

Maine Appalachian Trail Club
Executive Committee Meeting
November 1, 2013

Present: President, Lester Kenway; Vice President, Mike Ewing; Recording Secretary, Janice Clain; Corresponding Secretary, Doug Dolan; Treasurer, Elsa Sanborn; Directors, Dennis Andrews, Tony Barrett, Bob Cummings, Laura Flight, Bruce Grant, Dan Simonds, Don Stack; Overseer of Lands, Dave Field; District Overseers, Craig Dickstein, Dick Fecteau, Tom Gorrill; ATC Resources Manager Claire Polfus; Guidebook Editor, Ray Ronan; guest, Steve Clark

Absent: Directors, Rebecca Clark; District Overseers, Ron Dobra, Rick Ste. Croix; Club Coordinator, Holly Sheehan

President Lester Kenway called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. He introduced Claire Polfus, who began her position as ATC Resource Manager in June. Claire is based in Farmington, and was able to work throughout the summer on a number of projects sponsored by both MATC and ATC.

Lester asked the Executive Committee to think about topics and format for the January meeting. He would return to this item later in the meeting.

Secretary's Report: Janice Clain presented the Secretary's Report for the September 6 Executive Committee meeting. Tony Barrett suggested changes in the wording of his report of the Wind Power Report, including changing the word *constructions* to *projects*, and changing the last line to read *they have agreed to mitigate the visual impacts as well as address cumulative impacts*. Elsa Sanborn offered a few minor grammar and spelling changes and noted that the Horns Pond Caretaker's name is Ian Fitzmorris.

With these changes made, Bruce Grant placed a motion, seconded by Don Stack, to approve the minutes as amended. The Executive Committee voted to approve the report.

Treasurer's Report: Elsa Sanborn presented the Treasurer's Report and called for questions. She pointed out that the report for the year to date shows negative income, and explained that the annual appeal will offset that balance. Further, if membership renewals go out early, they will also be included in the fiscal year totals. She noted three corrections to note 4; grants include \$3965 for the Kennebec privy, \$15,000 from Piscataquis County for unspecified projects, and \$2,250 from the Norcross Foundation for bridging in Monson.

Tony Barrett asked about the Kennebec river expenses. Elsa explained that MATC only pays for notices regarding the service, as ATC pays the cost of the ferry.

With explanations and changes made, Dave Field placed a motion, seconded by Dan Simonds, to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion carried.

Database Service Recommendation: Elsa presented a proposal, described in a mailing, to acquire a data base program to track membership information. The system the club has been using has been adequate, although there have been some problems. As the club approaches a capital campaign, accurate membership information will be critical. With help from Dick Welsh, Elsa has investigated several on-line data base options. She is recommending the Donor Perfect program, which will cost the club about \$4000 per year, which Elsa feels will be worth the expense. Lester added that the club needs a tool like this to provide data for wealth screening for the capital campaign.

When asked whether the club would be able to withdraw from the program after the capital campaign, Elsa responded affirmatively. She further added that, as this is a web based program, the club would buy one subscription, and would have a password so anyone could use it from any location, being certain that only one person was using it at a time. Elsa also explained that we can upload our current Excel files to the new program. She noted in her printed explanation that the club could pay for someone else to do the transfer, but she thinks we can do it ourselves. At least to begin, Elsa would be the designated user.

Craig Dickstein placed a motion, seconded by Mike Ewing, to accept Elsa's proposal to purchase a license for the Donor Perfect on-line data-base. The Executive Committee voted to approve the motion.

Other Financial Business / Longley Estate: As an additional financial item, Elsa explained that the terms of former ferryman and long-time MATC member Steve Longley's will left all his land and buildings in The Forks to MATC. This includes 24 acres, and a store building. The remainder of his estate is split in 12 parts, with 4 parts designated to MATC. Elsa has been in contact with Ernie Hilton, the Personal Representative for Steve's estate, who asks that MATC sign two documents, one to accept the property, and one to relinquish claims to any other parts of the estate and to be relieved from any liability for debts of the estate. Elsa has conferred with club member and legal counsel, Bill Plouffe, who suggests that Lester, as club president, sign the documents, then wait until other parts of the estate have been settled.

Dave Field recommended an examination of the land and buildings and Lester suggested that we distribute the pertinent documents for examination and vote at the January meeting. To a question from Craig Dickstein, Elsa clarified that there are no constraints on the gift. Tony Barrett suggested that, as this legacy is only to MATC and does not involve the National Park System or ATC, we would need to consider how to administer and manage it. Elsa recommends that we sell the property, as we can use the cash more easily than the land.

Dan Simonds, Dick Fecteau and Craig Dickstein volunteered to inspect the property. Dick also recommended a deed and tax liability research, which Craig Dickstein can do. Based on experience with property on Abraham Mountain, Tony Barrett recommended research regarding whether the land is under tree growth protection and whether we would be liable for taxes, given our non-profit status, if we do not make the tract part of the trail.

We will revisit this subject and vote at the January meeting.

Friends of the AT in Maine: Lester gave an update on activities for the Friends of the AT in Maine. Their latest event was a presentation of trail photos by Carey Kish, on October 10, at the Hilton Garden in Auburn. The event was co-sponsored by the Androscoggin Land Trust but, due to a scheduling conflict, only one person from that group attended. That person was the advisor of the Bates Outing Club, Judith Martin, which gave MATC officials the opportunity to strengthen ties with the college group that has long served as a maintaining organization on the AT.

Bruce Grant reported that there is discussion in Millinocket about hosting a Friends event there.

Maine Trail Center and Fundraising Planning: Lester had little to report on the Maine Trail Center. Alicia and her husband have moved recently, so she was not available to attend this meeting. She is working on plans to start the capital campaign with active support from the Executive Committee, which will evolve to a capital campaign committee.

Carl Newhall Accessible Moldering Privy: Laura Flight had a brief report on the Carl Newhall privy installation. Since the last Executive Committee, MATC volunteers have made two more trips to finish the privy and have removed the temporary bridge so no one can get to it except via the Trail.

Lester commented that the Carl Newhall project was the best community style event the club has had since they were building a series of lean-to's a couple of decades ago.

The Campsite Committee planned to meet on the Monday following this meeting, November 4, to start plans for the next project.

Bingham Wind Power: Tony Barrett reported for the Wind Power Committee. The Bingham Wind Power project is still proceeding, and goes for a second hearing on November 16, with hopes for approval by November 21.

On other terms of the mitigation proposal by MATLT, MATC and others, First Wind agreed to terms for radar lighting and will retrofit if the FAA approves. They will agree in writing that no parts of any of their wind projects will be within eight miles of the Trail. With these agreements made, First Wind is proceeding with its Memorandum Of Agreement.

Tony also reported that the Trust for Public Land has begun discussions with Plum Creek about protection of Bald Mountain Pond.

A meeting was scheduled for November 9 to bring together several environmental groups to discuss MATC's proposed LD1147, which speaks to the impact of wind power development and its cumulative effects on scenic trails.

Strategies for Dealing with Difficult Members: Craig Dickstein asked the Executive Committee to consider strategies for dealing with difficult members, in

particular those who damage the credibility and reputation of the organization. He is concerned for the effects that destructive criticism may have on a capital campaign.

Lester summarized the discussion saying that the Executive Committee now sees that we shouldn't respond to unfounded criticisms and allow a negative situation escalate, but that the club should take action if policies are being abused.

Register Box Cards: Holly has sent the most recent version of the register box cards to the printer and they should be available to monitors soon. They now include the QR code, e-mail and Facebook contacts. There were concerns about crowding the appearance of the card, but those who worked on the revisions believe they now have a more tech savvy document.

Rising Tide PR News: Lester reported on the continuing work of the Rising Tide PR firm. Not much is going on right now, but an article in the November / December issue of the ATC Journeys publication will feature the Maine Trail Crew and its work last summer on Barren Mountain.

Vreeland Marketing has submitted several articles from its MATC PR campaign to a state organization and has won two awards for its work featuring the 75th Anniversary Celebration and the Facebook photo contest.

November Chainsaw Training: Craig Dickstein announced that the chainsaw training workshop, scheduled in October but postponed due to the government shutdown, will take place November 16 and 17 on Larry Clark's farm in Windham. Craig has registered six new trainees and four recertification candidates. The training is open to the general public, and non-members pay a non-refundable \$130 fee; club members and maintainers have priority in registering.

To a question regarding the dates for the spring workshop, Lester answered that he is now working on dates for the next calendar year, and that the tentative dates are: January 11 for the full-day winter meeting, April 12-13 for chainsaw training, and April 19 for the Spring Meeting.

Club Coordinator Report: Holly Sheehan was not able to attend this meeting because she was attending a Guy Waterman Alpine Stewards' conference in New Hampshire. She distributed a written report via e-mail.

Overseer of Lands Report: Dave Field reported as Overseer of Lands. The deadline for his annual Corridor Monitor report is January 1, and any information not in should be sent to him.

Dave has sent the latest update of the Local Management Plan, with the table of contents, the revised committee structure and list of names of committee members, to Dave Theoharides for posting on the club web site. The LMP is always a work in progress.

District Overseer Reports and Arnold Bog Boardwalk Proposal:

Rick Ste. Croix was not present, so there was no report from the Katahdin District.

Ron Dobra was in Illinois, on his hike of the ADT, so there was no report from the White Cap District.

Craig Dickstein had a lengthy report of activities and proposals in the Kennebec District. The Pleasant Pond relocation has been cut and will be ready to open in the spring. It adds .2 miles to the Trail, so will necessitate new signs and, eventually, an update to the guide book.

The Buck Hill section has been reassigned to Chris O'Neill and Mark McAuliffe.

There is still an opening for the east side of Pleasant Pond Mountain, which Craig planned to show to a prospective maintainer the following Sunday.

Bog bridging projects in East Carry and Monson were completed.

The beaver pond on Stan and Michelle Moody's section is gone, but, with money for bog bridging already secured, Lester thinks we should put something in anyway.

Craig and Lester visited the site for the new Kennebec privy and tentatively scheduled the project for July. Unlike the Carl Newhall project, there is road access and the privy will be built on site.

Craig presented a proposal, made in conjunction with the Arnold Expedition Historical Society, for an Arnold Bog Boardwalk along the Great Carrying Place Portage Trail. Steve Clark has proposed a series of five signs marking the trail. Craig proposes signs that are consistent with AT signage, brown signs with routed white lettering. Lester explained that one sign per trail, with the name of the main trail on the first line, is standard procedure and intended to avoid confusion.

Craig and Steve also propose an interpretive sign with historic information, similar to some that he has seen in historic locations further south on the AT. Steve noted that, while other historic paths cross the trail, this is the only piece of the AT that coincides with a Revolutionary War site. If implemented, this may be the first interpretive sign on the AT in Maine. The AES would design and fund the sign, and the most likely placement would be at Arnold Point.

Dave Field placed a motion, seconded by Bob Cummings, to authorize the interpretive sign and send the proposal to NERPC and ATC for approval.

Claire Polfus explained that she communicated with the NPS and the Stewardship Council regarding the proposed sign and has received no response. She isn't sure this can go forward because of Park Service policy regarding signs, and that it is likely that the sign Craig cited as a template is on Forest Service Land and not on Park Service land. She advised that the club be aware that there may be an obstacle as establishing an interpretive sign on Park Service land could be seen as creating a new precedent. Given that information, Dave and Bob amended their motion by adding "contingent on NPS approval."

When questioned by Steve Clark regarding the need for approval for a sign, Craig explained that this is a different type of sign and Dave Field quoted from the LMP

comprehensive plan guidelines that the purpose of signage is to "inform and educate," but agreed that, given the nature of this sign, it should be run through a formal process.

Bruce Grant called for a vote, and offered to take the proposal to NERPC for its approval. The motion carried.

Craig also spoke of constructing raised bog bridging at Arnold Swamp, similar to what the Trail Crew built at Carrying Place Stream. Lester suggested that this proposal should also go to the NERPC for approval; LURC agrees that this type of construction is normal procedure for maintaining a trail, so the project doesn't need their approval.

Dick Fecteau had no news from the Bigelow District.

Tom Gorrill reported on a couple of fall work trips to replace some bog bridging and some work on the Town Corner campsite. The district may have one opening coming up.

CARE Committee Report: Dan Simonds reported for the CARE program, which just wrapped up its season. The CARE Committee was fortunate to have three experienced people at its sites, including Augie Buchheit, who spent several seasons working in the Shenandoah region, and who enthusiastically monitored the Gulf Hagas area. Dan noted some problems with supervision of the Horns Pond site, where he and Dick Fecteau were able to work together to provide support for caretaker Ian Fitzmorris. Steve Massey left his position at Piazza Rock in the last few weeks of the season, when he was able to take a full-time position in Rangeley, and CARE members are questioning whether they need full time coverage at that site.

Dan will report at the January meeting on the project initiated and carried out by Ian Fitzmorris as he removed "trash" left by forest service personnel and hikers. The heaviest pieces were removed by helicopter, for which the Forest Service paid and which required some politics to arrange. The process has received some press coverage, including a segment on a Bill Green's Maine broadcast.

In a comment on the heavy use of certain campsites, such as Piazza Rock and Horns Pond and many of those in the "Hundred Mile Wilderness," Bruce reported that many hikers complain that they have difficulty getting away from crowds; he questioned the coordination of CARE services and oversight at heavy use sites.

Maine Trail Crew Report: Lester reported on the Maine Trail Crew. This year's crews were more productive than in any other year, and will be featured in the next edition of the AT Journey's publication.

The lease for the Garland sheep farm, where the crew has been housed in recent years, ended on the last day of September. The Trail Crew Committee made the decision to return to "the island" in Brann's Mills Pond, in Dover-Foxcroft, a site used for several years in the mid 90's. That site includes two buildings on a 4 acre island connected to the mainland by raft. The property has been improved since last used, the rent is 30% less, and, with sleeping quarters in the main buildings, will require fewer

tent platforms. The Committee opted for a three year lease. Lester reported that moving out was difficult, carried out in a short time span and with few volunteers available to help.

The Trail Crew Committee will meet later in November to review the previous season and make plans for the next.

Lester will meet with District Overseers to review the Trail Crew's five year plan and extend the list of projects for another year.

Relocation and Construction Projects: Lester announced several trail construction projects that need approval. The first is a relocation in Elliottsville, where it will be necessary to build a new .2 mile trail to move the Trail back into the corridor. Dave Field placed a motion, seconded by Bob Cummings, to approve the relocation of the Trail back into the corridor and send the proposal to NERPC for its approval.

The Executive Committee voted its approval of the relocation.

Lester wants to collect information to prepare a proposal for a relocation on Columbus Mountain. At this point, he is just looking for general approval to proceed. No vote was taken.

Lester further proposes construction of a new lean-to at Nahmakanta Stream. There is currently a rudimentary campsite there, and Lester and Laura Flight hope to increase use of the site, to relieve bootleg sites that are closer to water and more popular. An added benefit would be to renew lean-to construction skills among club volunteers. Any new lean-to would be ADA accessible and would meet updated guidelines for structures. The Campsite Committee conducted a capacity study, and determined that the AT in Maine needs more facilities to reduce bootleg sites.

Acting on a recommendation from maintainer Rod Forsman, the Campsite Committee will also discuss putting in a campsite at Black Brook to provide sanitary facilities for hikers and ease overuse of casual camping sites. This one will need approvals because of corridor and altitude issues. The site was selected following guidelines on locating campsites at least three miles away from the nearest road to ensure its use by hikers and not locals.

January Meeting: Lester called for suggestions for the January meeting. The format for that meeting is for discussion topics in the morning and a business meeting in the afternoon. Suggestions included:

- a presentation of Ian Fitzmorris' clean-up project and suggestion for cleaning up other toxic sites
- a presentation by Alicia Nichols, to move the capital campaign forward
- a discussion regarding use of facilities by groups and how to alleviate congestion at campsites
- Ron Dobra's ideas for a variable dues structure
- a discussion of the Little Wilson Falls trail and Lester's concerns for safety and rare plants
- a report from Claire Polfus on her work in Maine while on duty this summer

- a program and format for the Spring Meeting; this would likely be at another meeting for the committee of Craig Dickstein, Lester Kenway and Rob Dobra, and not for January

Newsletter: Bob Cummings noted that, according to the Local Management Plan, there should be one more newsletter for the calendar year. As he doesn't have a lot of news, he suggested delaying that edition until January, which would be a cost benefit for the club. To that end, Craig Dickstein placed a motion, seconded by Mike Ewing, to delay the MAINetainer until early January. The Executive Committee voted to accept the motion.

Bob announced that the deadline for articles for that next issue would be January 1.

With all business completed, Elsa Sanborn placed a motion, seconded by Mike Ewing, to adjourn. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Janice Clain
Recording Secretary.