

**RATC Board Meeting Minutes**  
December 6, 2021  
Glenvar Branch Library, 3917 Daugherty Road

**In Attendance:**

Board members: Andrew Bowman, Dee Case, Jennifer Fry, Terri McClure, Bill Neilan, Susan Terwilliger, Jason Thompson, Mike Vaughn, Homer Witcher, Therese Witcher, Brendle Wolfe

Others: Molly Armistead, Cathy Butler, Ron Butler, Nicole Dunn, Pete Irvine, Brian John, Joy Joseph, Janice Metzger, Bob Peckman

Meeting was called to order by President Bill Neilan at 6:03 p.m.

**Approval of November 8 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/Janice Metzger):**

Janice Metzger has agreed to become the next treasurer since Terri McClure is stepping down. Terri said the club took in about \$1,800 in dues in November, thanks in part to Bill Neilan's reminders. Other funds include \$2,500 for maintenance and \$840 reimbursement for storage unit rental.

Financial activity since last board meeting (as of 12/6/2021):

Total in Checking:	\$54,259.46
Total Monetary Assets:	\$69,908.23
Receipts (YTD):	\$17,714.92
Expenditures (YTD):	\$7,706.78

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

**Membership Report (Mark Farrell/Cathy Butler):**

Cathy Butler has agreed to become the next membership coordinator since Mark Farrell is stepping down. RATC currently has 675 members, including 11 new members. Lifetime member patches were recently received from the vendor.

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

Mike said trail work continued in the McAfee Knob area through November. Upcoming work hikes will be north of Newport Road in Roanoke County, then south of Tinker Creek to remediate eroded trail sections.

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

Hike leader training occurred November 20. Jennifer said we now have eight new hike leaders. Dee Case has been regularly leading group hikes this fall.

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

Butch did not attend and had nothing to report.

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

Homer and Therese reported that RATC's shelters and privies are generally in good shape. In January, they will visit all 16 shelters to check their condition.

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

A lunch to honor departing Catawba Mountain Ridgerunner Suzanne Neal was held on November 10. Dee said club members should regularly monitor the Triple Crown area for trash and other problems in Suzanne’s absence.

**Land Management Supervisor’s Report (open):**

This position is currently vacant.

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

Ron did not attend. Bill Neilan urged board members to contribute content (stories, images, etc.) to include in the January issue of the Trail Blazer. Ron asks everyone to use his personal – not the Blazer – email.

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

**1. Request for \$5,000 from RATC for Fire Road Repair – Pete Irvine**

Mike Vaughn and Pete Irvine, a retired U.S. Forest Service employee, gave a presentation supporting the urgent need to improve parts of the fire road in the McAfee Knob area. Erosion and general wear-and-tear have made it dangerous to navigate, even for large work vehicles. The road is essential for rescue squads and maintenance crews and is a good alternate route for hikers. The section needing immediate work is 2.6 miles of the fire road north of VA 311. The cost will be approximately \$10,000.

- There is a five-year capital plan to do large-scale repairs to the fire road through National Park Service funding. But immediate action is needed in the short term to allow use of the road and to prevent further deterioration. This will be mostly ditch work – getting water off the road.
- The recommended contractor is Scott Whittaker, who has previously performed other work for RATC.
- The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) has committed \$5,000 to this project, and RATC has been asked to fund the remaining \$5,000.
- A discussion followed on how much the club should commit to this project. We have considerable grant money, including license plate funds. Mike Vaughn moved to augment his trail-maintaining budget by \$3,000, which can be added to \$2,000 in existing funds. Dee Case seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Bill said work should begin soon (January – February) to minimize hiker issues. Volunteers will be needed to help manage hikers during this time.

**2. Website Host Update – Jill Pennington**

Jill did not attend. SiteVision, our website-hosting service, recently notified the club that they would begin charging us for website hosting and email, effective immediately. Jill and Bill contacted SiteVision and worked out an agreement for web hosting at industry standard rates starting in January 2022. Jill plans to set up email for the club through Google’s Workspace for Nonprofits as soon as we are approved.

**3. Salem Museum Exhibit**

The Salem Museum is hosting a new feature exhibit, “The Other Side of the Mountain: Life in the Catawba Valley,” through March 2022. The exhibit, based on local agrarian culture, includes views of Dragon’s Tooth and McAfee Knob. On December 11, there will be a kickoff event at the museum, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Bill Neilan and Cathy Butler plan to host a membership recruitment booth.

**4. Varsity Storage Unit and Shelving**

Bill said RATC has received full reimbursement for money spent on rental of a storage unit to house archival materials. Diana Christopulos plans to give a presentation on archival storage.

**5. Board Positions**

Two of the four open board positions have been filled: Janice Metzger will be the new treasurer and Cathy Butler will be the new membership coordinator. Bill is still looking for a new vice president and land management supervisor. All nominations will be approved by RATC members at the March 9, 2022, annual meeting.

**6. 2022 Annual Meeting**

The RATC annual meeting will be held on March 9, 2022. It will be virtual, as was the March 2021 meeting. Bill noted that the turnout will likely be better than for an in-person meeting.

**7. 2022 Annual Corn Boil**

The annual Corn Boil will be held on July 23, 2022. It will be similar to the 2021 event, with everyone outside. The Konnarock crew is planning to attend.

**8. Meetup Milestone**

The RATC Meetup site has around 2,000 members (not all of whom are RATC club members).

**9. Other Items**

- The unoccupied house on VA 311, just off the McAfee Knob trailhead parking lot, will be razed on December 15, according to Andrew Downs (ATC).
- T-shirts and caps have been out of stock on the RATC website because no one at Press Press (the vendor) has been monitoring supply. This situation has been fixed. Also, Outdoor Trails in Daleville has agreed to stock RATC T-shirts and hats.

**Calendar:**

January 3, 2022: RATC monthly board meeting at Glenvar branch library

March 9, 2022: RATC annual meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.