

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

DRAFT Minutes for May 17, 2011

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

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

Excused: Tony Arquiett and Dave Butler.

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Roger Bennett.
2. Quorum present.
3. Tom Ortmeyer asked for clarification in the April minutes on the Oversight report. There was a proposal for trails in the Town of Pierrepont. It was not a Town proposal. A motion was made to approve the Minutes. All were in favor.
4. There was no guest speaker.
5. Reports of Committees:
 - a. Executive – Roger Bennett. No report.
 - b. Board of Legislators – Alex MacKinnon, Scott Sutherland, and Tony Arquiett.
 - Alex MacKinnon reported that the draft GEIS was passed out to the BOL last night. May 16- June 15 is the comment period. He had one copy with him, but can get more.
 - Scott Sutherland will speak on the Trail Coordinator contract later in the meeting.
 - c. Oversight – Tom Ortmeyer and Kermit Blanchard. Tom Ortmeyer had no report.
 - d. Finance and Insurance – Dawn Howard.
 - A committee meeting was held just before this Board meeting. Lewis County info was reviewed. The County will own the trail for now. Insurance will be researched.
 - Bill Dashnaw circulated a sheet on the grant breakdown and where we stand at present. Totals are: the Empire State Development Grant \$11,873.46, In Kind County \$70,959.67, In Kind Local \$25,494 (not including \$7,036. submitted since).
 - e. Grant Search – Judy Wendt. No report.
 - f. Enforcement, Safety, and Education – Judy Wendt. A meeting was held 5/5 to talk with law enforcement. The meeting was well attended and went until 10:30 pm. Snowmobile revenues are down and enforcement is up. All complaints were put to rumor with nothing substantiated. Regulatory folks said they can't do anything without facts and complaints. The perception of a problem of too much enforcement was discussed. "Bean picking".

Also attitude was talked about. Suggestions to improve were asked for. None came from the enforcement side. Our group suggested:

1. Send reps to our meetings.
2. Provide us with data and reports on agency activities.
3. Pre season sessions and workshops with trail user associations like what was done with the justices.
4. Update us on system improvements.
5. ID places that need improvement.
6. Promote a community approach.
7. Welcome, encourage, and promote careers, safety, and kids.
8. Participate in events.

Erik Backlund offered to help coordinate between the groups to solve problems. Tony Arquiett spoke with Roger Bennett after the meeting. He also called the DEC Captain and spoke to him directly. A session was held after ward re specific personnel.

The meeting was contentious at times. Deb Christy reported that there are 4 Rangers, 7 ECOs (who don't do snowmobiles), and 3 Park Police. This is not a large number, but they are moving. Schyler Shea said there are 81 State Police in Troop B plus special groups from Albany. Pat Whalen reported that there were 60 more tickets than usual on decals, but compared it to the way seat belt enforcement was handled – warnings for a time, then action.

Walt Paul suggested the use of safety vs. enforcement and to follow-up with letters to elected officials. NYS shouldn't be able to use tickets to generate revenue. The Office of Parks and Recreation met with the magistrates. Why can't we? Judy Wendt asked how we can improve attitude at stops. There was discussion on the dress of officers. Pat Whalen suggested that there should have been documentation out before the meeting. Judy Wendt would like copies of reports in order to be able to analyze the situation. Schyler Shea complimented Pat Whalen on his willingness to work on problem areas. Spence Thew said the biggest concern should be speed. 95% are ok, but 5% are not respectful and are dangerous. Erik Backlund reported that ICE is coming in.

- g. SEQR – Alex MacKinnon and Erik Backlund. Alex MacKinnon reported on this previously. Walt Paul asked if our group should make comments. Alex MacKinnon stated that positive remarks are welcome. The document is available on the SLC website. Bill Dashnaw said our consultant also did Lewis County and that the Judge commented on how well it was done during the challenge. Alex MacKinnon asked that comments be sent to either Bill Dashnaw or himself. The document will also have directions.

6. Unfinished Business. None.

7. New Business. Deb Christy mentioned the new Mt. Bike web site that is coming out.

8. Announcements.

- a. Art Wilson reported that the Colton Town Board and Supervisor are planning to abandon the Snell Rd. Schyler Shea's property will be affected. Scott Sutherland also talked to the Supervisor about this. Bill Dashnaw will send out the information on abandonment.

- b. Alex MacKinnon spoke about a contract with the County Chamber of Commerce. The committee met with the County Attorney. A lot of progress was made. A beginning draft was prepared and they are developing a scope of services now. Alex MacKinnon does not think we will meet the June meeting target for approval. Everything also has to go through the Chamber Attorney. The new goal is July. We should have a draft before our next Trails Board meeting. Tom Ortmeier had a question concerning the next step after the impact statement comment period. Bill Dashnaw said we will address comments and finalize.
- c. Alex MacKinnon asked if we want to find a different meeting room. He suggested we try the Human Services Building on Rt. 310. He will check the schedule and let Roger Bennett know. There is also the 911 meeting room and at the courthouse.
- d. Dawn Howard reported that Schyler Shea and Hank Ford are now official members.

9. Next Meeting is 6/21/11 at 7:00 PM at a location to be determined.

10. Hearings and Comments.

- Mary Long appreciates the fact that we all work together and everything we do.
- Charles Schloer commented on reports of an officer hiding.

11. Walt Paul made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Kermit Blanchard. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Minutes by Dawn Howard