

**RATC Board Meeting Minutes**  
September 13, 2021  
Glenvar Branch Library, 3917 Daugherty Road  
(Zoom access also provided by Andrew Bowman)

**In Attendance:**

Board members: Andrew Bowman, Ron Bradbury, Mark Farrell, Bill Neilan, Susan Terwilliger, Jason Thompson, Mike Vaughn, Homer Witcher, Therese Witcher, Brendle Wolfe

Others: Doug Blankenship, Diana Christopulos

Meeting was called to order by President Bill Neilan at 6:00 p.m.

**Approval of July 12 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 did not attend. Bill Neilan reminded the board that a \$500 donation, made to honor Diana Christopulos, is being used toward the rental unit where some RATC archival materials are being stored. Diana has also donated another \$100 for this purpose.

Financial activity since last board meeting (as of 9/13/2021):

Total in Checking:	\$45,040.45
Total Monetary Assets:	\$60,689.13
Receipts (YTD):	\$13,119.76
Expenditures (YTD):	\$12,806.48

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

**Membership Report (Mark Farrell):**

RATC currently has 670 members, including 24 new members. Mark has ordered 500 RATC brochures to give to new members and for recruiting purposes. Bill Neilan said he will soon send out renewal reminders to prompt members to pay their yearly dues. This may help encourage timely membership renewals.

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

Mike and the trail maintaining crew have been working on parts of the McAfee Knob trail. They will then move to the Andy Layne trail for three weeks to put in steps, followed by work on the club's southern section and an eventual return to the McAfee Knob area.

**Hikemaster's Report (Jennifer Frye):**

Jennifer did not attend. Several hike leaders led group hikes in July and August with more scheduled for September.

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

Butch did not attend and has nothing current to report.

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

Therese said carpenter bees have infested the Pickle Branch privy. Homer and Therese sprayed the bees and filled in the holes. The Wilson Creek shelter also has a carpenter bee problem, which is being treated.

**McAfee Knob Task Force Report (Dee Case):**

Dee did not attend. A training day for new volunteer Ridgerunners was held July 17. Suzanne Neal, Catawba Mountain Ridgerunner, continues to lead an active group of volunteer Ridgerunners in their weekly patrols of the McAfee Knob, Dragon's Tooth, and Tinker Cliffs trails.

**Land Management Supervisor's Report (Kevin Moore):**

Kevin did not attend. He will soon begin scheduling training sessions for those interested in doing land management/boundary work this fall and winter.

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

The 2021 summer edition of the Trail Blazer was published on July 27. There are many articles of interest that feature the trail- and shelter-maintaining work of the club. Ron said he plans to standardize details from trail supervisor and hikemaster reports so they are presented more uniformly.

**Updates and Action Items (Bill Neilan):**

**1. National Weather Service**

Ron Bradbury has agreed to be the club's liaison with the National Weather Service (NWS) as a Weather Ready Nation Ambassador. Ron will periodically publish information from the NWS that might affect RATC club members and others in the outdoor community.

**2. Annual Corn Boil**

Bill reported that the 2021 Corn Boil, held on August 28, was a success. COVID precautions, such as using a pop-up tent, cooking the corn outdoors, and keeping people out of the community center, helped assure safety.

**3. Visitor Use Management (VUM) Issues**

Diana Christopulos, former RATC president and current club archivist, updated the board on recent developments in the three-year VUM study concerning RATC's Triple Crown section. The National Park Service (NPS) has prepared a draft of desired conditions for how best to handle the large crowds that regularly frequent this area. Diana is preparing the RATC response to the draft and wants to convey the club's priorities to NPS.

- **Group sites:** One solution to crowded campsites suggested by NPS and supported by RATC is to establish more group campsites, away from existing ones. The campgrounds near the Catawba and Campbell shelters are regularly overrun by groups (such as Boy Scouts) who are often noisy and monopolize the privy. The ground is almost bare of vegetation in these areas. Therese Witcher had many good suggestions for where such group campsites could be located, together with a separate privy.
- **Other NPS suggestions:** Building tent platforms remote from shelters and encouraging one-way and even paved day hiker routes to McAfee Knob are not preferred RATC alternatives, although they have been suggested in this VUM process. NPS also seemed to prioritize individual, remote campsites over the group sites that now exist. Diana will respond to NPS leaders and keep the club informed.

**Calendar:**

September 15: Hiker Happy Hour at Parkway Brewing Company

- Parkway will donate \$1 to RATC for every pint sold to a club member that evening.

October 4: RATC board meeting at Glenvar branch library

October 15-17: Go Outside Festival (GO Fest), downtown Roanoke

- RATC will participate in GO Fest and hold a membership drive during the festival.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.