

RATC Board Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2019
Glenvar Branch Library, 3917 Daugherty Road

In Attendance:

Board members: Jim Beeson, Brian Boggs, Josiah Leonard, Terri McClure, Bill Neilan, Anne Pfeiffer, Julio Stephens, Susan Terwilliger, Jason Thompson

Others: David Hester, Terry Shipley, Jim Webb

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

Approval of April 8 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 reported that RATC's total assets have dropped around \$900 since the beginning of 2019. Recent income includes renewal of membership dues and donations. Terri has received letters from hikers praising trail maintenance on our section of the AT accompanied by donations (\$100 received from one such hiker). Donations to RATC in memory of Siegfried Kolmstetter currently total \$880.

Financial activity since last board meeting (as of 5/6/2019):

Total in Checking:	\$46,556.34
Total Monetary Assets:	\$61,270.79
Receipts (YTD):	\$7,424.85
Expenditures (YTD):	\$8,380.06

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

Membership Report (Mark Farrell):

Mark was absent. Terri McClure reported that 13 new members joined RATC in April. Mark and Bill Neilan are staffing an RATC booth at the Elevate Your Vibe event on May 11 at Wasena Park in Roanoke to promote the club and its activities.

Regular Reports

Trail Supervisor's Report (Mike Vaughn):

Mike was absent. Jim Webb reported that four more work hikes have occurred on the east side of Sinking Creek Mountain since the April board meeting. Seventy-eight stone steps have been installed so far, with two more work hikes to go until completion. Next sections scheduled for maintenance are in the Roanoke area and around Mountain Lake (War Spur trail). Jim also said that Erik Taylor (U.S. Forest Service ranger) has denied RATC's request to rebuild two bridges in the Dismal Creek area. Jim Beeson noted that Mike has scheduled work hikes every week – more frequently than in the past.

Hikemaster's Report (Josiah Leonard):

Josiah reported nine RATC hikes were offered during April. There has been a good variety of hikes, with new leaders stepping up. Josiah said more hikes now offer a balance between easy and strenuous. Other planned outings include a hybrid activity with both hiking and cycling. Josiah said he wants to revamp the 113- (or 120-) mile hiking achievement program that recognizes members who hike RATC's entire section, partly by increasing incentives. The next hike leader training will occur in fall 2019.

Conservation Supervisor's Report (Butch Kelly):

Butch was absent.

Shelter Supervisors' Report (Homer and Therese Witcher):

Homer and Therese were absent. The Wilson Creek shelter is scheduled to be reroofed on May 19.

McAfee Knob Task Force Report (Brian Boggs):

Brian reported that the McAfee Knob area has had good coverage lately. Orientation hikes have been scheduled when weather permits and new Ridgerunners sign up. Terry Shipley commented that the 311 parking lot (trailhead for McAfee Knob day hikers) is getting worse, with reports of cars getting blocked in. Numbers on the McAfee Knob trail are huge (exceeding 350 on a recent day). The trail camera has recorded around 40,000 visitors per year (mostly day hikers).

Land Management Supervisor's Report (Bill Neilan):

Land management supervisor responsibilities have been successfully transferred from David Youmans to Bill. Josh Kloehn (Appalachian Trail Conservancy) is also helping to train. Land management work is typically done in the late fall and winter.

Newsletter Editor's Report (Bob Peckman):

Bob was absent. There was some discussion about whether the spring 2019 issue of the Trail Blazer is available (its link on the RATC website does not work). Around 80 RATC members have requested a hard copy (vs. electronic version) of the Blazer; some have not yet received it.

Updates and Action Items

1. PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Jim Beeson):

- a. *RATC partnership meeting (April 16, Roanoke County Regional Fire and EMS Training Center):* Representatives from USFS, ATC, VDOT, NPS, and other partners attended or called in. Topics discussed included finding a safe place to store trail maintenance tools, improving the Dragon's Tooth and 311 (McAfee Knob) parking lots, and lessons learned from the April 2018 Catawba Mountain fire. The Forest Service is responsible for grading the Dragon's Tooth lot; VDOT manages the 311 lot, which needs fresh gravel or crush. Partner agencies were pleased with RATC's response to last year's fire. Roanoke County Fire & Rescue offered to let RATC move its storage shed onto fire and rescue center property on Kessler Mill Road in Salem. See below for details.
- b. *LL Bean grants:* Grant submissions were successful. RATC's stolen generator will be replaced, and a bridge over Catawba Creek will be repaired. Jim also reported that Diana Christopulos has decided not to submit a grant to digitize the RATC archives right away because of a change in how this project will proceed.
- c. *Doc's Way property:* This property has been secured with a one-year option to purchase it. Jim noted that the property is easily visible from McAfee Knob and will greatly help to enhance its viewshed.
- d. *Liability insurance 2019:* RATC liability insurance was first purchased last July. The 2019 premiums are coming up soon and will come to treasurer Terri McClure for payment.
- e. *Backpacker magazine:* The board discussed *Backpacker* magazine's offer of a free, one-year subscription to new members who join the club or to RATC members who renew their membership. Jim clarified that

the offer is best used as a way to attract new members – especially people who use the club’s Meetup site. Jim also stated that the magazine has pledged to keep members’ contact information confidential.

- f. *Trail maintenance tool storage unit:* As noted above, Roanoke County Fire & Rescue has offered to keep RATC’s storage shed on county property on Kessler Mill Road free of charge. This area should be secure because it is policed regularly. RATC trail maintainers will now have a secure, easy-to-access place to store maintenance tools and other items. Therefore, the board decided not to rent a storage unit at this time. It is now a matter of moving the shed to its new location.

- Terri McClure asked if an inventory of all tools exists. Jim Webb said he will prepare one.

- g. *311 lot improvement:* There was a short discussion on upcoming improvements to the 311 McAfee Knob parking lot, especially the construction of a pedestrian bridge. Jim pointed out that the National Park Service has many requirements regarding how improvements are handled. Board members expressed various opinions about how a hiker shuttle to the lot would work and whether it would be used. The City of Salem may want to invest in this project as a way to increase regional tourism.

Calendar:

May 6	RATC board meeting
May 9-10	ATC board meeting (Roanoke)
June 3	RATC board meeting
June 7-8	Troutville Trail Days
June 20	VA 311 shuttle meeting
June 21	Triple Crown meeting
July 20	RATC Corn Boil
August 5	RATC board meeting
September	Starr Hill Brewery’s RATC Month (Starr Hill will donate \$1 to RATC for every beer purchased all month)
October 18-20	Go Fest (Go Outside Festival, Roanoke)

Meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.