

Maine Appalachian Trail Club  
Executive Committee Meeting  
September 6, 2013  
UMA Randall Student Center

Present: President, Lester Kenway; Vice President, Mike Ewing; Recording Secretary, Janice Clain; Treasurer, Elsa Sanborn; Directors, Dennis Andrews, Tony Barrett, Bob Cummings, Bruce Grant, Laura Flight, Dan Simonds, Don Stack; Overseer of Lands, Dave Field; District Overseers, Craig Dickstein, Dick Fecteau, Tom Gorrill; Club Coordinator, Holly Sheehan; Fund Raising Counsel, Alicia Nichols; ATC Regional Director, Hawk Metheny; Guest, Bryan Courtois.

Absent: Corresponding Secretary, Doug Dolan; Directors, Rebecca Clark; District Overseers, Ron Dobra, Rick Ste. Croix

President Lester Kenway called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**Secretary's Reports:** Secretary Janice Clain presented several reports from recent meetings. In the published minutes of the March 1 meeting, Alicia Nichols called for a correction to the total figure for the club's proposed capital campaign, which is \$4.2 million and not \$4.5 million. Tony Barrett asked for a change in wording in the discussion of the Bingham wind power proposal and in his motion to oppose the project. Elsa Sanborn signaled an error in the spelling of the AmeriCorps name.

Bruce Grant placed a motion, seconded by Craig Dickstein, to approve the Secretary's report as amended. The Executive Committee voted to accept the corrected report.

Janice then presented the minutes of the May 3 meeting. With no calls for corrections, Craig Dickstein placed a motion, seconded by Bruce Grant, to approve those minutes. The Executive Committee voted to accept the report.

The minutes of the June 14 special meeting should include Dave Field as in attendance. Ron Dobra's name was misspelled. With these corrections, Dave Field placed a motion, seconded by Don Stack, to approve these minutes. The Executive Committee voted its approval.

**Treasurer's Report:** Elsa Sanborn presented the Treasurer's Report, distributed prior to the meeting.

Elsa explained that the club can expect quite a bit of income from dues and the fall appeal. Most big expenses, such as the Trail Crew salaries, have been paid, and caretakers would be on duty only a few more weeks. Lester added that the amount of the current deficit is close to what ATC will give for the Trail Crew, and that funds from that organization are coming in late.

Tom Gorrill placed a motion, seconded by Bruce Grant, to approve the Treasurer's Report. The Executive Committee voted to accept the report.

**Friends of the AT in Maine:** Alicia Nichols, speaking on behalf of the Friends of the AT in Maine, presented a visual summary of that group's events. The next event scheduled was a presentation by Dave Field on the history of the AT in Maine. The event was to take place in Orono, at the Alumni Center. Susan Tompkins had arranged for free advertising in the Bangor Daily News. Alicia was also working with campus entities, especially the Maine Outing Club.

Most Friends events have had 70 or more attendees, amounting to a successful introduction of MATC to people in Maine. Alicia showed a binder with documentation of publicity for events and activities at those events.

**Maine Trail Crew Center:** On the topic of the Maine Trail Center, Alicia and Lester had no news to add.

**Campsite Committee, Carl Newhall Privy:** Laura Flight, Campsite Committee Chair, reported on installation of the Carl Newhall accessible moldering privy. More than twenty-five volunteers logged 316 hours to help with the project, which was 90% complete and open for operation. Most of the volunteers were needed to carry materials, which proved a logistical challenge. Laura explained that she now has a better understanding of what future projects will entail. Lester added that the structure, which is nearly 8x8 feet, took almost as much time to prepare and build as a shelter would.

**Contract Renewal for Alicia Nichols:** Alicia Nichols referred to an executive summary she distributed detailing her hours, expenses, overall fundraising goal and her role as director of a capital campaign. It was accompanied by a proposal for renewal of her contract. Bruce Grant placed a motion, seconded by Dave Field, to pursue the proposed arrangement.

To concerns regarding contributions if the campaign is not successful, Alicia explained that you don't go into a campaign expecting it to fail and that if the club doesn't meet its goal, there are ways to change the overall project. She also stressed that 100% support from the Executive Committee is critical to the success of the campaign. Bruce Grant, who has been involved in capital campaigns observed that there is some risk in any such project, but noted that Alicia has done everything she said she could do, has been up front, and organized.

To a reflection that the feasibility study showed the club not ready to begin a campaign, Alicia referred to the club's extensive PR campaign and the Friends of the AT in Maine group, which has brought in people from outside the Executive Committee. These efforts have shown that there is good reason to start a campaign, with the Friends group transforming into part of the Capital Campaign Committee. She affirmed that Friends events and the PR campaign have changed the situation and raised the image of and awareness to the MATC.

To concerns by some Executive Committee members who are looking for concrete, detailed, dollar and name specific steps in the campaign and guarantees of positive results, Dave Field, who has some experience with capital campaigns, explained

that this is a proposal to begin a process, not to build a product. Alicia added that campaign plans are not delivered at the time of the contract and that the campaign is built when the committees are in place. She further explained that it is a committee process and each step must be approved. There is a 30 day release clause at each step, so if either side is not satisfied, the agreement can be terminated. The proposed contract simply puts the process in motion.

To a question regarding the list of potential large donors, Alicia explained that the club needs to buy the software program to compile a donor data base. She added that timing is critical, and that you don't make contact with donors until you are certain that you have Executive Committee support and evidence of progress made.

Lester explained that he is satisfied with Alicia's competence and supports her judgment and added that delay just drags out the process; the longer we delay, the longer we won't be able to reimburse ourselves for expenses already incurred. Alicia said she felt encouraged after the June meeting, and cautioned that, if you wait too long, the people interviewed in the feasibility study will have forgotten.

Dave Field emphasized the need for 100% generous Executive Committee participation for the campaign. He noted that the MATC Executive Committee is a board of managers who do physical work and give hours to the trail but may not be comfortable in the role of fund raiser. He hopes that the show of support for the campaign will not be just in terms of money, but will include those who give time and energy and miles. Alicia added that the message that members support the organization with time and energy will impress potential donors. Regarding financial support, she urged that each Executive Committee member consider a gift that is significant to him or her, not a minimum gift amount.

To concerns regarding readiness to begin the campaign and guarantees of success, Alicia explained that she has worked on eight successful campaigns, and the nature of the process is that you can't know if you're ready until you start. She added that, in all her other campaigns there has not been a question among the members of the boards involved. When asked directly if the club is ready to begin a capital campaign, Alicia gave the following informal assessment: "You are ready."

Craig Dickstein called to move the question. The vote of the Executive Committee was twelve in favor, three opposed and one abstention. The Executive Committee voted to approve the Alicia Nichol's contract to lead the capital campaign.

**Search and Rescue and the AT:** Bryan Courtois, a life member of MATC and Education Director for the Maine Association for Search and Rescue (MESAR), asked to speak to the Executive Committee regarding links between the two organizations. He referred to recent high profile searches, at least one on the AT. When such a search is necessary, authorities call for certified only volunteers and there aren't enough certified searchers in the state. His organization is reaching out to groups who have members with specific skills, and asking them to make a connection. organizations. Training is on-line, and includes crime scene preservation, helicopter removal, and first aid. It takes 4 to 8 hours to go through the training. The individual then contacts an established group and, with a recommendation by an official of that unit, passes a one day verification.

Dick Fecteau and Dave Field both commented that there was a process about 16 years ago by which searchers would contact MATC for its expertise and knowledge, but that connection has lapsed. Bruce Grant added that the partners' hike is helpful, but the connection lapses when the personnel changes. Craig Dickstein noted that we need a formal liaison, with a standardized procedure, between MATC and the warden service.

Lester observed that Bryan has given us a good opportunity to network and Dave suggested that this would be a good topic for the January meeting.

**ATC Updates:** Hawk Metheny, Regional ATC director, presented an update on activities from the larger organization.

Claire Polfus, the new staff person in Maine, has been in every district in Maine, and plans to attend the November meeting of the MATC Executive Committee. She previously worked with AmeriCorps and her current duties as Conservation Resource Manager include: boundary stewardship, support to volunteers; encroachment follow up, footpath design and construction, trail protection and threat mitigation, land protection, outreach, volunteer and club support, education, resource management, and cooperative management.

ATC will fund five rehabilitation and repair projects that have been completed by the Trail Crew. Hawk remarked that funding has been coming later each year. Maine now gets twice the funding that other states do, and it's not enough. Funds are delegated to all, but ATC recognizes higher needs for treadway repair in Maine. Hawk recommends a permanent trail crew center where we can base more crews to support the work on the treadway, and then garner more financial support for the Trail Crew.

Two volunteer crews, from AmeriCorps and the American Hiking Society, have been in Maine to continue boundary work. Alison Scheiderer and Claire Polfus have been involved with both.

Several projects have been approved and are ready to go. They include a short reroute around Ethel Pond, the Pioneer Trail, the Arnold Trail connection, the Kennebec privy and the Goodall Brook bridge. Lester added that the club received grant money for the bridge.

Dave Field asked about approval to remove incidentally acquired structures, and Hawk said that has not yet been determined.

Hawk recommended that, as this backlog has been settled, this is a good time to get any new proposals to the Regional Partnership Committee, which meets next on November 23.

**Wind Power Update:** Tony Barrett spoke to the group regarding the Bingham Wind Power proposal. The application was completed in April and is now under review by the DEP (Department of Environmental Protection).

Tony showed a slide simulation of the site, in which turbines are not visible from the Bald Mountain Pond shelter because of an intervening ridge. He also showed a comparison of changes environmental groups, including MATC, discussed with First Wind in a mitigation agreement proposal that was reviewed by the Executive Committee in April.

The changes included: radar activated lighting and matte gray color, to both of which First Wind agrees pending FAA approval; the removal of three turbines that environmental groups say are visible from Bald Mountain Pond, to which First Wind does not agree.

Tony stressed that the main concern for MATC and its partners is the cumulative impact of wind constructions and conservation for land protection. He spoke of the Forks easement, and MATLT's recent acquisition of the Crocker Mountain parcel, made possible with the support of TPL (Trust for Public Lands). TPL's next project may be the protection of Bald Mountain Pond, part of which lies within the view shed of the Bingham wind project. Currently, however, there seem to be no obstacles to First Wind continuing with this proposed site and securing approval.

Lester noted that MATC's position on this matter hasn't changed since April, so the Executive Committee does not need to vote on any mitigation proposal at this time. He suggested that Tony present the subject again at the November meeting.

Hawk Metheny added that First Wind has made other concessions and agrees not to expand any of their projects to within eight miles of the AT.

**Club Coordinator Update:** Holly Sheehan referred to information she distributed to update the Executive Committee on her activities for the club. She explained that the Executive Committee will need vote to approve submission of an application to the Recreational Trails Program for a \$35,000 grant. Elsa Sanborn placed the motion, seconded by Dan Simonds, to authorize that submission. The Executive Committee voted to accept the motion.

Holly has also submitted requests to the Outdoor Heritage Fund and LL Bean. She acknowledged that grant applications will become more difficult in the future, as many organizations only allow one application per year. Holly and Alicia have formed a three year plan to integrate grant applications in conjunction with those that will offset capital campaign expenses.

**Overseer Reports:** Dave Field reported as Overseer of Lands. In July, AmeriCorps volunteers worked to clear and re-blaze the AT corridor boundary lines between Elephant Mountain and Old Blue. Rainy weather prevented the completion of the re-blazing work, but a lot of thick growth along the lines was cleared.

Claire Polfus led a crew of seven American Hiking Society volunteers from all over the U.S. to clear and re-blaze the AT corridor boundary lines between the Kennebec River and Pleasant Pond Mountain during the week of September 15 to 20.

Dave Theoharides has put most of the LMP (Local Management Plan) on the club web site.

Dave Field represented the club at a meeting in Greenville, convened by BPL's Outdoor Recreation Planner, Rex Turner, to provide information on and receive feedback about planning associated with a multi-year trail planning and development project in the Moosehead Lake Region. The project stems from the Moosehead Lake Region Concept Plan approved by the Land Use Planning Commission and involves Plum Creek providing both trails easements and funding to Maine Parks and Lands in order to

support the development and enhancement of non-motorized trails in the Moosehead Region.

Rick Ste Croix was absent, so there was no report from the Katahdin District.

With Ron Dobra absent, Bruce Grant reported that the White Cap District has only one opening.

Craig Dickstein reported that the Kennebec District has two openings since Dana Hall and Wally Donovan resigned. Matt Colello resigned, and his slot was filled by Ben Thomas. Most of the permits are in place for installation of a Kennebec River privy. A Colby College group worked on Labor Day weekend to improve drainage at the Horseshoe Canyon lean-to. They can be a valuable resource.

Dick Fecteau reported on the Bigelow District. An MCC crew was working on Crocker Mountain at the time of the meeting and an AmeriCorps person was working at Bigelow Col. Horns Pond Caretaker, Ian Fitzmorris, worked at the site of the former warden's cabin to remove refuse left over a period of decades. Dick said they may have a helicopter to haul out the last of the heavy items; BPL's Pete Smith is the contact.

The Camp Tekakwitha campers rebuilt an unofficial "floating bridge" and replaced some platforms at Little Bigelow.

Tom Gorrill said the Baldpate District has had a challenging season. They lost an access to the Grafton Loop Trail when a new landowner denied access to several groups. This has proved to have a significant impact. The Mahoosic group is negotiating with the landowner and may need support in its discussions. The Baldpate District has also had several maintainers with injuries, so Tom has been out a lot this summer. They have also had a lot of treadway issues.

The Baldpate District, with help from Camp Tekakwitha, has decommissioned one Grafton Loop campsite, and may want to eliminate one more, which would leave Stewart, Town Corner and Lane still in existence. Tom will take his proposal to the Campsite Committee.

Dirigo High School helped on a couple projects, and the Colby College Outing Club helped on Labor Day weekend. Tom hopes this will become an annual event.

The district may have one opening and trips are scheduled in October.

Tom commented that adding trail through the Grafton Loop Trail has not taken traffic away from AT, as when it was proposed. Tom is considering an idea to make the GLT a separate district. Laura Flight added that volunteers are more interested in working on the AT than on the GLT or other trails.

**CARE Update:** Holly Sheehan and Dan Simonds gave an update on the CARE program. Steve Massey has left his position as caretaker at Piazza Rock to take on a full time position elsewhere. Dan is supervising both Piazza Rock and Horns Pond. It's been a relatively quiet season at the three caretaker / ridge runner sites.

**Maine Trail Crew Update:** Lester reported on the Maine Trail Crew, which has had a very productive season. The two crew leaders came with little experience but accomplished a lot. They finished a stone steps project in Baxter State Park, on the Hunt Trail, that has been in process since 1991. They also worked on the Gulf Hags

Rim Trail, on water bars on the Horns Pond Trail, and on stone stairs and stepping stones at two locations on Barren Mountain. They worked mostly with crews of eight, comprised of a crew leader, two SCA interns, and other volunteers, some assigned through ATC.

**Community Outreach Committee:** Bruce Grant spoke on the Community Outreach Committee, which will serve as a link to Trail Towns and the Trail to Every Classroom program. He said some have agreed to serve, and he is contacting a few others. The next step is to meet and get the committee underway. Bruce has written a description for the committee, which should become a standing committee within MATC. Bruce placed a motion, seconded by Elsa Sanborn, to accept the description of the Outreach and Education Committee. The Executive Committee voted to approve the motion.

Dave Field has reviewed Bruce's document and will include the committee in the Local Management Plan.

**Strategies for Dealing With Difficult Members:** Craig Dickstein asked if the topic of strategies for dealing with difficult members should be on the agenda. He asked if we should have a policy to deal when a club member who demeans the club in public venues and thus becomes detrimental to the club. He asked at what point we stop tolerating and do something. The topic was on the agenda for this meeting but was postponed for further discussion until the November meeting.

**End of Trails Festival:** The End of Trails festival was scheduled for the weekend following the meeting. Bruce said he would get the club display to Millinocket but would not be available to man the club table.

The annual Hard Core project, sponsored and organized by the AT Lodge, was planned as part of the End of Trails Festival. Participants would meet at the AT parking lot on the KI road to help with a project on the Gulf Hagas trail. News of the project was posted on the Trail. The AT Lodge, through Paul Reynaud, provides transportation and meals for hikers who participate.

**Register Box Cards:** Holly is working on a redesign for the Register Box Cards, adding the club QR code. The new card asks for an e-mail address and includes a Facebook contact. Dave Theoharides is also designing a page that directs the QR to the club website.

**Newsletter:** Bob Cummings announced that the Maintainer deadline was on September 15.

**Rising Tide PR News:** Susan Tompkins e-mailed a report of her PR efforts on behalf of the club. She is now a club member and has agreed to work with us for about 12 hours a month. She organizes e-mail informational messages through mailchimp. What was put in place through the formal PR campaign continues to grow.

**Other, Trail Map Applications:** Bruce Grant spoke on Trail Map applications. He referred to the digitized AT guide and enhanced application using GPS resources that are inexpensive and readily available. Bruce has found several apps for the Appalachian Trail in Maine, some at a fee. He is doing an investigation to get more details. He wants to develop an app for the club, as we have some information that doesn't exist in the public domain. Such a project could cost us money to develop. He seeks board support to put together a committee to work on the project. He suggests a standing group to do some research, and then bring back information to the November or January meeting. Dan Simonds agreed to help with the effort but thinks it should be an extension of the Guidebook Committee. Lester noted that Bruce seems to have a show of interest to continue with the project. He suggested that Julian Wiggins, an active volunteer and a surveyor, might be a good resource.

**Chain Saw Training:** Craig Dickstein announced the next chainsaw training workshop, on October 5-6. He said there were still openings. Lester said the Friends of Baxter Park wanted to send some trainees. He has offered them a private class, but Baxter Park doesn't recognize an AT instructor. He is still in negotiations with that group.

With business concluded, Dan Simonds placed a motion, seconded by Don Stack, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 10:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Clain  
Recording Secretary