

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

DRAFT Minutes for July 19, 2011

Present: Dawn Howard, Danny Collins, Roger Bennett, Wm Swafford, Walt Paul, Warren Irwin, Deb Christy, Tom Ortmeier, Stanley Hewlett, Bill Dashnaw, Art Wilson, Schyler Shea, Hank Ford, Alex MacKinnon, Mark Martin, Kermit Blanchard, Scott Sutherland, Dave Irish, and Erik Backlund.

Guests: Ed Francis, Pat Whalen, Russell Martin, Charles Schloer, Ken Kogut, Ed Long, and Mary Long.

Excused: None

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Roger Bennett.
2. Quorum present.
3. Deb Christy moved and Stan Hewlett seconded to approve the Minutes. All were in favor.
4. There was no guest speaker.
5. Reports of Committees:
 - a. Executive – Roger Bennett. Dave Butler has submitted his resignation. Roger Bennett asked if the group wanted to change the meeting location because it is difficult to hear. The group could go across the street to the Emergency Services building, change the night and go to the Human Services Building, or go back to the Soil and Water conference room. A motion was made and seconded to leave it at the BOL chamber and all were in favor.
 - b. Board of Legislators – Alex MacKinnon, Scott Sutherland, and Tony Arquiett.
 - Alex MacKinnon reported that a draft contract between SLC and the “agency” has been developed. It is a discussion paper to put out when deciding who will provide the service. We need more emphasis on future day to day operation done by self funding.
 - Alex MacKinnon said the Trail Coordinator position is still a go even though we have hard economic times. Casino funding is to be used for economic development. The money is in an escrow account now because the Native Americans and NYS have a disagreement re slot machines and sales tax.
 - Scott Sutherland continues to support the position.
 - c. Oversight – Tom Ortmeier and Kermit Blanchard. Kermit Blanchard reported that two meetings were held last month. The group met and reviewed the County parcels in Parishville and Hopkinton and then drove and mapped the roads in the parcels. Parcels include 7,17,36,8,20,34 (parking), and 23 (in and out). A couple of parcels had possible parking areas. The roads were good, but some ditching and a little gravel may be needed. Kermit Blanchard would like to get the County to open these parcels. Tom Ortmeier reported that parcel 20 is sand and wet and needs some work. Alex MacKinnon said the procedure would be to recommend to the Trails Board to open, have the SWCD staff pick the trail, and do a SEQR. Then the BOL can open by amending the local law to add. This

is the easiest method. Kermit Blanchard added that the road out of Parishville would also need to be opened to make the connection between the pilot trail and the new pieces. Bill Dashnaw reminded the group that August is the SEQR deadline. This can be started now, but will take awhile and should be done after the SEQR. Alex MacKinnon will notify the BOL with our recommendation and then we can work on the local law and SEQR.

- d. Finance and Insurance – Dawn Howard. Dawn Howard asked everyone to continue to remember to do time sheets. Deb Christy reported on insurance. NYSSA (Snowmobiles) and NYSORBA (ATVs) use the same insurance company. \$5 per member. The club has to agree all members will pay. No money for landowner permission is allowed. \$3000 min policy, but go thru NYSORBA for \$2 million coverage. Policy covers negligence on the trail (liability). It covers actions, not the trail or health. Members only, but others are covered due to our negligence. Covers private and NYS land. Each gets a certificate of insurance. Trail Pass is now out of business since about a week and a half ago. Walt Paul suggested we get a speaker with more details. Stan Hewlett is involved with this. Deb Butch from NJ or Joe from NYSORBA (Carthage area) were suggested as speakers. Pat Whalen asked where the incentive was to join if all were covered. NYSSA does through registrations, but NYSORBA is not as well funded. Walt Paul suggested we get our questions together for a speaker.
- e. Grant Search – Judy Wendt. Alex MacKinnon would like to convene the Finance Committee to try and get the \$500,000 grant monies obligated. Bill Dashnaw has a list of items needed. Walt Paul suggested the Oversight Committee be involved as Tom Ortmeyer has a list also. The two committees will set a joint meeting date at the end of this meeting.
- f. Enforcement, Safety, and Education – Judy Wendt. Scott Sutherland received information from Danny Collins and Schyler Shea re an incident involving a side by side in Colton. An individual was stopped by a Forest Ranger and given a ticket for an unregistered ATV. These units can't be registered. The individual was given a new ticket for an unregistered MV. This is headed to Colton court. Scott will discuss with the rest of the committee what action should take place on our part. There is legislation to resolve this in NYS committee right now. Hank Ford said Tony Arquiett has gotten a hold of Judy Drabicki re this and also a follow-up on the enforcement meeting held. Addie Russell was also contacted about the May meeting. Schyler Shea had a question on the letter Tony Arquiett is sending out. Pat Whalen said concerning the discretion of officers for enforcement that it was better to get the law changed.
- g. SEQR – Alex MacKinnon and Erik Backlund. Previously covered.

6. Unfinished Business.

- a. Roger Bennett asked about the power line easements. Bill Dashnaw pulled the power company agreements and there is no authority to grant recreational rights. We would have to deal with each individual landowner. Deb Christy also researched (SLC Gas, etc) and reported that there is not much opportunity. Roger Bennett also mentioned these easements cross ag land with fences and suggested we not pursue this at this time.
- b. Deb Christy reported on the railroad bed. IDA gave temp permission from Newton Falls to Harrisville for snowmobiling, but there is a major culvert wash out. An engineer is looking at it. Adirondack Compliance is being paid for inspecting bridges and culverts.

Tom Ortmeyer asked if the IDA is aware that the Trails Board wants to use it. Deb Christy said it was discussed before. Bill Dashnaw explained that the original washout fix was designed for a 500 year storm and that the beaver dam that took it out was 8-10 feet high.

- c. Dawn Howard gave an update on the efforts being made in Franklin Co. to develop a trails system.
- d. Walt Paul asked if there was any news from Brookfield. Bill Dashnaw is waiting on pictures and high water /placement bridge.
- e. Walt Paul asked the DEC staff in attendance if any staff from Albany had been to the County to view sections of the trail yet. Pat Whalen will cover this under New Business.
- f. Tom Ortmeyer asked if the horse resolution had been acted on yet. Alex MacKinnon reported that the BOL passed it last night.

7. New Business.

- a. Kermit Blanchard made a motion to recommend that the BOL open County Forest parcels 7,17,36,8,20,34, and 23. Alex MacKinnon seconded and all were in favor. Alex MacKinnon said the next step would be to open up road sections. Bill Dashnaw said it is still a struggle re miles of road between trail heads.
- b. Pat Whalen of the DEC reported that the folks from Albany were up and that there was not an immediate "No" to opening. A presentation will be made to the Commissioner. The bad news is that everything still needs to go to the lawyers for review. There are three critical places. The Whitehill Rd has wetlands around which is not so good. Gate 10 Newbridge is probably ok, but this is a policy decision. Greenwood looks good. Bill Dashnaw sent a man with Pat Whalen to scout to get off NYS land. There are skid roads with the trees gone, but we would still need road building i.e. Picketville to Morgan Rd. May have to amend the Whitehill UMP. Grass River UMP is still in the works. Needs to get done for Newbridge. Schyler Shea asked why we need an adjustment after it was included in the original UMP. Pat Whalen replied that ATVs were not addressed as they were waiting for a policy to be developed. Walt Paul asked if the Goldmine section was good. Pat Whalen said yes, but the connection through the Morgan Rd was not. The lower end of Picketville is wet. Pat Whalen asked about the legal status of the road and who would fix it. Ken Kogut said the Albany people looked at everything and will present to the Commissioner. There was a concern on the wetlands. Still have to have the APA review. He is trying to send a clear message on: 1) this section needs to go back to the drawing board and to look at it again to find another way through (DEC will be sued whatever the decision) and 2) Also, any decisions will be very open to public scrutiny. Walt Paul thanked Pat Whalen for all of his work. Ken Kogut said the DEC will have their GEIS comments to the County in approx two weeks. There will be substantial comments. Maybe some of the grant funds could be used to fix areas. If the DEC approves, they may want to fall back on our GEIS to help them through their SEQR process. Get at a good standard and answer questions.
- c. Deb Christy met with Brookfield two weeks ago re Curran being on the Goldmine Rd and possibly working together. They use ATVs and a temp bridge, but may not want the liability. Brookfield has funds available we can apply for.

- d. Dawn Howard made a suggestion to add Russell Martin to the Trails Board. Art Wilson made a motion, seconded by Dave Irish to add Russell Martin. All were in favor. A bio will be forwarded to the BOL.
 - e. Bill Dashnaw had a cover letter for a Landowner Use Agreement that he discussed.
8. Announcements. None.
 9. Next Meeting is 8/16/11 at 7:00 PM in the Board of Legislators chambers.
 10. Hearings and Comments. Group thought sound in the room was much better tonight.
 11. Bill Swafford made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Warren Irwin. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Note: Joint Oversight and Finance Committee meeting to discuss grant funds was set for 8/2/11 at 4:15 pm in the SWCD conference room.

Minutes by Dawn Howard