

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

In Attendance:

Board members: Jim Beeson, Mark Farrell, Terri McClure, Bill Neilan, Anne Pfeiffer, Julio Stephens, Susan Terwilliger, Mike Vaughn, Homer Witcher, Therese Witcher

Others: None

Meeting was called to order by Jim Beeson at 6:00 p.m.

Approval of September 9 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 said the proposed club budget for 2020 will be prepared soon. Board members should look at the budget online and compare what funds they will likely need for the coming year with what is proposed. RATC has received \$2,000 reimbursement from ATC for McAfee Knob parking lot repairs and Route 621 culvert replacement, of which \$1,200 has been spent. Mike Vaughn suggested using the remainder for bridge repairs.

Financial activity since last board meeting (as of 10/7/2019):

Total in Checking:	\$45,828.46
Total Monetary Assets:	\$60,797.66
Receipts (YTD):	\$9,780.11
Expenditures (YTD):	\$11,017.73

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

Membership Report (Mark Farrell):

RATC currently has 626 members. Ten new member packets were sent out in September. Mark has also taken membership brochures to Back Country Ski & Sport and Walkabout Outfitter. NOTE: Membership numbers as reported in the September 2019 meeting minutes were corrected by Terri McClure. Also, no members have been recently dropped because of nonpayment of dues.

Regular Reports

Trail Supervisor's Report (Mike Vaughn):

Trail crews are working regularly on the McAfee Knob trail with eight hikes so far. Seventy-two steps have been installed, with rocks and roots removed where necessary. Many more work hikes are planned along this section of the trail in response to the huge hiker impact. The Mountain Lake relocation near the War Spur trail is ongoing. Additionally, there are plans to redeck the bridge across Trout Creek.

Hikemaster's Report (Josiah Leonard):

Josiah was absent; he is hiking the Foothills Trail in South Carolina. He reported via email that RATC hosted five recreational hikes in September. No one earned the 113-mile patch that month. As mentioned in last month's meeting, Josiah is working on an incentive program to encourage people to hike. Wilma Vargas was recognized as being an accomplished hiker and a popular new hike leader. The Wilderness First Aid money (to pay for classes for hike leaders) has been spent or allocated.

Conservation Supervisor's Report (Butch Kelly):

Butch was absent. Bill Neilan reported on a meeting at the Catawba Community Center on September 25 about the suitability of placing solar panels and/or wind turbines near the McAfee Knob trail. The meeting, hosted by Virginia Tech Architecture and Urban Planning students and faculty, was a stakeholder and community design charrette to discuss the feasibility of placing two five-acre plots of solar panels and three small wind turbines at the Catawba Sustainability Center. The viewshed impact may be greatest from Tinker Cliffs.

Shelter Supervisors' Report (Homer and Therese Witcher):

The Jenny Knob shelter was reroofed on September 15. Homer and Therese made two follow-up visits to work on the Jenny Knob privy. The Wapiti shelter badly needs a new metal roof. Homer and Therese are working with Erik Taylor (U.S. Forest Service) to confirm funds for this project. Doc's Knob shelter also needs a new metal roof. There was a brief discussion of a proposed Appalachian Trail relocation near the Wapiti shelter.

McAfee Knob Task Force Report (Brian Boggs):

Brian was absent. Bill Neilan reported that an orientation hike for new Ridgerunners was held at Dragon's Tooth on September 14. Bill also announced a new Ridgerunner mentoring program where recently trained volunteers are assigned to a mentor (experienced Ridgerunner). The program seems to be working well so far. Dave Youman's last day as 2019 Catawba Valley Ridgerunner is November 4.

Land Management Supervisor's Report (Bill Neilan):

Bill plans to start working with Josh Kloehn (Appalachian Trail Conservancy resource manager) within the next month or two. Since the northern boundary of the AT in our section is changing, surveying must wait until new boundaries are established. ATC officials have purchased not only Doc's Way property near McAfee Knob but also an adjacent property from a different landowner. ATC is in the process of buying 12 properties in that area.

Newsletter Editor's Report (Bob Peckman):

Bob was absent. He is currently training Anne Pfeiffer is to succeed him as editor of the Trail Blazer. Jim Beeson suggested that Anne and Bob switch roles (Anne as Blazer editor, Bob as counselor) until the March 2020 annual board of directors' elections. A discussion followed on the Blazer and its evolving content and structure.

- Anne suggested, and other board members agreed, that the Blazer might benefit from including more "first-person" human-interest articles and other content, such as information about land purchases, a history of the club, and descriptions of the various work done by club members. Facebook articles are another source of material. All such articles should be submitted to Anne.
- Anne asked board members to send her short items (such as a reminder to use the Amazon Smile program to benefit the club) to fill blank spots in the newsletter. She also may include Ridgerunner orientation photos in the Blazer.
- The board expressed its appreciation to Bob for his many years of dedicated service to the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club. He has served in many different capacities for 38 years, including 20 years as Blazer editor, and has contributed greatly to the club's well-being. Bob will be recognized at the holiday gathering on December 14.

Updates and Action Items

1. PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Jim Beeson):

- a. *Starr Hill Brewery*: Starr Hill designated September 2019 as RATC Month. The brewery pledged to donate \$1 for every Love wheat beer (pint) purchased all month. We do not yet know how much money was donated to the club.
- b. *Trail/shelter maintenance mileage reimbursement*: The RATC committee charged with researching whether and how other maintaining clubs reimburse for mileage will report its findings at the November 4 board

meeting. Terri McClure, treasurer, handed out a sheet of questions she prepared about things to consider if we do adopt a reimbursement policy. For example, the IRS implications, what miles will count for reimbursement, whose vehicles are eligible, and what forms and detail will be required.

- c. *Go Fest*: October 18-20. RATC volunteers are requested, especially for Sunday, October 20. Backups for the person using Square (payment software) are also needed. Bill Neilan and Bruce Agnew are among current volunteers.
- d. *VT Center Solar – Wind*: See conservation supervisor’s report.
- e. *2019 ATC Data Book*: Jim said someone on the board should review this resource for our section of the AT to verify its accuracy. Homer and Therese Witcher, shelter supervisors, volunteered for this task. They used the Data Book a great deal during their through hike some years ago.
- f. *Outdoor Trails*: Jim mentioned that Outdoor Trails, an equipment and clothing merchant located near the AT in Daleville, sells RATC shirts and hats. This store also offers a 10% discount to RATC club members.

Calendar:

- October 18-20 Go Fest (Go Outside Festival, Roanoke)
- November 4 RATC board meeting
- December 14 Holiday party

Meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.