

Maine Appalachian Trail Club  
May 6, 2016  
Viles Arboretum, Augusta

Present: President, Lester Kenway; Vice President, Mike Ewing; Recording Secretary, Janice Clain; Treasurer, Elsa Sanborn; Directors, Tony Barrett, Laura Flight, Bruce Grant, Audrey Laffely, Sherri Langlais, Dan Simonds, Don Stack, Dick Welsh; Overseer of Lands, Dave Field; District Overseers, Craig Dickstein, Ron Dobra; Club Coordinator, Holly Sheehan; Guidebook Editor, Ray Ronan; Members, Richard Gower, Michelle Moody, Stan Moody; Guests, Diano Circo, J. T. Horn, Wolf Tone.

Absent: Corresponding Secretary, Doug Dolan; District Overseers, Dick Fecteau, Tom Gorrill, Rick Ste. Croix.

President Lester Kenway called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. With several guests in attendance, he called for introductions.

**Secretary's Report:** Janice Clain presented the Secretary's Report for the March 4 meeting. She noted two corrections in names that created ambiguity; in the report on the biennial plans, Tony Barrett and Sherri Langlais should be listed separately, and in the discussion of a new director, Dan Simonds and Dick Fecteau should be listed separately. Dave Field called for a correction for the date of a corridor monitor workshop, which will take place in July.

Craig Dickstein placed a motion to accept the Secretary's reported as corrected. Don Stack seconded the motion. The Executive Committee voted its approval.

**Treasurer's Report:** Elsa Sanborn presented the Treasurer's Report. The report notes \$18,000 in income from various sources. She indicated a couple distribution entries in the wrong place, but the bottom line is the same; the report shows total assets of \$643,697.44. Lester accepted the report on behalf of the Executive Committee.

**Purdy Powers Audit:** Lester referred to the Purdy Powers audit, which was distributed after the last meeting. Discussion and action on the audit was tabled at that meeting, as members of the Executive Committee had not had time to review the document. Lester noted that there were a lot of observations in the report, and some recommendations. As a result of the audit, Finance Committee Chair, Tom Lewis, who was unable to attend this meeting, has decided to take that committee to quarterly meetings. The committee has recommended hiring a contracted part time bookkeeper.

Tony Barrett placed a motion to accept the report and to authorize the Finance Committee to take action to meet the recommendations of the audit company. Audrey Laffely seconded the motion. The Executive Committee voted to approve the motion.

Lester made some observations about the audit process. It was the first in 80 years, and took some time to locate information requested by the auditor. The audit company

didn't find any serious issues. The original estimate for the audit was \$6000, and the final cost was \$12,000, which indicates how much time it took.

**Corresponding Secretary's Report:** Doug Dolan was not present, so there was no report.

**Trust for Public Lands Update:** JT Horn, Diano Circo and Wolf Tone presented an update on several projects for the Trust for Public Lands. TPL has historically worked closely with MATLT, and realized that they should update MATC on their progress on their projects, including Abraham Mountain, the Crockers, and Bald Mountain Pond. While they have worked more closely with MATLT, they stressed that TPL is working towards MATC's priorities.

TPL has put forward a proposal to use some of the funds from the Bingham Wind Fund mitigation. They referred to a Landscape initiative by ATC and NPS, which holds a different philosophy than in the past; TPL will be one of the main partners in this effort. JT feels there is more opportunity to make a meaningful impact here in Maine than in the other thirteen states through which the AT passes. Funding for the Trust for Public Lands is private and grant funded, and sometimes includes funding help from the land owners; they currently have \$27 million in projects and are moving towards becoming a philanthropic organization.

Wolf Tone presented information about specific projects. He referred to earlier projects, in 2009, 2010, 2012, in the Crockers, and along Orbeton Stream. He distributed information about the White Mountains to Moosehead Lake initiative.

Four projects, which are all linked, are currently under way and under contract; Bald Mountain Pond, Redington, Lone Mountain, and Perham Stream. Saddleback is also under consideration, but is on hold until the question of ownership of the ski area is determined. TPL hopes to close on the Redington project this summer, and maybe on Lone Mountain.

Tony Barrett commented on JT Horn's history with MATLT, which grew out of shared membership on the MATC Executive Committee and JT's work as ATC regional director. JT recognized that TPL has dealt in recent years mostly with MATLT, and considered it communication with MATC; he now sees they're two different entities, and that he must keep each organization informed.

JT commented on the history of the Bald Mountain Pond project, which began when he visited the site with Sarah Carpenter in 1998. He quickly realized that it is a special place that needs to be protected. TPL came to MATC two years ago to ask for support to protect Bald Mountain Pond; it has now developed a protection plan, which JT pointed out on a map of the area.

The TPL is asking for letters of support from the club to take to Maine's congressional delegation to support the protection plan. JT is concerned that the AT may be caught up in the controversy over the movement for a national monument. He stressed that we need to educate the congressional delegation to understand that AT / NPS is separate from the movement for a national monument. A public meeting was scheduled for Monday, May 16, and JT urged that they need local support.. Dave Field

noted that Susan Collins was helpful in working toward preserving Saddleback; she has been a strong supporter of the AT, and he feels that she may be supportive of this project.

To a question from Sherri Langlais as to whether it would be appropriate for the Executive Committee to formulate a letter, Lester suggested establishing a committee to formulate a letter and a plan. He suggested that we take this summer and next winter to formulate a plan. JT explained that TPL hopes to close by September 2017. Lester says we can work on a document to discuss at the next Executive Committee meeting, in September. JT suggested that MATC can have most impact as a voice in the political discussion because it is local, and the congressional delegation may be more amenable to that input. As a result of the discussion, Dave Field placed a motion to support a three phase plan that TPL has put together to conserve Bald Mountain Pond. Don Stack seconded the motion. The Executive Committee voted to approve the motion.

The next step is to compose a letter. Craig Dickstein recommended that JT draft a template that MATC officials can sign. Lester encouraged all Executive Committee members to create their own letters.

Diano also asked for support for the Perham Stream project. That parcel is an ecological preserve that abuts both Mount Abraham and the AT. TPL is working with the New England Forestry Foundation to hold the land in fee and create a model forest. They hope to close on the project in late 2017.

Lone Mountain has a new owner, Golden Eagle LLC, which is biodiversity driven and ecologically focused. There is concern for ATV trails and for motorized vehicle interests.

Following these discussions, JT recommended that TPL visit MATC Executive Committee meetings on a regular basis, establishing a direct link between the two entities. Lester will bring this up later.

**Meet-Up proposal:** Michelle and Stan Moody explained their Meet-Up proposal, based on their own experiences through AMC. Meet-Up has wide membership and subscribers can indicate what types of opportunities interest them. Individuals have to join the group to get notices and reminders automatically on their e-mail. They can specify groups and interests to get notifications. Work trips can be posted by anyone and individuals can respond to the person who posted the information. The service costs \$15 per month, and Michelle and Stan have offered to fund membership for the first year. The organization subscriber has to post from one city location, but could post distance to the work site.

Ron is concerned that members would have to be specific about what the activity is, and that it's not for recreation. Tony is a Meet-Up member for a bicycle group; he sees this as meeting Susan Tompkins' recommendations that MATC branch out and publicize its activities.

Craig Dickstein placed a motion to accept the Moody's generous offer to organize and finance the Meet-Up program and pilot it for a year. Mike Ewing seconded the motion. The Executive Committee voted to approve the motion.

**ATC Update:** Claire Polfus was unable to attend this meeting, but updated the Executive Committee on several ATC initiatives via e-mail.

**Wind Power and Power Lines Committee Update:** Tony Barrett gave an update on the Wind Power and Power Lines Committee. A special teleconference meeting of the Executive Committee was held on April 4 to consider the recommendation from AMC to release funds from the Bigelow Wind mitigation fund. The EC approved \$450,000 for the acquisition of land above Bald Mountain Pond and adjacent to the A.T. corridor. On April 12, the Wind Committee met and recommended increasing the amount to \$550,000 for the Bald Mountain Pond land due to Sun Edison financial issues. Sun Edison filed for bankruptcy on April 21. On May 4 the mitigation escrow fund was completely emptied and monies transferred to the Trust for Public Land for the Bald Mountain Pond project.

**Biennial Update:** Tony Barrett and Sherri Langlais gave their update on the ATC Biennial in 2017. They showed the first flier for the event. They have sent out letters to hiking clubs and AMC. They have contact information for workshops. They have post cards ready to send to announce the event. They also have business cards to advertise. Everything is moving forward according to schedule.

Stan Moody offered to upload the flier to the Meet-Up site.

**Campsite Committee Report:** Laura Flight spoke for the Campsite Committee. They are gearing up for the season. They have \$3500 in grant money for privies. ATC may pick up the rest of the costs.

Eight people prebuilt two privies. With help from volunteers and Dirigo High School, they plan to install the privy at Black Brook on June 11. They plan to install the Pleasant Pond privy in mid-September, and are waiting for a permit and the NEPA review. Construction of a new lean-to at Nahmakanta Stream is scheduled to begin on June 11, with follow-up work trips later in the season.

**CARE Committee Report:** Dan Simonds gave an update for the CARE program. Alexis "Moxie" Niedenthal will return to Gulf Hagas; Erin Schlager is at Horns Pond and Evan Spencer at Piazza Rock. Caretakers for the Piazza Rock and Horns Pond sites pack in on May 21. The Gulf Hagas ridge runner begins at Abol Bridge / Hurd Brook and will set up in the Gulf on June 18. Training for caretakers and ridge runners begins on May 22, at Bigelow Lodge.

**Club Coordinator Report:** Holly Sheehan added to her Club Coordinator's report. Volunteer slots with the Trail Crew are mostly filled; only about 20 spots remain. Holly has finished grant writing for 2016.

Lester reported that he conducted an annual evaluation for Holly Sheehan in March and shared it with the Personnel Committee. Milt Wright, chair of that committee, and Lester have discussed recommendations for improvements, and both recognize a need to make revisions in the job description. As a result of the review and discussions, the

Personnel Committee recommends an increase in the Club Coordinator's hourly wage. Laura Flight placed the motion to accept the Personnel Committee's recommendation. Dan Simonds seconded the motion. The Executive Committee voted to approve the motion.

**Executive Committee Survey Results:** Lester reported findings of the Executive Committee Survey that Susan Tompkins distributed. There are nineteen members of the Executive Committee, and most members are very or mostly satisfied with their positions and with responsibilities. The most frequent recommendation was to build committee structure, with further suggestions to add a committee for strategic planning and one for social activities. There were some recommendations to combine committees, but no consensus on which ones should be combined. A listing of hours spent in committee indicates that the Campsite Committee is highest, followed by the Trail Crew Committee.

It was generally noted that succession planning is critical. In addition, the goal should be that no more than half of any committee should consist of Executive Committee members.

Lester recommends that the club use the survey as a starting point and build a new "system" to put in place in 2017.

**Capital Campaign Update:** As an update for the capital campaign, Lester reported that Alicia Nichols has completed solicitor training; five committee members will solicit from lists of prospects. The campaign has raised \$190,000 to date and includes 100% participation of the Executive Committee and 100% of the Campaign Committee

**Membership Services Committee Report:** Dick Welsh spoke for the Membership Services Committee. Other organizations use benefits of membership to attract new members; MATC currently lists no benefits of membership. Dick proposes developing a list of benefits of membership, including membership cards, invitations to club sponsored work trips, discounts at the on-line store, invitations to members-only events, and a color edition of the newsletter. To offset the costs of color printing, we have to increase the number of electronic only newsletters; one way to do this is that volunteers with the Trail Crew only receive the issue electronic version of the newsletter.

Dave Field asked that we add one more benefit of membership, the privilege of being eligible for a maintaining assignment; club membership is a requirement for a maintainer assignment.

Dick Welsh placed a motion to accept five of the six proposals presented in his document and Dave Field's addition, less the color copies of the club newsletter. Tony Barrett seconded the motion. The Executive Committee voted its approval. It will revisit the color copy proposal in November.

**Overseer of Lands Report:** Dave Field reported as Overseer of Lands. He is looking forward to a July 9 field training for corridor monitors.

**District Overseer Reports:** Dave also reported for Dick Fecteau, who will have two or three openings for maintainers in the Bigelow District, as Dave is resigning from his maintainer responsibilities for health reasons.

Craig Dickstein reported on the Kennebec District. He already had a few trip reports. Maintainers reported not so many problems as last year. One maintainer (Horseshoe Canyon) planned to be absent for the summer.

Craig had posted the Kennebec ferry schedule, which has some changes from previous years. He asked that campsite maintainers replace any old schedules.

Ron Dobra reported for the White Cap District. Rex Turner has proposed a campsite on the Blue Ridge Trail; this might take some pressure off Long Pond Stream lean-to. Ron planned some walk throughs with potential maintainers. He had some reports of damage.

Colby College has scheduled a work trip on Labor Day weekend to replace bog bridging on the Pleasant River Tote Road, in Gulf Hags. Ron will facilitate a Gulf Hags Rim Trail vista work trip, in August, with three arborists; the project is funded by a grant from Plum Creek.

**Maine Trail Crew Committee Report:** Lester reported for the Maine Trail Crew Committee. They planned to set up the base camp on The Island on May 13 and 14. The Trail Crew has five staff. Their season begins with site visits, trails training, and work in Baxter State Park.

**Merchandising Opportunity:** Lester referred to a proposal from REI Brooks shoes, as explained in an e-mail from Royce Gibson. The proposal was for financial consideration for support for REI's marketing of Limited Edition Scott Jurek running shoes. Given the fundamental differences in philosophy between Mr. Jurek and trail protectors in MATC, Dave Field placed a motion to decline the offer. Elsa Sanborn seconded the motion. The Executive Committee voted its approval of the motion; the club will not participate in or benefit from this marketing strategy.

**Sales proposal:** Dick Welsh spoke to a Woolrich "Pro" sales opportunity which the company has presented to the MATC Executive Committee. They will offer a 50% one-time discount to all club volunteers who exceed a designated number of volunteer hours. The company asks for nothing in return and it doesn't conflict with other fund raising issues; the company wants publicity about what they've done for club members. Lester pointed out that this could be a major conflict with requests to another supportive company, and he suggested that MATC postpone consideration of the proposal for at least two years.

**Maine Trail Finder Request:** Ray Ronan spoke on communications with the Maine Trail Finder on-line service. That entity wants to do another set of trails, including

Barren Mountain, Chairback, Gulf Hagas and Pleasant Pond, to its web site. Owner Stephen Engle does the work, Ray reviews the descriptions, and brings them to the Executive Committee for approval.

Lester is concerned that most of the hikes listed are in the Hundred Mile Wilderness, which is already a very high use area. His concern is that such promotion increases use. He advises that the site include information about overcrowded conditions and high use. Ray explained that Maine Trail Finder can post their information anyway, so it's in our best interest to cooperate.

No decisions or recommendations were made on this proposal. Ray will contact Steve with MATC's concerns.

With discussions concluded, Elsa Sanborn placed a motion, seconded by Dick Welsh, to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Clain  
Recording Secretary  
submitted June 22, 2016