

RATC Board Meeting Minutes

November 5, 2018

Glenvar Branch Library, 3917 Daugherty Road

In Attendance:

Board members: Jim Beeson, Brian Boggs, Butch Kelly, Anne Kohinke, Josiah Leonard, Terri McClure, Chris Means, Bob Peckman, Julio Stephens, Susan Terwilliger, Homer Witcher, Therese Witcher, Jim Webb, Dave Youmans

Others: Mark Farrell, Tina Miller, Bill Neilan, Jason Thompson

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

Approval of October 1 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 proposed 2019 budget and asked board members for whom funds have been allocated to approve the amounts. She also noted that certain recent expenses not previously budgeted for 2018 were paid from the general fund. These expenses, totaling \$4,050, were for an insurance premium, a culvert, and nine new fire rings. According to Terri, the club is in good financial shape overall.

Financial activity since last board meeting (as of 11/5/2018):

Total in Checking: \$47,407.40

Total Monetary Assets: \$62,125.23

Receipts (YTD): \$11,460.83

Expenditures (YTD): \$15,376.57

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

Membership Report (Chris Means):

Eleven new members have joined the club since last month, including a few who signed up at Go Fest in October. A few members who were delinquent in dues have recently paid up.

Regular Reports

Trail Supervisor's Report (Jim Webb):

Jim reported that work crews have recently repaired three bridges that were damaged and made unusable by recent storms: Catawba Creek on the Andy Layne trail, Tinker Creek near Daleville, and Miller Cove Road off VA 620. Other bridges are being evaluated for future repairs.

- In particular, the RATC board acknowledged the prompt action of those who repaired the Tinker Creek bridge, heavily used by hikers and now back in service. Jim Beeson remarked that the \$1,000 cost to repair this bridge is a good example of what club funds are used for.
- Blowdown removal is ongoing; many trees are down in various locations. Work crews have replaced steps on the Andy Layne trail and on the Pickle Branch water trail. Jim requested \$250 from the club to cover food for the Konnarock alumni crew scheduled to finish work at Sinking Creek in late November and early December. Jim Beeson approved this request, noting that this relocation work is long overdue and sorely needed. This section of the trail will then be ready for next season's hikers.

Hikemaster's Report (Susan Herndon-Powell):

Susan was absent.

Conservation Supervisor's Report (Butch Kelly):

Butch reported that Conner McBane (ATC resource specialist) and others have managed 253 acres of invasive plants by strip mowing, herbicide use, and other techniques. These areas include Sinking Creek, Miller's Cove, Burruss Tract, and Pickle Branch. Invasive trees, including autumn olive, were also treated. Biological control of tree of heaven (ailanthus) using its natural enemies may also be effective.

Shelter Supervisors' Report (Homer and Therese Witcher):

On November 3 and 4, work crews relocated the privy at Pickle Branch shelter and installed new wood steps on the blue-blaze water trail. Another work hike is scheduled for November 12 to finish work on the steps.

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

Dave reported that about a dozen volunteer Ridgerunners attended the end-of-season gathering on October 28 in the Roanoke ATC office. Some statistics shared: 1,125 volunteer hours, 38 volunteers, 175 patrols, 570 gallons of trash removed, 46 fire rings dismantled, and 18,486 visitors seen (as of the end of October). Some volunteers noted that the Appalachian Trail parking sign in the 311 lot needs repainting.

Land Management Supervisor's Report (David Youmans):

Dave had no recent updates.

Newsletter Editor's Report (Bob Peckman):

Bob will be away much of December and requested that all Blazer (newsletter) info be submitted to him by December 15. He also mentioned that he wants to buy old RATC hats.

Updates and Action Items

1. PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Jim Beeson):

- a. Narrows Mill Creek Nature Park connector proposal: This proposal, discussed in several previous meetings, will go off the agenda. Jim noted that the connection (between Mill Creek Nature Park and the AT) is no longer requested by the Narrows group. Jim read a passage from a "Life Outside" article claiming that a blue-blaze trail to the AT already exists in that area.
- b. Open 2019 board positions: Jim recently contacted sitting board members to confirm whether they will serve in 2019. All have agreed to continue in their positions except as noted:
 - Diana Christopulos: Move from vice president to counselor (if needed).
 - Mike Vaughn: New trail supervisor (replacing Jim Webb).
 - Mark Farrell: New membership coordinator (replacing Chris Means).
 - Josiah Leonard: New hikemaster (replacing Susan Herndon-Powell). The board noted the need for assistant hikemasters to lead hikes at different levels, from moderate to strenuous.
 - Bill Neilan: New counselor (replacing Anne Kohinke).
 - Dave Youmans: May give up his position as land management supervisor because of his other duties as Catawba Ridgerunner.
 - Open positions include land management supervisor, counselor, and vice president. The board needs to consider who might fill these slots before the March annual elections.
- c. 2019 budget: Jim led a discussion of the proposed 2019 budget. Much of it is the same as last year, except for funding for the Blazer. In 2018, \$1,800 was budgeted to print and mail the Blazer and reminder postcards. For 2019, \$1,000 has been budgeted.
 - Jim proposed moving to a default system to email the Blazer to all members. Those wanting a hard copy mailed to them would have to opt in. This change will reduce production costs. The Blazer will also be posted on the RATC website.

- A discussion ensued on the merits of mailing vs. emailing Blazers. Bob Peckman stated that many people prefer a hard copy to reading a long document on a screen. He suggested that those who want a hard copy could cover the added costs. Jim responded that this would increase administrative duties and that it may cost more to print fewer copies. Bob proposed notifying members through the next Blazer that those desiring a hard copy will have to opt in.
 - Jim asked board members to review the proposed 2019 budget and forward any comments to Terri McClure by November 19. The final budget will then be voted on via email before January 1, 2019.
- d. Chainsaw training: December 8-9. Trail maintainers have been notified.
 - e. Sinking Creek relocation: November 28-December 3. (See trail supervisor's report above.)
 - f. Walkabout Outfitters: Tina Miller provided an update on Walkabout's secret shopper program and its benefits to RATC. The club has received \$75 from Walkabout so far. This program benefits both RATC and a local small business.

2. Meetup Organizer (Anne Kohinke):

Anne, who reviews event organizers on RATC's Meetup site, reported that a number of people have posted events on the site lately without following Meetup rules (such as providing a face photo and first name plus at least the first initial of the last name). Others have not been active in a timely fashion. Anne requested a motion to require all event organizers to sign up according to Meetup rules, pay club dues, and remain active. This should reduce the number of "unapproved" organizers. Anne will communicate this policy to hike leaders and other potential event organizers with the help of Susan Herndon-Powell. The board informally approved Anne's request.

3. Virginia Regional Partnership Meeting Update (Jim Webb/Dave Youmans):

Jim attended the Virginia Regional Partnership Meeting on October 20. Various issues were discussed, including use of bear canisters, whether to use ATC license funds to send hike leaders to wilderness first aid training, and agreements to cover trail workers.

4. Go Fest (Chris Means):

Chris reported that Roanoke's Go Outside Festival (Go Fest) on October 12-14 was slower than usual because of poor weather. Bruce Agnew worked each day of the festival and handled the Square payment system on his phone. The system worked well and seems to be an effective way to handle sales. The board commended Bruce for his hard work and dedication at Go Fest.

Calendar:

November 6	VA 311 shuttle meeting (to discuss parking lot construction at 311)
November 8	ATC conference call
Nov. 28-Dec. 3	Sinking Creek relocation
December 8	RATC Holiday Potluck
December 8-9	Chainsaw training
September 2019	Starr Hill Brewery's RATC Month (Starr Hill will donate \$1 to RATC for every beer purchased)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.