

RATC Board Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2019
Glenvar Branch Library, 3917 Daugherty Road

In Attendance:

Board members: Jim Beeson, Brian Boggs, Diana Christopoulos, Susan Herndon-Powell, Anne Kohinke, Josiah Leonard, Terri McClure, Bob Peckman, Julio Stephens, Susan Terwilliger, Jim Webb, Homer Witcher, Therese Witcher

Others: Matthew Burnett, Mark Farrell, Jeff Hill, Bill Neilan, Jason Thompson

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

Approval of November 5 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 a summary of RATC's account transactions for 2018. The club spent about \$4,000 more than it took in last year due to certain "extraordinary" expenses (such as bridge repairs, fire rings, and a new culvert) and the purchase of RATC store items. However, some of this money will be recouped. Additionally, RATC has received \$500 from the Crittenden Charitable Fund.

Financial activity since last board meeting (as of 1/7/2019):

Total in Checking:	\$47,066.08
Total Monetary Assets:	\$62,110.40
Receipts (YTD):	\$13,929.49
Expenditures (YTD):	\$18,186.55

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

Membership Report (Chris Means):

Chris was absent; Terri McClure reported on membership totals. As of December 31, 2018, RATC has 645 members (including family memberships). Of these, 19% have not paid their 2018 dues. It was noted that this membership total is considerably larger than those of the past.

Regular Reports

Trail Supervisor's Report (Jim Webb):

Jim reported that recent trail work has included cleaning up from an ice storm and two hurricanes. Some southern parts of our section of the AT are also a concern, including blowdowns in the Ribble Trail area near Wilson Creek. A trail maintainers' meeting is coming up in April. Jim also mentioned that Northwest Hardware gives the club a 25% discount on equipment used for trail work.

- Jim Beeson reminded the board that no official trail work (or Ridgerunner patrols) is allowed during the current government shutdown by order of the National Park Service and Appalachian Trail Conservancy.

Hikemaster's Report (Susan Herndon-Powell):

Susan reported that 16 hike leaders led 56 hikes in 2018. License plate grant funds have been received from ATC, which will encourage RATC hike leaders to attend wilderness first aid training classes. Hike leader blogs will be linked to the RATC website. Dates to note: Josiah Leonard and Susan are presenting a hike leader training session on March 30, and Susan is teaching a backpacking class on January 23.

Conservation Supervisor's Report (Butch Kelly):

Butch was absent but is interested in leading some moderate-length hikes focusing on wildflowers and other flora. The board agreed that such hikes would be a welcome addition to the RATC hike calendar.

Shelter Supervisors' Report (Homer and Therese Witcher):

The Witchers reported that they removed a large tree limb that fell on the Laurel Creek shelter in November. The shelter itself was not damaged.

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

Dave was absent. Brian noted the death of a hiker near the Dragon's Tooth trail in early December. The board briefly discussed graffiti and other nuisance behavior in our area. A posting of New Year's Day graffiti on Facebook drew 4,000 views.

Land Management Supervisor's Report (David Youmans):

Dave was absent.

Newsletter Editor's Report (Bob Peckman):

Bob reported that the winter 2019 edition of the Trail Blazer is out. Jim Beeson noted that RATC is moving to an all-electronic version of the Blazer, as discussed in the November 2018 meeting. Individuals who want a hard copy going forward must contact the RATC treasurer, who maintains the membership list. Terri McClure suggested adding a line to the renewal page of the Blazer where members can specify whether they want a hard copy of the newsletter.

Updates and Action Items

1. PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Jim Beeson):

- a. Open 2019 board positions: Jim reported that two board positions still need to be filled. A slate of candidates is under review and will be finalized before the March 16 annual meeting.
- b. Sinking Creek relocation: November 28-December 3. Jim thanked Josh Kloehn for putting together a large and dedicated group of workers. Jim acknowledged the hard work of more than 19 trail maintainers from RATC, other trail clubs, Konnarock alumni, and other groups. Despite rain and freezing weather, the work was completed, and the new section of trail is blazed and open for the 2019 hiking season. Jim Webb reported 545 hours of labor donated during the relocation.
- c. RATC annual meeting: March 16. Jim has asked Carol and Jim Steiner, authors of *The Appalachian Trail Day Hikers' Guide*, to do a presentation. The Steiners approach the AT as a series of day hikes (atdayhiker.com).
- d. Forest Service partnership agreement: This agreement cannot be confirmed until Forest Service staff members (as part of USDA) come off furlough mandated by the federal government shutdown.
- e. February 4 RATC board meeting: Jim will be out of town; Diana Christopoulos has agreed to preside in his absence.
- f. Press Press Merch: Press Press, which handles RATC's online merchandise sales, is setting up a shop administrator to help us better determine what is selling. According to Press Press, 21 Triple Crown T-shirts have been sold since December 1, 2018, yielding \$1,069 in total receipts and \$886 in net sales.
- g. Backpacker magazine: *Backpacker* did an article about the Sinking Creek area, which was described as one of the best hikes in Virginia. Jim reported that the magazine's editors have offered a free, one-year subscription to RATC as a nonprofit entity. The board can decide which members get the subscription.

- h. Bonfire fundraiser: Jim discussed Bonfire, a T-shirt fundraising platform that handles many types of inventory. He passed around a sample T-shirt to the board. Bonfire prints the T-shirts, which sell for \$20; the club gets a small percentage. The club will consider using this tool as part of RATC's 90th anniversary celebration coming up in 2022.

2. Meetup Organizer (Anne Kohinke):

Anne, Jim Beeson, Terri McClure, and Diana Christopulos discussed the role of RATC's Meetup organizer. Terri does not want to handle any Meetup tasks other than paying Meetup fees each year. A discussion ensued on Meetup organizer responsibilities. A meeting will be held to clarify Meetup leadership issues.

3. NPS Wayfinding Project (Diana Christopulos):

Diana shared information with the board about the National Park Service wayfinding project, which seeks to improve signage on or near the Appalachian Trail for both drivers and hikers. An Oregon consulting firm has been hired to create signs in the McAfee Knob trailhead area. Diana has seen some drafts, and she believes there is too much text and not enough maps (which are of primary interest to hikers). NPS has authority over what is on bulletin boards and signs, but local clubs can provide input. Kathryn Herndon-Powell (ATC VARO) is working with this project.

- Diana also reported on the pedestrian bridge over VA 311 that will connect the McAfee Knob trailhead parking lot with the northbound trail. This VDOT-funded bridge is slated for completion in 2023. Construction and parking lot upgrades will mean most of the 311 lot will be closed to parking. Offsite parking and shuttle service will be required during this period.
- Diana announced an Appalachian Trail photo exhibit at Roanoke's Taubman Museum of Art in September 2019. Local artists will be showcased, and several children's activities are planned.

Calendar:

February 4	RATC board meeting
February 21	VA 311 committee
March 8-10	ATC Southern Regional Partnership
March 16	RATC annual meeting
April 8	RATC board meeting
September 2019	Starr Hill Brewery's RATC Month (Starr Hill will donate \$1 to RATC for every beer purchased)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.