

St. Lawrence County Recreational Trails Advisory Board Meeting
St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators Chambers

DRAFT Minutes for August 16, 2011

Present: Dawn Howard, Roger Bennett, Wm Swafford, Walt Paul, Warren Irwin, Deb Christy, Tom Ortmeyer, Stanley Hewlett, Bill Dashnaw, Art Wilson, Schyler Shea, Alex MacKinnon, Kermit Blanchard, Scott Sutherland, Dave Irish, Tony Arquiett, Judy Wendt, Spencer Thew, and Erik Backlund.

Guests: Ed Francis, Pat Whalen, Russell Martin, Charles Schloer, and John Manson.

Excused: Danny Collins, Henry Ford, Bill Lutz, and Mark Martin.

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Roger Bennett.
2. Quorum present.
3. Art Wilson moved and Wm. Swafford seconded to approve the Minutes. All were in favor.
4. There was no guest speaker.
5. Reports of Committees:
 - a. Executive – Roger Bennett. Roger Bennett reviewed the meeting attendance policy. Group consensus was for a letter to be sent by the Chairman to anyone with three consecutive unexcused absences.
 - b. Board of Legislators – Alex MacKinnon, Scott Sutherland, and Tony Arquiett.
 - Alex MacKinnon reported that they were in the process of drafting a local law for additional trails in the Parishville Hopkinton area. There had been a question on the definition of a trail vs. an area. A trail is linear points and an area is a place to congregate and mingle such as a parking lot or rodeo “area”.
 - Tony Arquiett said he recently had lunch with Senator Griffo when the Governor was in SLC. They talked about opening trails for ATV use in the North Country. They touched on the economic value and reasons to do this. Tony Arquiett also reported on a meeting in the Brasher area for education.
 - Scott Sutherland met with Judy Drabicki of the NYS DEC Region 6 office re law enforcement and public relations. She will speak with the Forest Ranger Lieutenant. Scott Sutherland was in the Star Lake area recently and spoke to a group about law enforcement. Most folk thought enforcement was fair in that area. Tony Arquiett said he was anxious to see results from the May meeting. He is hearing more positive feedback from folks in the field. He expressed his gratitude to the legislators who helped.
 - Tom Ortmeyer stated that if more county parcels are opened, that there is a need for picnic tables and outhouses. Discussion followed.
 - Scott Sutherland met with the Town of Colton re roads. Bill Dashnaw also met with Town officials and ironed out some things in a 2-3 hour session.
 - c. Oversight – Tom Ortmeyer and Kermit Blanchard. No report.

- d. Finance and Insurance – Dawn Howard. No report.
- e. Grant Search – Judy Wendt. No report.
- f. Enforcement, Safety, and Education – Judy Wendt. No report. Judy Wendt is trying to put together a meeting in Brasher.
- g. SEQR – Alex MacKinnon and Erik Backlund.
 - Erik Backlund reported that we need to schedule a meeting to review the public comments received. Bill Dashnaw will get the comments to the web site. Bill Dashnaw stated that our groups need to get to work. Half of the info requested is easy to get. Some he didn't think needed to be included. We can maybe get this done in two to three weeks. Need to decide how to address unauthorized use, etc. Committee member please e-mail any thoughts to him ASAP. Need to address off trail use, diverse use (areas of particular interest for other trail users), and the relationship between the County and Towns. Bill Dashnaw is working on a shared service agreement. Half of the items will take longer to put together. We can work on the easier things and delegate the more difficult items to the consultant. The sub committees need to get to work. Easy items may include speed limits, enforcement, and adding maps. Bill Dashnaw is doing soil erosion. Avoid sensitive areas i.e. noise and identify segments that can be opened quickly and easily and do others later. There will be no trails opened this year.
 - We may need UMP amendments. Pat Whalen said White Hill may be easy to write, but that it will need approval. Easement areas just need the landowners to sign off. The Grass River UMP is more complicated. It may be done next spring. The Brasher Forest UMP is being redone. It was never approved. It is no longer a stand alone, but is combined with seven others to form the "St. Lawrence Lowlands."
 - Tom Ortmeyer suggested that Section 4.2 b needs more work. Bill said we need more clarification on the focus. Discussion followed. The purpose is multi use, but ATV's are the "least common denominator". We need to keep the grant money requirements in mind. A comment was made that the consultant should have been more aware of some of these. Bill Dashnaw was thankful to the DEC for their insightful comments. This may still be challenged in court. Pat Whalen talked about multi-use. Bill Dashnaw said we need more specific info about what we're looking for.
 - Warren Irwin asked about users and seasons. May be hard to keep track of.
 - Bill Dashnaw said we have many resources available to us. Erik Backlund suggested we be more precise on the language. Bill Dashnaw also suggested we look at other areas that are possibilities.

6. Unfinished Business.

- a. Dawn Howard submitted info to the County BOL office re County Forest parcels in the Parishville –Hopkinton area. Alex MacKinnon is putting this info into the local law. Our Board will review the draft before submission to the BOL for approval. Dawn Howard was asked about an ATV area. Art Wilson requested Roger Bennett to send out any info before the meeting for review.

7. New Business.

- a. Deb Christy asked about the Traffic Safety Board in SLC. Franklin Co. has one and she reported on the education that they do. Bill Dashnaw is on that Board here in this County. Deb Christy would like to attend their next meeting.
- b. Dawn Howard asked if anyone was interested in being our rep to the Franklin Co. trails group. Bill Dashnaw replied that he would like to do this after January 1. Dawn Howard will get on their e-mail list and forward info to Roger Bennett for distribution. Tony Arquiatt asked that meeting notices go out ahead if time.
- c. Bill Dashnaw said we need to identify an area for a mud bog to keep these users off the trail system. Develop an area at the same time as the trail. Judy Wendt said play areas do need to be addressed. Other areas do this commercially. There is one at the club in Harrisville. Kermit Blanchard suggested someone needs to own the land to hold events and raise money. It was suggested this be in a centrally located hub and also that it be private or club owned and not public land. You can't sign away liability. Look for gravel pits or fallow meadows.
- d. Walt Paul put on his hunting/fishing/trapping hat and asked about some easements that allow off trail use, different hours of use and firearms. We need to leave flexibility and address these issues with our language. Pat Whalen offered that all 13 easements in SLC have different regulations. This creates a nightmare for law enforcement.
- e. Walt Paul through his seat on the NYS Conservation Council, now has a seat on the Forest Preserve Advisory Comm.

8. Announcements. Roger Bennett reiterated the attendance policy.

9. Next Meeting is 9/20/11 at 7:00 PM in the Board of Legislators chambers.

10. Hearings and Comments. None.

11. Bill Swafford made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Warren Irwin. All were in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Note: Oversight Committee meeting was set for 8/23/11 at 3:30 pm in the SWCD conference room.

Minutes by Dawn Howard