

Maine Appalachian Trail Club
March 4, 2016
University of Maine at Augusta

Present: President, Lester Kenway; Vice President, Mike Ewing; Recording Secretary, Janice Clain; Corresponding Secretary, Doug Dolan; Treasurer, Elsa Sanborn; Directors, Tony Barrett, Laura Flight, Bruce Grant, Sherri Langlais, Dan Simonds, Don Stack; Overseer of Lands, Dave Field; District Overseers, Craig Dickstein, Ron Dobra, Dick Fecteau, Tom Gorrill; Club Coordinator, Holly Sheehan; ATC Resources Manager, Claire Polfus; Guidebook Editor, Ray Ronan; Finance Committee Chair, Tom Lewis; Biennial Committee member, Nancy Grant; member, Audrey Laffely

Absent: District Overseer, Rick Ste. Croix

Call to Order and Remembrances: President Lester Kenway called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. He called for a moment of remembrance for recently passed club members Bob Cummings, Janice Ronan, and Edith Cheney. He explained that Edith was a member of the Maine Trail Trotters and maintained a section along Flagstaff Lake. Bob served the club in a variety of capacities, and was a strong advocate for outdoor recreation. Janice was a long-time maintainer, corridor monitor and active club member.

Secretary's Report: Janice Clain presented the Secretary's Report for the January 9 meeting. Dave Field asked for a correction on the section noting the history of the Trail. *Myron Avery and others laid out the first section in Maine, from Katahdin to Bigelow, in 1933.* Bruce Grant placed a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Dave Field seconded the motion. The Executive Committee approved the motion.

Treasurer's Report: Elsa Sanborn presented the Treasurer's Report. She noted about \$80 of income. The fiscal year would end March 31, and there were not many bills before then.

Lester Kenway accepted the Treasurer's Report for the Executive Committee.

MATC Budget for 2016 - 2017: Tom Lewis presented the 2016 Budget, which indicated a total of \$330,000. It presents a budget that is balanced. It also calls for adding a bookkeeping position, which was a recommendation from the club audit by Purdy Powers. Tom would like the Executive Committee to have the opportunity to review the audit, but it had not been distributed at the date of the meeting. That audit, the first ever for the club, noted some deficiencies and recommended some changes, in particular segregation of duties.

The Recreational Trails Program has not approved MATC's grant application for this year, which impacts the budget; the club has found some replacements for that funding.

Ron Dobra asked about money for bog bridging supplies, which should be milled this year for a 2017 project in the White Cap District. Tom reassured him that the item is included. Lester advised that all projects should be included in the budget, as major outlays, those costing more than \$500, have to be approved by the Executive Committee and / or the president.

Claire Polfus noted that the ATC contribution to MATC will not be as high as what's listed in the budget; it will be closer to \$60,000.

Elsa Sanborn placed a motion, seconded by Craig Dickstein, to approve the budget as presented. The Executive Committee voted its approval.

Audit Findings: Tom is asking the Executive Committee to review and accept the auditor's report, the first one in eighty years. It arose because of the capital campaign. It included financial statements, a governance letter and a management letter. It noted some deficiencies in the club's internal operations and concerns about segregation of duties, in particular those of the Treasurer. It calls for a subcontracted bookkeeping position to assist the Treasurer. Tom is asking the Executive Committee to accept the audit and direct the club to address deficiencies once they've had the chance to read it. He asks to have it on the agenda for the May meeting. As a result of the audit, Tom plans to integrate the budget into a Quick Books Program, and to set a quarterly meeting schedule for the Finance Committee, which will then report back to the Executive Committee. Tom is also hoping to expand the Finance Committee, and will announce his call for more members at the annual meeting.

Corresponding Secretary's Report: Doug Dolan, Corresponding Secretary noted that e-mail traffic is picking up as hikers are starting on the Trail.

Longley Conservation Easement: Lester presented an update on the Longley property in the Forks. MATC and MATLT retained attorneys to craft a conservation easement document. It establishes a "forever wild" area in the upper section, adjacent to the AT. It also leaves a lower section open for possible development of a camping area. Lester read the printed easement document with accurate dates.

Tony Barrett placed a motion, seconded by Mike Ewing, to approve the Longley property conservation easement document. The Executive Committee voted its approval. This action now prepares MATC to market the property.

ATC Report and Baxter State Park Task Force: Claire Polfus presented the ATC report, and remarked that it has been a dramatic winter. The proposal for hazard tree workshops was approved by ATC. No date has yet been set for a hazard tree workshop, but it will likely be in early summer.

The Kennebec ferry operator revoked his contract. ATC has received four bids for the contract, and would make a decision the following week. Operating the Kennebec ferry is becoming more expensive each year, and ATC, which pays the majority of the costs, is reviewing funding options. The ferry operator's report is posted on the MATC web site.

ATC seasonal positions have been posted. They include two boundary techs for the full summer and two seasonal employees will work on an asset inventory scheduled for Maine. That inventory will indicate the value of all Trail structures. Two seasonal employees will staff a visitor center in Monson. They will devote 70% of their time in the center working with hikers, and 30% on the Trail. Claire is working with the CARE committee to provide guidelines for those positions and their interactions with CARE employees. ATC is looking for people familiar with the Trail in Maine and with Baxter State Park.

New England regional administration is working on a capital plan data base. They expect to share and report plans for trail projects. Claire asked that overseers think about trail projects for 2018 and 2019 as this will be the last chance to make changes to plans. Claire will distribute lists to overseers once they've been finalized.

Wind Power and Power Lines: Tony Barrett updated the Executive Committee on Wind Power and Power lines. He said that Lexington Township, Highland Plantation and Concord Plantation have petitioned to withdraw from the expedited wind power area. There don't seem to be obstacles to withdrawals from expedited area.

Tony included an update on Bingham Wind; the FAA issued updated regulations on wind turbine lighting that now allow night-time radar activated lighting. The developer will apply to the FAA for a "No Hazard Determination" as soon as practicable.

ATC 2017 Biennial Conference: Tony and Sherri Langlais spoke on plans for the 2017 Biennial Conference. There is nothing major to report at this point, although there has been a lot of progress behind the scenes. This biennial may be the last one of its kind; planners are waiting for a decision by the ATC board as to the format for future biennial conventions.

Communications Committee - MAINEtainer: Doug reported for the Communications Committee. He had handouts that showed a cost analysis for the club newsletter. There is \$3000 designated in the budget for the MAINEtainer. There have been requests for a color newsletter, but costs of color printing are exorbitant. The Communications Committee is working with Bangor Letter and Printing. Doug reported that not many people opted for a digital only publication.

Doug plans to call a meeting to discuss procedure for releasing information. The club needs to take advantage of its PR person. Currently there are no protocols for how and where to release information and to which media sources.

Club Coordinator Update and CARE: Holly Sheehan gave an update on her work as club coordinator. Forty slots on the trail crew are filled, and some attendees at the Youth Trail Summit took applications.

LL Bean will host its annual camping weekend on May 14.

Holly introduced Audrey Laffely, who first worked with the CARE Committee as the ridge runner at Gulf Hagas, and who now volunteers as the site supervisor for Horns Pond and on the CARE hiring committee.

Moxie Niedenthal will return to the Gulf Hagas ridgerunner position this season. Erin Schlager will be assigned one of the caretaker positions. The last hiree for the season was pending as of this meeting.

Alpine Plants Field Guide: Glen Mittelhauser met with Holly, Audrey, Bill Millis, Lester and Elsa to discuss the proposal for an alpine field guide. The Waterman Stewardship Fund awarded \$1000 toward the project. The CARE Committee has four goals for spending the money: 1) on the ground training for caretakers; 2) add scientific background information to the draft created last summer; 3) order more books, at an on-demand basis, for club members who would benefit; 4) correct and add plants to the current guide.

Dave Field was surprised that Glen had never heard of the natural heritage resources guide, published in 2000 through the ATC New England office after extensive research. That program wasn't completed because the person in charge left the position. Claire clarified that Glen was aware of the inventory. Dan Simonds added that the guide in question was not a field guide and not interpretive. Dave is concerned about how best to articulate the goals of the project, and will support it if it's not redundant, and if the price is right; rewriting what's already been done is not beneficial, but training for our employees is beneficial.

Lester explained that this work meets the needs of the caretakers employed by the club, but advised that in future, any funding proposal must be brought to the Executive Committee in advance.

After a brief discussion, Dan Simonds placed a motion, seconded by Bruce Grant, that the club use the \$1000 Waterman Foundation Grant for this project for 1) training, 2) scientific background 3) to order copies 4) to correct and add to the existing document.

The Executive Committee approved the motion, with one abstention.

Trail Karma: Moxie Niedenthal has submitted a proposal for Trail Karma, to acknowledge positive trail behavior and influence hikers to improve their interactions with other hikers and to protect Trail resources. ATC devised the Trail Karma program to reward positive trail behavior, issuing numbered necklaces as rewards; hikers who received the awards posted photos on the internet. Because the necklaces were numbered, it was possible to track the mementos. Moxie's proposal is for buffs, a special neck / head wear, enhanced with a leave no trace message. The items are meant to spark an LNT conversation. The CARE committee supports the effort. Lester approved the concept, but it's not in the budget just passed by the Executive Committee. There is money available through Grants to Clubs, but most of it has already been designated.

Bruce Grant placed a motion to recommend that the Executive Committee support the concept of a buff or talisman to distribute for commendable hiker behavior contingent on full funding. Craig Dickstein seconded the motion. The motion passed, with three abstentions.

Member Volunteer Recognition Program: Tony spoke on Member Volunteer Recognition Awards. ATC has a number of volunteer recognition programs, both for time of service and for achievement. MATC has also established several awards for its members, including honorary member designation, a President's Award, and the Walter D. Greene Award. Tony Barrett asked to refine wording in the LMP on when and how to designate honorees.

Tony placed a motion, seconded by Don Stack, to include an accurate volunteer recognition document in the LMP. Dave Field pointed out that some of the volunteer awards are already described in the LMP. After brief additional comments, Tony amended the motion to permit Dave Field to edit the existing description, using his discretion. The Executive Committee approved the motion.

Executive Committee Survey: Lester referred to the on-going examination of term limits. Susan Tompkins is compiling a Survey Monkey inquiry to learn what Executive Committee members do. This research plays into the term limits discussion; Lester has asked Susan to create a meaningful survey to learn the specifics of jobs Executive Committee members do now and the time commitment. Lester wanted to distribute the survey in a couple weeks and discuss results at the May meeting.

Overseer of Lands Report: Dave Field delivered his report as Overseer of Lands. The corridor monitor report for 2015 is posted on web site. He has twelve openings and five applicants, and is just waiting for the annual training workshop in June. He credits Dick Welsh's information elicited from membership registration forms.

The American Hiking Society has set dates for boundary work September 18 - 24.

District Overseer Reports: Tom Gorrill reported on the Baldapte District. He has two openings. He also has benefited from Dick Welsh's information on member interests.

Dick Fecteau reported three openings in the Bigelow District, with one filled tentatively by a potential maintainer linked by Dick Welsh's information.

Craig Dickstein reported that the Kennebec District is fully subscribed. He and his wife, Donna, ceded their section to Louis Chartier. His report for 2015 was published in the last MAINEtainer and has been sent to the web site for posting.

Craig reported that there were still openings for chain saw training on April 16 - 17 for both new sawyers and re-certifications.

Ron Dobra reports three vacancies in the White Cap District, but potential maintainers had made contact to inquire about open sections.

Trail Town Application: Bruce Grant reported that Kingfield will be presented as a candidate for Trail Town at the next RPC meeting. The application is for just the town of Kingfield, and not for the greater Carrabassett Valley area.

MATC Resolution: Lester asked the Executive Committee to consider two resolutions, one to recognize LL Bean for its commitment to maintaining the trail and

one for its support of MATC. He reported that the capital campaign organizers plan to invite LL Bean to join the Trail Champions Committee.

1) Resolution on the Maine Appalachian Trail Club expressing appreciation for contributions made by the L.L. Bean Trail Crew to the maintenance of a section of the Appalachian Trail.

Whereas the L.L. Bean Trail Crew has been working on the Appalachian Trail since 1980;

Whereas the L.L. Bean Trail Crew has introduced more than 600 people to working on the Appalachian Trail; and

Whereas the L.L. Bean Trail Crew assignment spans from Crawford Pond to Mahar Landing and at 14.3 miles is one of the longer assignments along the trail in Maine; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Maine Appalachian Trail Club on behalf of its Executive Committee and its members commend, supports and appreciates the efforts of the L.L. Bean Trail Crew to maintain a significant section of the Appalachian Trail, and recognizes them as true Trail Champions.

2) Resolution of the Maine Appalachian Trail Club expressing appreciation for the support provided to the Appalachian Trail by L.L. Bean.

Whereas L.L. Bean has been providing contributions to the Maine Appalachian Trail Club since 1982;

Whereas L.L. Bean has supported special projects such as for solar privies, aerial photography, and lean-to construction; and

Whereas L.L. Bean provides annual support to the Maine Appalachian Trail Club; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Maine Appalachian Trail Club on behalf of its Executive Committee and its members commends, and appreciates the contributions of the L.L. Bean towards supporting the projects and programs that are so important to the Appalachian Trail, and recognizes them as true Trail Champions.

Dave Field placed a motion, seconded by Craig Dickstein, to formalize both resolutions.

Members of the Executive Committee expressed concern that other groups also deserve recognition, and Lester reassured that those will come later. He said he plans to invite LL Bean staff to the annual meeting for a presentation.

The Executive Committee voted to approve the motion.

Executive Committee Applicants: Lester reminded that the club constitution states that the Executive Committee will fill governing board vacancies should they arise in the interim between elections. He suggested that the club could form a committee to examine or consider applicants who inquired and sent applications.

Lester announced the two recent director position openings in the latest MAINEtainer and invited applicants.

The first director candidate is Dick Welsh. He is currently Assistant Overseer of Lands. He has contributed a lot to the club, serving on the Biennial Committee, establishing and maintaining the club membership data base, working at the trail crew base camp, as well as serving in other volunteer capacities. He has a background in

communications. He lives in Connecticut but is planning to move to Maine full time. Tony Barrett explained that the nominating committee considered Dick at the time of the last election, but there were no Executive Committee vacancies at that time.

Dave Field placed a motion to invite Dick Welsh to join the Executive Committee as a director. Tom Gorrill seconded the motion. The Executive Committee approved the motion.

Audrey Laffely has been associated with MATC since she worked as the Gulf Hagas ridge runner in 2012. She currently serves on the CARE Committee, as site supervisor for the Horns Pond caretaker and as a member of that body's hiring committee. Dan Simonds described her as young and energetic, and added that she wants to get involved. She is an experienced hiker, having thru hiked, and she knows the trail well. Dick Fecteau placed a motion, seconded by Dan Simonds, to invite Audrey Laffely to join the Executive Committee as a director. The Executive Committee voted its approval.

Lester will send contact information to the MAINEtainer and to the web site.

Membership Analysis: Lester referred to a membership analysis submitted by Dick Welsh. Dick proposes services to benefit members and reward them for their membership. His proposals include: 1) a color edition of the MAINEtainer; 2) discounts on everything the club sells at the MATC store; 3) member only events, like the maintainer gathering, and others to be created. Claire noted that these are similar to ATC member benefits.

Craig Dickstein suggested that the color copy of the newsletter only be the digital copy; Doug Dolan's earlier presentation showed that printing a color edition is not cost effective. Craig would also like to add retailer discounts for members only.

Craig spoke of the winter maintainer gathering, which is for education. Lester explained the history of that event, which began as a winter social. When attendance at the purely social event waned, the maintainer gathering was created for the purpose of educating maintainers. It next expanded to corridor monitors. Organizers added general membership this year, but most were aspiring maintainers. Dave Field reminded that MATC is a service organization, not a social organization, like some other outdoors organizations that offer social events.

Claire reminded that the benefit of membership is being able to maintain and monitor the Trail; membership is a requirement for maintainers and monitors, not a privilege.

Lester suggested that the Membership services committee discuss Dick's recommendations. That committee includes Priscilla Seimer, Ron Dobra, Elsa Sanborn, and Dick Welsh.

Marketing Use of Register Box Cards and Ferry Releases: Craig Dickstein brought attention to the use of register box cards and the Kennebec ferry release forms for marketing purposes. We've been telling hikers that information entered is not for marketing purposes, but we use the information for the annual appeal. In fact, register cards serve two purposes for the club; to invite membership and for information for the annual appeal. Craig is concerned for invasion of privacy. He suggests that we need to

add an opt / in opt out line. If we approve, we'll honor the person's requests through data entry volunteers.

Dan Simonds noted that the ferry release form is very different, as it pertains to liability. Craig clarified that we also use the ferry release for data collection and planning purposes. Claire reminded that register cards aren't required, so it's an individual choice, while the ferry information is required for safety and liability reasons. Lester acknowledged that the ability to raise funds using information on the cards is significant.

Craig Dickstein placed a motion to reword the two forms in question (the ferry release and register box cards) to include an opt out on both and then honor the request, Mike Ewing seconded the motion. The Executive Committee voted to approve the motion.

Don Stack noted that the decision is timely as the club is due to reprint register box cards. Don and Craig will confer on what to do with cards that were completed last year and not yet entered in data base.

Guide Book: With supplies running low, Ray Ronan presented two options for the guide book: reprint 2600 of the current edition for this year, and work on a new edition for the biennial year or proceed with plans for a 16th edition. Dave Field thinks that the first option is most favorable, and gives the club time to review changes and format and prepare a quality new edition in time for the Biennial Conference.

Dave Field placed a motion to approve option 1 of Ray's recommendations for the guide book, and Bruce Grant seconded the motion.

The Executive Committee approved the motion.

With discussions concluded, Dave Field placed a motion, seconded by Bruce Grant, to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 9:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Clain
MATC Recording Secretary