

## **RATC Board Meeting Minutes**

February 8, 2021

Online format (through Zoom)

### **In Attendance:**

Board members: Jim Beeson, Andrew Bowman, Terri McClure, Bill Neilan, Bob Peckman, Susan Terwilliger, Jason Thompson, Mike Vaughn, Homer Witcher, Therese Witcher, Brendle Wolfe

Others: John Hedrick (Potomac Appalachian Trail Club), John Kelly, Wendy Kelly, Jill Pennington

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

### **Approval of January 4 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 took in \$2,400 in receipts last month, including \$1,100 in donations. Jim Beeson plans to send thank-you notes to the donors. Some of the club's income was from Bonfire T-shirt sales. Sixteen new members joined the club in January.

Financial activity since last board meeting (as of 2/8/2021):

Total in Checking: \$46,465.61

Total Monetary Assets: \$61,364.08

Receipts (YTD): \$2,426.05

Expenditures (YTD): \$558.19

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

### **Membership Report (Mark Farrell):**

Mark did not attend.

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

Work hikes continue on the Hayrock trail on Tinker Mountain, putting in steps and erosion controls. In late March, the venue will shift to the Andy Layne trail to deal with mud issues. A sign at the Catawba Mountain shelter has been knocked over and will be repositioned.

- A discussion followed on a proposed Eagle Scout project near Pearisburg and VA 100. Plans are to install a kiosk either near an old cemetery or near Cross Road (close to the Angel's Rest trailhead). The scout is in the process of fundraising for the project and has requested funds from RATC. Mike said he is willing to contribute \$400 from his trail maintenance budget when the project is further along. Brendle Wolfe offered to help with online fundraising. Jim Beeson said it's good to have improvements in this part of the club's section since much of our trail maintenance focuses on the Triple Crown area.

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

Bob had no updates.

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

Butch did not attend.

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

The Wapiti shelter suffers from an extensive insect infestation and needs new logs. Homer and Therese met with a general contractor who has accepted the job of repairing and fixing the shelter sometime in March. The roofs on the shelter and privy also need to be replaced. The Fullhardt Knob and Lamberts Meadow privies will need to be moved in the spring or summer. Work hikes will be organized for that purpose.

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

Dee Case has agreed to be the new McAfee Knob Task Force liaison. The task force will be operating this year, and Kathryn Herndon-Powell (Appalachian Trail Conservancy) is planning to host online training for new volunteers.

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

Kevin Moore has agreed to take the job of land management supervisor. He has scheduled a hike on February 20 to monitor the APPA boundary line along the Catawba Valley. Bill said he, Kevin, and ATC staff recently spent three days doing boundary work surveying the south side of the VA 311 to VA 220 corridor. Work on the north side will follow. There are some encroachment issues to settle.

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

Ron did not attend. The 2021 winter edition of the Trail Blazer was published on January 31. The board agreed it was extremely well done. Jim Beeson suggested putting a short notice in the next issue of the Blazer recognizing Homer and Therese Witcher's efforts to clean up a large amount of trash in an area near an apartment complex in Daleville.

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

**1. Dowd Property Cabin – Discussion/Potomac AT Club**

John Hedrick, a member of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC), described his club's cabin rental system and how the cabins are managed.

- PATC manages 42 cabins in four states: Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. Six are inside Shenandoah National Park; others are in various areas near the national park, on or near the Appalachian Trail, in state parks, and in national forests. Seventeen cabins are available to the public; the rest can be rented only by PATC members. The cabins range in type from primitive (no running water or electricity, similar to the Dowd cabin) to modern (house-type conveniences). The first PATC cabin was built in 1936. All cabins are locked and require advance online reservations.
- A paid cabin coordinator handles the reservation system, and teams of volunteers maintain the cabins. However, renters are expected to clean their cabin and leave firewood upon departure. Rental fees vary depending on cabin type (primitive, semi-primitive, etc.). John said there have been very few problems with renters. The club's philosophy is to provide service to members and the public. The cabin rental program is seen as outreach to the community, and many members and maintainers have joined PATC through the cabin rental system.
- John said the cabin rentals bring in around \$420,000 annually. Much of this money must be reinvested in renovations and structural repairs. Insurance costs are covered by the cabin owners: PATC, the National Park Service, or state parks.
- Jim said RATC wants to pursue the Dowd cabin project subject to ATC approval. A visit to the cabin for board members is scheduled for February 16.

**2. Officer/Board Updates**

Bill Neilan has contacted all board members as to whether they wish to continue to serve in 2021-22. This evening's board meeting was Jim Beeson's last as president. The board expressed appreciation to Jim for his leadership and hard work as RATC president over the past three years.

### **3. 2021 RATC Annual Meeting – Officer/Board Election**

The 2021 RATC Annual Meeting will be held in virtual format (GoToWebinar) on Wednesday, March 10, at 6:30 p.m., courtesy of Andrew Bowman and Gentry Locke. The officer slate for 2021-22 will be voted on by members.

### **4. Roanoke Valley Gives – March 10, 2021**

Roanoke Valley Gives, a 24-hour, online giving campaign, will happen on March 10. Brendle Wolfe will use social media to promote RATC as a worthy cause, as she has done in the past. Brendle asked for photos, videos, and other items that illustrate the club's efforts (especially through trail maintenance) to support and enhance the Appalachian Trail. She suggested setting \$4,000 as a fundraising goal. Mike Vaughn will provide Brendle with examples of maintenance tools that could be purchased with contributions of different amounts.

### **5. Other Updates**

Jim has arranged with Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge to include a link on its website to McAfee Knob T-shirts ("Purchase a McAfee Knob shirt"). All proceeds will benefit RATC. We are in discussion with the Mast General Store in downtown Roanoke about stocking McAfee Knob T-shirts. Dilly Dally, a Salem general store and eatery, has agreed to stock and sell them.

#### **Calendar:**

February 16: Visit to Dowd cabin  
March 10: RATC Annual Meeting  
March 10: Roanoke Valley Gives  
April 12: RATC board meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.