

St. Lawrence County Recreational Trails Advisory Board Meeting
St. Lawrence County Soil & Water Conservation District Office

DRAFT Minutes for January 18, 2011

Present: Dawn Howard, David Irish, Art Wilson, Danny Collins, Roger Bennett, Wm Swafford, Tom Ortmeyer, Walt Paul, Kermit Blanchard, Warren Irwin, Stan Hewlett, Aaron Earl, Erik Backlund, Bill Lutz, Deb Christy, Alex MacKinnon, Scott Sutherland, and Tony Arquiatt.

Guests: Ed Francis, Pat Whalen, Charles Schloer, Schyler Shea, Christopher Collins, Mary Long, and Ed Long.

Excused: Dave Butler, Bill Dashnaw, and RB Lawrence.

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Roger Bennett.
2. Quorum present.
3. Motion to approve the Minutes was made by Walt Paul and seconded by Warren Irwin. All were in favor.
4. Elections - The meeting was turned over to Art Wilson representing the Nominating Committee. A slate of Officers for 2011 was presented as follows: Roger Bennett for Chair, Alex MacKinnon for Vice Chair, and Dawn Howard for Secretary. There were no further nominations from the floor. Warren Irwin made a motion seconded by Dave Irish that the Secretary cast one ballot in favor of the slate of officers as presented. All were in favor.
5. Roger Bennett reported that our guest speaker, Pat McKeown the Exec Director of the SLC Chamber of Commerce, was unable to attend tonight. We will try to reschedule her sometime before April. Jim McCulley has been invited to speak next month on railroads. Danny Collins reported that there will be a seminar on 1/25 at 7:00 pm at the Wild Center in Tupper Lake re a study on railroads.
6. Reports of Committees:
 - a. Executive – Roger Bennett.
 - John Manson is not now with the SLC Economic Development/IDA and will no longer be attending our meetings. The group consensus was to talk to the IDA to get a new representative to our Board. Dawn Howard will contact Ray Fountain.
 - Bill Dashnaw has been reappointed to our Board. The rest of the reappointments and the one new appointment are still in the queue. Three Board of Legislator reps have been appointed. These include a reappointment for Alex MacKinnon and new appointments of Scott Sutherland and Tony Arquiatt. Introductions were made.
 - We have been trying to update the Bylaws for the last year. The version posted on the website is not even the most recent. This needs to get done!
 - b. Board of Legislators – Alex MacKinnon, Scott Sutherland, and Tony Arquiatt.
 - Alex MacKinnon welcomed Scott Sutherland and Tony Arquiatt. He feels this is the year the BOL needs to act on a Trail Coordinator position. There was \$100,000 put into the County budget last year for this that had to be pulled because of the financial situation. We need to move forward this spring. The \$500,000 grant needs to be

completed. Once the SEQR is done, things need to move into high gear. Alex MacKinnon also talked about Rails to Trails.

- Tony Arquiett reported that he came to listen. He pledged his support for the Trail Coordinator position. He is tasked with consolidation of jobs and services, but sees a need to create new jobs. He feels this is a key position.
- Scott Sutherland reported that he is here to help move our Board forward. He concurs with going ahead on the position and projects, but would like more information on Rails to Trails.
- Walt Paul asked where a Trail Coordinator position would go – County, IDA, Chamber, etc. A contract would be needed. He also questioned who would fill the position and what would be expected. Alex MacKinnon said it would need to be a dedicated, full time position.

c. Oversight – Tom Ortmeyer and Kermit Blanchard.

- Tom Ortmeyer reported that the Oversight Committee met last week. At that time, Bill Dashnaw brought the group up to date with changes to the route and sticky points. They are waiting on the State. There will be a plan in place, but the trail probably won't be opened all in one piece. The committee is looking at opening portions in the spring after a public hearing. Trails in the east will probably open first and those in the southwest part of the County last. They are also looking at staging areas on eight County forest properties. These properties are plentiful in the east, but get sparse as you go west. The east section of the trail is fairly well defined.
- Kermit Blanchard reported that Bill Dashnaw has contracts for private landowners. These have been reviewed with the County Attorney. Three are ready to get signed. These are agreements, not payments. Bill Dashnaw will get a copy to Roger Bennett.
- Tom Ortmeyer said the Committee will put together a wish list of equipment. They are holding another meeting next month.
- It was suggested that if the railroad becomes available, that the Board should be ready to move on it. Alex MacKinnon thought that the IDA will probably hold onto it. Walt Paul said railroad steel may be pulled for its value.
- Dave Irish asked if they could start to open the roads out of Parishville. Tom Ortmeyer recommended waiting for the SEQR process. Kermit Blanchard asked about segmenting. Tom Ortmeyer doesn't want to confuse the issues.
- Scott Sutherland attended a meeting in Parishville last year. He would like a map of the tentative route. Tony Arquiett would also. Dave Irish asked if more SEQRs would need to be completed for new sub trails. Alex MacKinnon said yes, but that we could do these ourselves. Roger Bennett asked that the map not be brought out till after the meeting.
- Art Wilson and Danny Collins reported that Hank Ford has a meeting with the new Governor next week on motorized vehicles. The group's consensus was to get a letter to Mr. Ford. Alex MacKinnon will do this.
- Danny Collins again mentioned the meeting next Tuesday, January 25 at 7:00 pm at the Wild Center in Tupper Lake. The railroad presentation is by the Town of Alba. There is information on Facebook (Adirondack Railroad). Art Wilson reminded the group that Jim McCulley said we have 21 miles of railroad in SLC. The County sent a resolution supporting this. Danny Collins said there would be money from tourism.

d. Finance and Insurance – Dawn Howard. No report.

e. Grant Search – Judy Wendt. No report.

- f. Enforcement, Safety, and Education – Judy Wendt. No report. Danny Collins asked if the group would meet with all the officers. Roger Bennett said one officer from each group had attended a meeting two years ago. He assumed this would be done again in the same way.
- g. SEQR – Alex MacKinnon and Erik Backlund. Alex MacKinnon reported that the SEQR is progressing.

7. Unfinished Business.

- a. Roger Bennett stated that the revised By-laws posted on the web site are not the most up to date. The changes to the Chair (Revised 1/09) are not included. He will wait until next month and if he doesn't hear of any changes, the By-laws will go on the web as they currently are.
- b. There was no report from the new subcommittee re trail use by off road motorcycles. This will be taken off the agenda. Consensus is that our posted speed prohibits this use.
- c. Art Wilson asked Judy Wendt to send a copy of a corrected map to Bill Dashnaw. Art Wilson did give the Town of Parishville 30 copies of the old version of the map. Bill Dashnaw will talk to the NYS DOT re the Parishville bridge/village route before the map is reprinted. Judy Wendt was also drafting a letter re the ATV Association's position on dirt bikes on the trails.
- d. Walt Paul talked to Judy Wendt about developing a handbook/manual for the Towns to utilize in regards to the trail. Also, there is another bill in the NYS Assembly to allow more home rule re what roads can be opened to ATV traffic. This addresses State land also. There was also a bill in the Senate last year sponsored by Griffo. Pattie Ritchie is on board. Not sure what Addie Russell's position is. Tony Arquiett volunteered to contact all four NYS reps for us. Walt Paul will e-mail info on the bill to the Board.
- e. Walt Paul noted that regarding the dates to use the trail (opening and closing), there will be exceptions based on easements. I.e. the Gold Mine Rd. This may be open when other sections of the trail are closed. Pat Whalen said this complicates his job also.

8. New Business. None.

9. Announcements. None.

10. Next Meeting is 2/15/11 at 7:00 PM at the SWCD office.

11. Hearings and Comments. Alex MacKinnon asked about the Postwood Park piece of County property that is currently being logged. Dawn Howard and Aaron Earl gave an update.

12. Deb Christy made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Bill Lutz. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Minutes by Dawn Howard