

**RATC Board Meeting Minutes**  
September 14, 2020  
Online format (through Zoom)

**In Attendance:**

Board members: Jim Beeson, Ron Bradbury, Terri McClure, Bill Neilan, Julio Stephens, Susan Terwilliger, Jason Thompson, Homer Witcher, Therese Witcher

Others: Dee Case, Andrew Downs, Jill Pennington

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

**Approval of August 3 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):**

RATC incurred \$2,000 in expenses in August, mostly for trail maintenance. Terri has filed the paperwork (Registration Statement for a Charitable Organization) to establish our standing as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization that can solicit funds. The tax-exempt certification must be renewed through the state every five years; permission to solicit funds must be renewed every year.

Financial activity since last board meeting (as of 9/14/2020):

Total in Checking:	\$59,698.13
Total Monetary Assets:	\$74,413.56
Receipts (YTD):	\$22,331.87
Expenditures (YTD):	\$7,365.97

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

**Membership Report: (Jim Beeson)**

RATC currently has 600 members, including four who joined in August.

**Update MVP Property Fund/McAfee Knob Property (Andrew Downs)**

Andrew Downs, director of the Virginia Regional Office of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, announced that Mountain Valley Pipeline leadership has committed up to \$19.5 million to conserve land along the Appalachian Trail. These funds can be applied to the McAfee Knob property purchase and will easily fill the funding gap between the purchase price of the entire property and funds raised so far. Andrew has been in touch with the property owner, and plans are to complete the deal later this year. ATC will be working with the Conservation Fund, a national organization dedicated to environmental preservation. Andrew also mentioned that structures on the Doc's Way property previously purchased by ATC have been removed.

- Andrew said the MVP donation will also allow the purchase of new land to improve the AT in certain areas. Jim Beeson asked the board to recommend trail sections in need of widening or other improvements. Therese Witcher suggested a section near Daleville and Mountain Pass Road. A section near Pearisburg is another possibility.

**Update McAfee Knob Shuttle (Diana Christopulos)**

Diana did not attend.

**Trail Supervisor's Report (Mike Vaughn):**

Mike did not attend. Work hikes are taking place each Monday, most recently in the Dragon's Tooth area. Mike requests that individuals who maintain a section of the trail report their hours worked from October 1, 2019, to September 30, 2020, to him by October 1.

**Hikemaster's Report (Bob Peckman):**

Bob did not attend. There were no recreational group hikes in August.

**Conservation Supervisor's Report (Butch Kelly):**

Butch did not attend.

**Shelter Supervisors' Report (Homer and Therese Witcher):**

There were no shelter maintenance group hikes in August.

**McAfee Knob Task Force Report (Bill Neilan):**

Bill reported large hiker volume in the Triple Crown area over the past few weeks, especially on Labor Day weekend. A few Ridgerunners continue to patrol each weekend.

**Land Management Supervisor's Report (Bill Neilan):**

Bill had no updates.

**Newsletter Editor's Report (Ron Bradbury):**

Ron introduced himself as the new Blazer editor. He is the director of admissions for the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine. Ron requested input for Blazer content by the last week in October.

**Updates and Action Items (Jim Beeson)**

**1. RATC Webmaster**

Jill Pennington, a longtime trail maintainer and RATC member, is the new webmaster. She has a background in website development and plans to upgrade the club website.

**2. Nonprofit/Tax-Exempt Status**

See treasurer's report above.

**3. VA 311 Property Update – Bonfire**

Jim reported that RATC has contributed about \$43,000 to the McAfee Knob property acquisition fund, including \$7,866 from the Bonfire T-shirt sale campaign. Terri McClure will provide addresses of donors to the fund so they can be acknowledged. Jim said 563 T-shirts were sold during the campaign, which ended August 22. There are plans to set up a virtual store through Bonfire to continue shirt sales indefinitely.

**4. Open RATC Board Positions**

Jim mentioned that Andrew Bowman, a partner with Gentry Locke law firm, may fill an open counselor position on the board. Andrew has arranged for Gentry Locke to provide legal advice to RATC on a pro bono basis.

**5. Fundraising Committee**

This committee, led by Julio Stephens and Brendle Wolfe, will help ensure a long-term funding stream for the club through the Bonfire T-shirt virtual store.

**6. Other Items**

- a. *Volunteer Leadership Academy:* Jim encouraged board members to consider participating in ATC's Volunteer Leadership Academy. Held online this year, the academy offers a variety of topics of interest to AT volunteers from September 2020 to April 2021. Registration begins September 21.
- b. *Holiday potluck:* There likely will be no holiday potluck this year. The next in-person club general meeting and social event will be in March 2021 if circumstances permit.
- c. *AT trail maintenance:* Jim said trail maintenance is the top priority of the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club. He praised Mike Vaughn and the work crews for their hard work and dedication.
- d. *Roanoke Times connection:* Brian Kelley was recently named the new top editor for the Roanoke Times. Brian is also a longtime RATC volunteer and will be a valuable contact at the newspaper.

**Calendar:**

September	ATC Volunteer Leadership Virtual Academy
October 5	RATC Virtual Board Meeting
October 24	VA Partnership Virtual Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.