

Maine Appalachian Trail Club  
October 30, 2015  
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, Dennis Andrews, Tony Barrett, Laura Flight, Dan Simonds, Don Stack; District Overseers, Craig Dickstein, Ron Dobra, Tom Gorrill; Club Coordinator, Holly Sheehan; ATC Regional Director, Claire Polfus; Capital Campaign Director, Alicia Nichols

Absent: Directors, Bob Cummings, Bruce Grant, Sherri Langlais; Overseer of Lands, Dave Field; District Overseers, Dick Fecteau, Rick Ste. Croix

**Call to Order:** President Lester Kenway called the meeting to order at 7:00, noting that it would be the last Executive Committee meeting of the year.

**Recording Secretary's Report:** Janice Clain presented the Secretary's Report for the September 4 meeting. Hearing no calls for corrections, Elsa Sanborn placed a motion, seconded by Ron Dobra, to accept the report as distributed. The Executive Committee voted to approve the motion,

**Treasurer's Report:** Elsa Sanborn presented the Treasurer's Report. She noted negative net income, but reminded that the annual appeal letter would go out soon, bringing in cash. She signaled some reimbursement items included in her report. Claire Polfus added that the ATC contribution might be a little more than indicated in the report. Elsa also reminded that the club has several prepaid expenses for the Trail Center, which will be covered by the capital campaign. The President noted that the Executive Committee accepted the report as distributed.

**Corresponding Secretary's Report:** Doug Dolan, commented that there has not been much correspondence in the last month; only a few people are still hiking the Trail.

**Term Limits Discussion:** On the topic of term limits, Lester Kenway said that the nominating committee is not looking for a vote at this time, but is examining existing policy and background for further action at the January meeting. He referred to a document with recommendations compiled by the Nominating Committee the previous December. That committee proposed a three term limit for any position. The Executive Committee engaged in some discussion at a previous meeting, and noted concern for institutional memory, suggesting that some knowledge-based positions should be exempt from a strict term-limits requirement. There was also discussion of increasing the number of club directors, which would require an amendment to club by-laws. Some at this meeting suggested that the number of directors might depend on the candidate pool available at the time of any given election.

Lester reminded that committee chairs are not required to be members of the Executive Committee, and that a good way to add involved members and potential directors is to engage them to work on and chair committees. He explained that he has made personal contacts to club members to invite them to serve on committees based on information they included on membership renewal forms. He added that maintainers have also been training in club procedures and policy, which serves as a starting point for moving to leadership and participation at the organizational level. Mike Ewing suggested that some maintainers might be interested in being on the board if they were aware of the possibility. He thinks we need to promote participation. Elsa Sanborn suggested that we invite anyone that's interested to attend one of our meetings. Tom Gorrill suggests that committees have a limit on the number of Executive Committee members who can participate, filling out the committee with other volunteers. This format allows for a training process.

Dennis Andrews observed that it's hard to find a qualified treasurer, and that he would hate to see that job have to change to comply with term limits; he believes it is in the best interests of the club to retain a qualified person as long as that person wants to do the job.

Lester referred to a presentation at the January 2008 meeting when Stephanie Cotsirilos explained the benefits of term limits. She explained that one reason for setting term limits is to have "graduates" publicizing the organization after they leave. He does caution replacing everyone, citing the example of the Maine Legislature, which lost all its knowledge base when it enforced term limits. For complete term limits to succeed, we need to be sure that there's a training system.

Laura Flight asked if it the person that's important or the position. She suggests we define the position, not the person; if some have term limits and some don't, it should be because of the position, not the person. Laura has read articles that clarify advantages and disadvantages of term limits. Mike Ewing explained that changing positions helps members to learn all the jobs and enables good leaders develop broader knowledge and skill. Doug Dolan reminded that we don't have to worry about abuse of power, as roles for Executive Committee positions and committees are written regulations in the Local Management Plan.

Craig Dickstein asked the intent of setting term limits, and observed that just switching chairs doesn't really accomplish anything. Tony Barrett clarified that the Nominating Committee was responding to suggestions of some club members. He agreed that we need to understand the goal before we set a policy. He suggested that only directors have term limits. He further suggested moving to a community board, with representatives from some of our partners, developing a professional board; such a change makes sense when moving towards a capital campaign. Tom Gorrill added that the idea behind term limits is to foster turnover, to get "new blood." We need to make sure we have fresh people on committees, to add new people through committees, and to spread the knowledge base.

In general, Lester advises we consider a mechanism to apply for an exception, and Dennis Andrews suggests term limits only for directors.

Claire Polfus explained that ATC has a board of directors, who are fund raisers, and a stewardship council, which advises on conservation work. They've gone to a more professional board. All have term limits. She supported Mike's opinion; the benefit of changing positions is that you share knowledge of the trail and the organization, with each board member learning about other jobs. In response to Tony's recommendation of a broader based Executive Committee, she explained that most boards with a professional aspect are primarily concerned with fund raising.

Both Doug Dolan and Lester spoke on the prospect of expanded numbers. If someone is part of the Executive Committee, they become more involved. If the panel is too large, the group can be less manageable. If the board is bigger, we will need a firmer agenda and tighter time limits; a larger group means those on the board have less time to speak.

Lester asked what is different about the MATC leadership structure. Ron Dobra suggested that most of the board's work is narrowly focused on the Trail; we make important decisions that impact the Trail. Board members therefore need knowledge of and experience with the Trail, to be able to make informed decisions. Lester added that, in most non-profit organizations with paid staff, the board oversees and guides decisions. In Trail clubs, the level of detail involved with overseeing trail districts is valuable and necessary and requires a level of expertise and experience that takes time to develop. Claire recommended looking at other trail clubs to see how they operate. She added that MATC is more involved with the Trail Crew and CARE than other trail maintaining organizations. She can help us examine other groups. Lester agreed, and suggested looking at other trail maintaining organizations, both within the AT community and other long distance trails, such as the PCT.

Lester asked for suggestions for the step. He suggested some research and a draft proposal. Claire will help with information on ATC and on other trail clubs. Claire, Lester and Tony agreed to form a committee to take the next step; to research what other organizations do with regards to term limits, and draft a proposal.

**Little Wilson Falls Relocation:** Ron Dobra spoke on the proposal for a relocation at Little Wilson Falls, which provides a walk around to a steeply pitched and badly eroded section of trail. Executive Committee members had already reviewed the background for the proposal. Ron placed a motion to accept the Little Wilson Falls relocation as stated in the proposal. Craig Dickstein seconded the motion. The Executive Committee accepted the motion by voice vote. Planners will have to close out the trail that's in use now with a barricade and add signage to direct hikers.

**Blue Ridge Connector Trail:** Ron Dobra also spoke on the proposed connector trail, as presented by Rex Turner for the Bureau of Parks and Lands. The proposed trail offers a thirty mile loop trail and includes some back-country campsites on ponds. It will provide an alternative to hiking the entire Hundred Mile Wilderness. The proposed trail ties in from the KI road, and ties into a woods road, that, in turn, ties into the AT. No construction is involved. Ron has heard some negative comments from maintainers, who are worried that motorized vehicles are using the current trail; they suggest

blocking off the ends to any vehicles to prevent motorized vehicles from going onto the AT.

Ron placed a motion to accept the proposal by Rex Turner to establish a loop trail connecting to the AT at Wilbur Brook, as described in BPL communications as the Blue Ridge Connector Trail. Craig Dickstein seconded the motion.

To address the concerns of maintainers, Claire Polfus suggested that if MATC representatives see signs of encroachment, they should report it to her so ATC can do something about it. She added that we need permission for a right of way to block anything.

Ron said MATC still doesn't know who's going to maintain the trail; it's a short section, and will likely be acceptable. Lester worries about MATC's reputation if it's not maintained. Claire thinks it's relatively low risk to the club; she thinks the risk of this trail is more to campsites than to the Trail. Lester asked that we include the club's concern about maintaining, to have it on the record.

Doug Dolan noted that most correspondence he receives has questions about a two night / three day trip, and this trail will meet the needs of hikers, but he'd be reluctant to recommend a blue blaze loop trail that might not be up to standard.

Claire explained that Plum Creek is hoping to make the AT and the community of Greenville more connected; she believes this proposal has broader implications, establishing community connections. She added that our expertise as trail maintainers may help trail maintaining groups in Greenville with work on their own trails. Ron feels AMC will take responsibility for some of the maintaining, as part is on their land.

Claire recognized that Rex wants an idea of the location of everything by May, in order to secure the proper easement. Lester is ready to add wording approved by this group to express MATC's approval with provisos regarding maintenance. Craig expressed his concerns that we'd be put into the position of being an enforcement agency, which we have no authority to do. Claire explained that, as this is on a state easement, if no one maintains the trail, the state will be responsible.

Craig called for a vote to move the question. He asked for an amendment to add wording that we're concerned that there's no maintenance provision.

With discussions concluded, the Executive Committee voted to approve the BPL connector between the Blue Ridge Trail and the AT with the stipulation that plans include a statement establishing responsibility for maintaining that trail.

**ATC Report:** Claire Polfus commented on her ATC update. She said relocations are key to improving the Trail in Maine. She urged that, if someone is on the trail and sees a problem, report it; we can get the backlog of deficiencies taken care of using that strategy. Lester added that well planned relocations actually save time and expense. Ron suggested that a workshop, perhaps at the annual maintainer gathering, would be helpful to prepare trail workers to be able to identify deficiencies and possible relocations. The maintainer in the field should contact the overseer who will then seek input from Claire or Lester.

The New England Regional Planning Committee would meet on November 21. Claire asked that anyone who planned to attend that session contact Hawk Metheny or

herself. Don Stack added that the RPC meeting would be held at Plymouth State University, in New Hampshire.

**Biennial Committee Update:** Tony Barrett reported on behalf of the Biennial Committee. The Biennial Steering Committee, along with representatives from ATC, had a meeting at Colby, including dinner. An MOU is being readied and will be available at the January meeting. The committee is putting together work plans. They are soliciting ideas for excursions and hikes. To a question regarding the difference between a hike and an excursion, Tony explained that an excursion is more sedate, more about experience than action.

**Wind Power Committee:** Tony also spoke on behalf of the Wind Power Committee. He sent his written report, with detailed information on several issues, the previous day. The wind committee recommended submitting a visual impact bill in the legislature's short session, but will not be able to do so. The new bill proposal will be ready for 2017 session.

Tony spoke briefly on the Misery Ridge, which is twelve miles from Pleasant Pond Mountain and on Plum Creek lands.

**CARE Committee:** Holly Sheehan spoke to the CARE Committee written report. Claire Polfus, referring to concerns expressed at previous meetings and with the Friends of Baxter-led task force, commented that Trail entities need to concentrate on visitor management. She recommends we consider expansion of the CARE program, including, perhaps, a visitor center in Monson, and more presence in the Hundred Mile Wilderness. She suggested that ATC may be willing to contribute funding.

Holly spoke of the work by Glen Mittelhauser, who compiled a field guide of alpine plants on Saddleback and did field training with the caretakers on Bigelow.

Holly also showed LNT tags that caretakers distributed, one version for adults and one for children. Ron Dobra commented that he saw the cleanest shelters in several seasons this year. As a result of discussions at the last Executive Committee meeting and as a reaction to the concerns expressed by Baxter State Park officials, Mike Ewing asked how we should interact with hikers to educate them on LNT, group size and hiker ethics. Dan Simonds suggested anyone who would like pointers on how to approach hikers join the CARE training session in the spring. Holly recommends we develop a consistent approach and use the authority of the resource. Claire suggested we include the topic at the maintainer gathering.

**Capital Campaign Committee:** Alicia Nichols presented an update on the capital campaign. The capital campaign committee has added members, and includes Elsa Sanborn, Lester Kenway, Mike Ewing, Sherri Langlais, Laura Flight and Tim Fortune, with Dave Field as honorary chair. Mike Ewing reported that the committee has had three meetings. They have examined the architect's renderings and have reviewed donor lists. They have designated a theme: Trail Champions. They plan five more

meetings before January to finalize materials, and are working to revise the original business plan. Alicia will conduct solicitation training in January.

Vreeland Marketing has developed a short campaign video.

The Capital Campaign Committee has planned a presentation to MATLT on November 3.

Alicia explained that this move, to establish a Trail Center, will help Holly to get less restricted grants, grants for general operating expenses and will open opportunities for revenue generating.

**Club Coordinator Update:** Holly Sheehan added to her Club Coordinator Report. She has secured \$20,000 in grant money from the Heritage Fund for tenth year in a row. That money is designated for White Cap for the Trail Crew.

Holly has had an e-mail from the Natural Resources Council of Maine and the Quimby Family Foundation. MATC has received an invitation to a reception to honor Roxanne Quimby on behalf of the conservation community. The club is invited to fund a table at the event, held at the Jewish Charity Building, and to contribute to an ad in the program to acknowledge Roxanne for her conservation work. Cost for the ad is \$250.

Dickstein placed the motion to support the event with club money and to buy a seat at the table and an ad in the program. Mike Ewing seconded the motion. After considerable discussion of the event and who would contribute monies, the Executive Committee voted ten in favor and one opposed to designate the suggested monies for the table and program.

**Grafton Loop Trail agreement with Mahoosuc Land Trust:** Tom Gorrill reported that he met on the previous day with stakeholders in the Grafton Loop Trail. All positions on the GLT are filled. Tom conducted a trail assessment this summer, with Claire and Mahoosuc Pathways. Based on this assessment, Lester estimated that it would take a quarter million dollars to bring that trail up to standards. MATC has been reluctant to sign an agreement with Mahoosuc Land Trust, given their stipulations. Some other groups such as Outward Bound and Mahoosuc Pathways have offered to help with trail construction in the worst areas. There has been discussion of land ownership, and changes in ownership and currently there are no long term access agreements. Tom feels they are headed in the right direction, but doesn't recommend signing the agreement with the Mahoosuc Land Trust yet.

**Baxter Task Force:** Claire Polfus reported on the Baxter Task Force. As the season came to a close, there were no major incidents. Baxter State Park kept lower level campsites opened and they didn't stop hikers, even when there was snow. There were some reports of partying in Baxter Park, but no verification. Moxie, ridge runner at Gulf Hags, reported that she heard that hikers partied at Crawford Pond, but she found the site cleaned up when she went there. Lester observed that it's the delivering of supplies by shuttle services in the Hundred Mile Wilderness that's encouraging the partying; as hikers aren't not carrying their own materials, they are more likely to "party."

Claire reiterated that we need to do more; we need to communicate more with warden services and we need to improve about visitor management.

**Pierce Pond Stream crossing:** Craig Dickstein reported on the Pierce Pond Stream crossing. The Trail currently crosses Pierce Pond Dam. We don't have a liability release from the dam owner, Cobb's Camps. Tim, the owner of the footbridge across the stream, would be willing to hand back the bridge to MATC, and we can rebuild it. Tim's bridge is inside the corridor. Craig recommended that we do a field check. He noted that there is some controversy about permissions and ownerships. He said the dam isn't well maintained, so is another good reason to get the Trail off it. If we build a new bridge, it would have to be ADA compliant. Tom Gorrill is concerned about the precedent of putting in a bridge and asks if there are criteria to justify it. Craig noted that the discussion gives feedback for Dave Field. He agreed that we need field research and verification of corridor boundaries.

Craig also reported for Dave that corridor monitors found evidence of a bear baiting station in the corridor in Blanchard. The Warden Service was contacted and the owners closed it down the next day.

**Baldpate District:** Ton Gorrill reported on the Baldpate District. All positions are full. Most effort has been expended on the GLT.

**Kennebec District:** Craig Dickstein reported on the Kennebec District. Sarah Carpenter, who oversees the ferry service, is resigning, but still offers to produce fliers for the service. Jeanne Ference pays for fliers, in memory of her mother, Alice. Doug Dolan offered to keep the flier as a pdf, which simply requires a change of the date each year. Craig suggested we thank Sarah for her service and not replace her. Sarah still volunteers to make the signs.

**White Cap District:** Ron Dobra reported on the White Cap District. Volunteers worked on a reroute on a 500 foot section on Columbus Mountain on Columbus Day. They are not ready to open it yet. Claire asked for the official completion date for her documents.

Ron and his maintainers will be involved in the Little Wilson relocation.

Ron has had four maintainer applicants for maintaining sections as a result of the Bangor Daily News article.

**Campsite Committee:** Laura Flight reported for the Campsite Committee. Several LL Bean volunteers helped with the Potaywadjo lean-to project.

The campsite committee received a grant for tools for privy construction.

Laura reported that volunteers replaced the roof on the Baldpate privy.

The campsite committee has submitted an application to move the Pleasant Pond privy 175 feet down a blue blaze trail. Laura placed a motion, seconded by Craig Dickstein, to move the proposal review forward to move the Pleasant Pond privy. They

recognize that the proposal still needs an archeological review; a botanical review has already had been conducted. The Executive Committee approved the motion.

**Maine Trail Crew:** Lester sent a report of the Trail Crew Committee. He expects the Trail Crew will be in same place, and will need the same level of staffing for the next season.

**MAINEtainer:** Doug Dolan introduced the new MAINEtainer editor, Jason Phelps, who was not able to be present at the meeting. The fall edition has gone out to the printer. The communications committee will need to work out some protocols to determine acknowledgements for content sent. They are working to make it a mobile app readable on a phone. Doug asks that members send any comments or critiques to him.

**Development Committee:** Holly Sheehan reported that the annual appeal was at the printer. There was a mailing list glitch, which was now resolved. The Development Committee expected the appeal would go out in November.

**January Meetings Planning:** Lester called for input for the format of the January meeting. It will be held in Augusta, which is central, on January 9. Lester expected to continue with the format of recent years. He called for suggestions for presentations, and received the following suggestions: return of the Maine wardens' service with, perhaps, a panel discussion; a discussion with Jenson Bissell and Jean Hoekwater to further define positions of MATC and Baxter State Park.

**Annual Meeting Planning:** Attendees at this meeting favored a spring meeting at Bates. The date is set for April 9. Craig Dickstein and Tom Gorrill agreed to consult, via phone, with Lester on the format. The date for the Annual Meeting was listed incorrectly on this meeting agenda.

With all business concluded, Craig Dickstein, seconded by Mike Ewing, placed a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Janice Clain  
Recording Secretary