (Deferred from June 2018 meeting; 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."

- After some discussion, Anne Kohinke moved to adopt the proposed change, Diana Christopulos seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Unfortunately, this was not a binding vote because we lacked a quorum. Diana suggested voting by email to allow all board members to participate.

Regular Reports

Trail Supervisor’s Report (Jim Webb):

Jim announced that two steel toolboxes (18” x 16” x 72”) are available to whoever wants them. He reported on the Konnarock crew’s accomplishments during their five weeks of work. Trail work at Sinking Creek is still ongoing; Rocky Gap tasks are largely complete (rock steps and sidehill digging). Crews are currently working to improve some steps along the Dragon’s Tooth trail.

Hikemaster’s Report (Susan Herndon-Powell):

Susan was absent. She has just submitted a grant proposal for ATC license plate funding for five RATC hike leaders to take a Wilderness First Aid course. The proposal was submitted to Andrew Downs at the Roanoke ATC (Virginia Regional Office). Susan is also in the process of recruiting a potential new RATC hike leader.

Conservation Supervisor’s Report (Butch Kelly):

Butch was absent.

Shelter Supervisors’ Report (Homer & Therese Witcher):

The Witchers were absent. The Niday shelter was reroofed on June 10.

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

Brian and Dave were absent. Bill Neilan, a Ridgerunner organizer and leader, reported on the Task Force program and said there will be an orientation class for new Ridgerunners in September. Bill went on to describe the situation with diaper dumping at the portable toilets in the 311/McAfee Knob parking lot.

- Over the past four weeks, a huge number of dirty diapers (filling four large trash bags) has been dumped both in the toilets and between the two units. The board discussed at some length how to deal with and stop this misbehavior.
- Anne Kohinke suggested erecting a sign saying that volunteers maintain this site and it is not an official trash collection venue. She also suggested writing a letter to local papers. Another suggestion was to place a real or realistic fake surveillance camera in the area. Over the long term, this parking lot may be upgraded to include a permanent toilet and bear-proof trashcans, like the Dragon’s Tooth lot. But in the short term, we need to stop the dumping.

Land Management Supervisor’s Report (David Youmans):

Dave was absent.

Newsletter Editor’s Report (Bob Peckman):

Bob was absent.

Updates and Action Items

2. PRESIDENT’S REPORT (Jim Beeson):

- a. Narrows Mill Creek Nature Park connector proposal: The board was scheduled to vote on whether to approve a Narrows outdoor group’s request to connect a quarter-mile section of Mill Creek Nature Park with the AT, but the vote was postponed to the September 5 meeting because of lack of a quorum. David Jones, who gave the original presentation, reiterated his support for this proposal, mostly to help

the Narrows Now group and because the possibility for encroachment onto the AT from bicyclists and horse riders appears to be slight.

- Chris Means will post a hike on Meetup to encourage RATC members to visit this area before the September meeting to get a first-hand look. David Jones will accompany the hikers.
- b. VA 311 portable toilets: In the past, the National Park Service has funded the rental of these units (\$190/month, through ATC to RATC) for the convenience of McAfee Knob hikers. But the NPS funding has ceased, and RATC has been asked to provide these funds. Jim Beeson objected to this arrangement and spoke with an NPS official and with Andrew Downs of ATC.
 - As a result, ATC has agreed to fund the portable toilets in the McAfee Knob parking lot until a permanent toilet and bear-proof trash containers are installed, like those at the Dragon's Tooth trailhead lot.
- c. VA 621 parking lot: This parking area has become treacherous, and people have gotten stuck trying to park there. One problem is a collapsed culvert. Jim Beeson has been in touch with Forest Service personnel, who have agreed to replace the culvert and improve the surface through a partnership with RATC. RATC will buy the culvert (estimated cost of \$3,500-\$4,000) and furnish volunteers to spread gravel over the lot as needed. The timeline for this work has not been finalized.
- d. Pine Swamp Branch shelter reopening: This shelter has been closed for three years because of hazardous (dead) trees that endangered the shelter. The Forest Service has felled the problem trees, and the shelter has reopened and is now available for hiker use. (Rehabilitation, naturalization, and log removal in adjacent areas may still be necessary.) Susan Herndon-Powell has advised Guthook of this change and the availability of the shelter.
- e. ATC license plate funds: See hikemaster's report above. About \$1,100 may be available to fund hike leader Wilderness First Aid course training.
- f. NPS ranger: A new National Park Service ranger is in the process of being hired to serve parts of the Appalachian Trail and Blue Ridge Parkway. This person will spend three-quarters of his or her time on the AT and the remainder on the parkway.
- g. Other business:
 - Jim Beeson commended Scott Karns, social chairman, for an excellent job in organizing the Corn Boil.
 - RATC recently received \$75 from Walkabout Outfitters through the Secret Shopper program.
 - Press Press Merch recently sent the club a check for \$68 for online merchandise sales. Jim Beeson described four possible designs for proposed Triple Crown T-shirts.

3. MVP Update (Diana Christopulos):

Diana had encouraging news about the Mountain Valley Pipeline. Most significantly, on August 3, the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals halted work on all 303 miles of the MVP until environmental issues concerning sediment and erosion are resolved. An earlier decision by the same court halted work in a small section of the Jefferson National Forest. Additionally, Diana reported that a three-judge panel has vacated two permits for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline project, finding decisions by federal officials to be "arbitrary and capricious." She described a June explosion of a natural gas pipeline in West Virginia that was put in place despite warnings from engineers and geologists as a cautionary tale for the MVP.

Calendar:

August 10-12	ATC Volunteer Leadership Meeting – ATC Membership Meeting
September 5	RATC Board Meeting
October 1	RATC Board Meeting
October 12-14	Go Fest
November 5	RATC Board Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.