

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

Minutes for September 21, 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, Judy Wendt, Kermit Blanchard, Roger Bennett, Bill Lutz, and Tom Ortmeyer.

Guests: Pat Whalen, Ed Francis, Mary Long, Charles Schloer, Lucy Lucas, and Ed Long.

Excused: Russell Lawrence, Deb Christy, and Wm Swafford.

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Roger Bennett.
2. Quorum present.
3. Motion to approve the Minutes as amended was made by Judy Wendt and seconded by Walt Paul. All were in favor. Mr. Swafford's first name was corrected to read Wm instead of Paul.
4. Reports of Committees:
  - a. Executive – Roger Bennett. A request for a letter in recognition of Eric Hanss's Boy Scout Eagle project, to be used at the award ceremony, was received. His project was trail rehabilitation in County forest property. Judy Wendt made a motion, seconded by Warren Irwin to send a letter. All were in favor. The secretary will prepare a letter to be signed by the Chairman.
  - b. Board of Legislators – Tom Grow and Alex MacKinnon.
    1. Alex MacKinnon reported that the Economic Development Department in St. Lawrence Co. has been abolished and replaced with the IDA.
    2. Judy Wendt reminded everyone that our two legislative reps are running for re-election.
  - c. Oversight – Tom Ortmeyer and Kermit Blanchard.
    1. Kermit Blanchard reported that the committee had met. Discussed membership fees to go thru the Finance Committee i.e. Trail Pass. There is approximately 121 miles of trail being worked on.
    2. Bill Dashnaw is working with the consultant. 90-95% of the trail is covered. The rest is difficult access. The resolution went thru the Board of Legislators to establish the lead agency. In the spring there will be public meetings. The next step at that point will be to go through the SEQR process and then open the trail.
    3. Bill Dashnaw's next step is to meet with Judy Drabicki of the DEC re requests we need to make to make connections. He hopes to meet in the next week or two.
    4. Bill Dashnaw has identified the bridges we need.
    5. Bill Dashnaw reports everything is moving along nicely. He is working on landowner agreements. We need to talk about land acquisition/easements. He brought a current map.
    6. Walt Paul and Judy Wendt encouraged everyone to read the new state policy of trails on State land.

7. There has been no response to the letters the Board sent to Brookfield.
  8. Judy Wendt reported that the ATVers are opposed to a trail pass system because they are the only group that will pay. They have provided labor and invested money.
- d. Finance and Insurance – Dawn Howard.
1. Dawn Howard reported that the only grant records so far have gone to Bill Dashnaw. It may be time to reorganize the committee.
  2. Kermit Blanchard requested everyone to get their time records to Dawn Howard. Tom Ortmeyer asked about in-kind. Bill Dashnaw said to send in all time. Dawn Howard will resend the reporting forms.
  3. Bill Dashnaw said we need to spend the grant. He will do a draw for the consultant this fall. There are two local matches - \$100,000 from the county and \$25-35,000 from the club. The bridges will eat up the county portion.
  4. The Finance Committee needs to look at equipment needs. Bill talked about a mini excavator. The Highway Dept applied for a Polaris grant.
  5. Bill Dashnaw is spending money that will come from the grant. No draws yet. The money is there and we can make draws before the end of the grant.
  6. Bill Dashnaw thinks the Finance Committee should recommend what to spend money on for equipment, with input from the Oversight Committee, and report to the full Board. Towns may have equipment available to borrow so we need to keep in touch. Pat Whalen at the DEC has a skid steer with many attachments i.e. a bucket with a thumb. This is not available for our use, but is an example of a useful piece of equipment to do trail work with.
- e. Grant Search – Judy Wendt.
1. John Manson had suggested looking into RVRDA funding so Judy Wendt sent them a trail coordinator package covering a three year period. Alex MacKinnon said the IDA may want the contract for the coordinator.
  2. Judy Wendt reported that the Yamaha grants are due 12/3. Bill Dashnaw may want to redo the Polaris grant.
- f. Enforcement, Safety, and Education – Judy Wendt. No report.
- g. SEQR – Alex MacKinnon and Erik Backlund. Alex Mackinnon reported that the County Attorney suggested we wait until the generic statement is done to do further development because of segmenting. This will be completed soon. The generic lays the ground work for all other trails. Then the issue of segmenting goes away.
5. Unfinished Business.
- a. Roger Bennett requested we be prepared to discuss the Committee descriptions for the By-laws at the next meeting. Please get these done. This issue has been unresolved since last January.
  - b. Roger Bennett has been asked to send out the minutes two weeks before the meeting.
  - c. Judy Wendt brought up the topic of ATV's on the rail beds. A letter of support was going to be done by someone. The letter should say multi-use for this recreational corridor.
6. New Business.

- a. Roger Bennett attended Ethics training. \$40,000 fine for failures. A cup of coffee can get you in trouble with NYS. The County policy is \$75/yr. Financial statements must be submitted. There will be more training in the future. Alex MacKinnon said this Board is not a policy making Board. He can do a quick training for the Trail Board.
- b. Dave Butler reported that the mountain bikers are getting organized. There is a new St. Lawrence Co. Mountain Biking Association (SLMBA). Trails will be in Stone Valley, Seven Springs, and the White Hill Area. They are developing expert level trails. Some trails will be on county land. Dawn Howard reminded him that no trails are to be cut on county land without prior authorization as this has been a problem in the past.
- c. The issue of our trail use by off road motorcycles was brought up. There would be wear and tear on the trail and there is currently no organization to do maintenance. Bill Dashnaw suggested a sub committee to research and bring back suggestions. Roger Bennett appointed Judy Wendt – chair, Bill Dashnaw, Walt Paul, Eric Backlund, etc. It was suggested the group contact the Adirondack ATV Club as they ride two wheelers.
- d. Walt Paul reported on the new Colton Tourism Committee. ATVers and Snowmobilers need to sit at the table with this group.
- e. Walt Paul reported that the Raquette River Blueway Steering Committee is developing a 2011 calendar and is selling advertising slots.
- f. Walt Paul reported that a Democratic co-sponsor is needed for a bill by Addie Russell re roads. County and town resolutions in support and also having the County Highway Assoc. group behind this would be helpful. Walt Paul will resend info to the Board.

7. Announcements. None.

8. Next Meeting is 10/19/10 at 7:00 PM at the SWCD office.

9. Hearings and Comments. Mary Long was concerned about no ATV's on the railroad bed. She was glad to hear they were being included. Ask for a multi-use trail or will lose the opportunity.

10. Kermit Blanchard made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Walt Paul. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Minutes by Dawn Howard