

St. Lawrence County Recreational Trails Advisory Board Meeting  
St. Lawrence County Soil & Water Conservation District Office  
7:00 PM

DRAFT Minutes for July 20, 2010

Present: Dawn Howard, Walt Paul, Warren Irwin, Stan Hewlett, David Irish, Thomas Grow, Art Wilson, Danny Collins, Aaron Earl, Alex MacKinnon, Spencer Thew, Bill Dashnaw, Erik Backlund, David Butler, Deb Christy, and Judy Wendt.

Guests: Amy Feistel & daughter, Bob Irish, and Ed Francis.

Excused: Russell Lawrence, Kermit Blanchard, Roger Bennett, Thomas Ortmeyer, Wm. Swafford, and Wm Lutz.

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Vice Chairman Alex MacKinnon at the SWCD office.
2. Quorum present.
3. Motion to approve the Minutes was made by Warren Irwin and seconded by Walt Paul. All were in favor.
4. Amy Feistel from NC was the guest speaker. She is the Director of Operations and does licensing for the National Auto Sport Assoc (NASA) Rally Sport East. Rally Sport is closed course, off road racing (usually a dirt road). This sport is fairly new to the US. It is similar to Baha racing and tests skill, endurance, and accuracy. Racers are set off in 1 minute intervals and are timed. A wide variety of street legal vehicles are used including motorcycles and small trucks. Safety requirements are met and safety cars are run also. Amy does 3 events. One is in Harrisville. This event is actually several smaller events with 2 full days of racing. The next event is this Sept 18 & 19<sup>th</sup> with the start in Croghan. A driver and co-driver (navigator) are allowed. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> year here in the North Country. There are places for spectators. They have had problems in the past policing ATVs. The economic impact from an event such as this is very large.

Amy would like to cooperate with us on this event. She sees a need for someone to ID ATV trails and to police during the race. More volunteers for safety are always needed. She would also like someone to look at the roads and make trails to different viewing points along the race course for observation. This could be made into a two day ATV event at the same time. They have event insurance. The Town is additionally insured. She works with the Town highway departments on grading. She can provide us with spectator guides if we contact her.

Alex MacKinnon suggested we get the press involved and publicize the event. Amy can put us in touch with participants and photos of the event. Judy Wendt will communicate with Amy and also publicize the event in the ATV Assoc. newsletter. The event is looking for challenging roads.

The Secretary was asked to send out contact info for Amy Feistel to all members.

[amy@nasarallysport.com](mailto:amy@nasarallysport.com) 919-434-3267 The web site for the event is: [blackriverstages.com](http://blackriverstages.com)

5. Reports of Committees:

- a. Executive – Roger Bennett. Alex MacKinnon said there was no report.

- b. Board of Legislators – Tom Grow and Alex MacKinnon.
  - 1. Alex MacKinnon reported that the SEQR process will be started with the County as the lead agency. Judy Wendt asked where we are with the new parcels. She would also like to add parcel #2. Alex reported that per the County Attorney, this may be considered segmenting. A lot was learned at the benefit ride held one week ago. The Cedar Lodge, Timber Tavern, Kunoco, Silver Café, etc. are business supporters. The Town supports also. The ATVers would like to add Cappel Rd to proposal also. Alex will add to the BOL Finance Committee Agenda. A discussion with comments from Judy Wendt, Bill Dashnaw and Walt Paul ensued regarding our progress.
  - 2. Alex MacKinnon reported that the county is starting the process with IDA to take over Economic Development. May be able to fund the trail coordinator thru IDA, but it is up to them. Could contract with another agency, but it would probably be best with IDA.
  
- c. Oversight – Tom Ortmeyer and Kermit Blanchard. No report.
  - 1. It was reported that Kermit Blanchard is doing fine after his recent medical problem.
  - 2. Walt Paul discussed what he worked on with Pat Whalen of the DEC. He also worked with Bill Dashnaw on a draft of a letter to the DEC to discuss issues. Wondered who the Board thought the letter should go to – Watertown or Albany and who it should come from. It was suggested it go to the local DEC and to let the BOL decide. Three phases were listed in the letter, but there may be more to follow. Areas needing work were listed. Alex will schedule time Aug 9 at the BOL committee meeting at 5:00 pm.
  
- d. Finance and Insurance – Dawn Howard. No report.
  
- e. Grant Search – Judy Wendt. No report.
  
- f. Enforcement, Safety, and Education – Judy Wendt. The County ATV Association is talking about a County wide Safety Day.
  
- g. SEQR – Alex MacKinnon and Erik Backlund. No report.
  - 1. Bill Dashnaw talked about the Declaration of Intent to establish a lead agency. St. Lawrence Co. should be the lead. We can add involved or interested agencies. Get back to him ASAP with any additions as this may be introduced at the next BOL meeting. Review process as written. Deb Christy made a motion and Judy Wendt seconded to accept SLC as the lead agency. All were in favor.
  - 2. Bill Dashnaw reported that the GEIS is moving well with only a couple of issues. Drivable portions are surveyed and plotted. A number of segments we need gate keys for. He is working with the DEC to access. Other segments need an ATV or to be walked. We are a long way from being done, but we are well on the way, over 40%. Maintenance and liability are the two biggest private landowner issues.
  - 3. Alex MacKinnon asked about the grant. Bill Dashnaw said we have to go to NYC to discuss when making the draw. Bill Dashnaw is pushing the consultant so we can do this. He would like to meet with the Finance Committee before the next meeting to do a plan for spending the money.
  - 4. Dave Irish reported that the Raynor piece contact has changed.

## 6. Unfinished Business.

- a. We will wait for the next meeting to discuss the Committee descriptions for the By-laws with Roger Bennett.
- b. Deb Christy inquired about the letter that had been sent to Brookfield and also the bridge that had prevailed. No word yet on our letter. Walt Paul reported on a FERC ruling that because of safety, access was originally denied. The kayakers appealed and FERC said the company had to do safety and open to kayakers. There is a \$15,000 fund (\$5,000/yr) for access through the relicensing agreement. We could put in for the Morgan Rd bridge repair. It is 22' x 17'. It was damaged when the company used for access to do repairs with heavy equipment. Many folks need access. We need to meet with the Town of Colton and Brookfield. We still need a Raquette River bridge too. There is a meeting on Thursday night that Deb Christy and Walt Paul are going to. Deb Christy will do a proposal.
- c. Walt Paul reported that the APA is taking comments on their understanding w/DEC on easement lands. His opinion is that this will tie up projects even more and tighten the noose. Bill Dashnaw made a motion and Deb Christy seconded that Walt Paul put together comments from this group and all were in favor. The group consensus was to have Roger Bennett sign the letter. The Secretary will let him know.
- d. Deb Christy reported on the repairs to the railroad bed in the Southern portion of the County. Deb Christy made a motion which was seconded by Judy Wendt to do a proposal to use this area for snowmobiling. All were in favor. This letter should also be signed by Roger Bennett.

#### 7. New Business.

- a. Dave Butler was concerned about the loss of the mtn. bike trails on the county owned Lenny Rd. piece that had just been logged. The Postwood Park piece is being logged next and he would like to avoid the same problem. Bill Dashnaw asked for mtn. bike trail specs. Aaron Earl reported that the primary purpose in managing County land is forestry, but he tries to accommodate recreation. These trails are not mapped at this point.
- b. Bill Dashnaw asked about the qualified abandoned road article. Walt Paul will send it to him.

8. Announcements. None.

9. Next Meeting is 8/17/10 at 7:00 PM at the SWCD office.

10. Hearings and Comments. None.

11. Meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM.

Minutes by Dawn Howard