

Taconic Hiking Club Board Meeting
March 10, 2022, 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Via Zoom

PRESENT: Martha Waldman, Karen Ross, Leslie Siegard, Sue Jordan, Dave Pisaneschi, Margaret Parks, Tom Hart, Christine Boucher

MINUTES:

Accepted and approved minutes from January 10, 2022, meeting with amendment to Next Meeting Date (from March 2 to March 10, 2022).

TREASURER’S REPORT THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2022:

Jan-Feb receipts exceeded expenses by \$1029. There were many membership renewals in these 2 months. Though dues are \$1230 short from the annual budget, this should be recovered in the fourth quarter. Map and Patches receipts are slow due to the winter.

Expenses for the quarter were as anticipated, including annual memberships of \$250 and End 2 End reimbursements for withdrawals. The E2E reimbursements are offset by the income from new participants. Annual memberships are those approved in the budget and comprise Rensselaer Land Trust, Rensselaer Plateau Alliance, Williamstown Rural Lands, Friends of Grafton Lake and Berkshire Natural Resources Council.

The last line on the financial statement notes the amount of the End-to-End deposits received. These are a liability until the event is held. Leslie will keep this note on the financials until the event is held.

The audit of the 2020 books will be completed by Kirk Cornwell. He anticipates it will be complete next week.

THC INSURANCE COVERAGE:

With the new insurance THC will continue offering the outings we have been doing, including trail work, hiking, snowshoeing, X country skiing, cycling, paddling. We might add short, “local” backpacking outings. The agent said we should not supply or cook burgers at picnics or make the breakfast for the E2E. We will not offer adventure travel trips, mountain biking, white water paddles, ice climbing or rock climbing.

All agreed that Insurance should become a regular budget item.

END TO END (May 14th):

Email to Participants/Release of Liability and Emergency Contacts – Tom will send an email on April 12th requesting participants to sign and return the Release of Liability/Emergency Contact form. The email will also provide information for those who may want to withdraw from the E2E event and get a refund. Withdrawal requests must be received by THC by May 1st.

Berry Pond Orientation/Check-in/Lunches – THC staff will record participant show/no shows on the Berry Pond check-in list. To track event progress along the ridge, THC sweeps will record participant check-in times at each of the other support/checkpoint stations. Karen may know someone who can sweep from Berry Pond to Madden Rd and will follow up on this. Tom requested that a list of phone numbers for the sweeps, Martha, DEC Region 4 Forest Ranger Steve Jackson, and participant emergency contacts be created and available to him and THC staff at each of the support/checkpoint stations.

For the 2 lunch/supply distribution points, we have 2 totes – one for Mattison Hollow and another for Petersburg Pass. At Berry Pond each participant will be responsible for marking their name outside or inside their lunch/supply bag and putting the bag into the correct tote (Mattison Hollow or Petersburg Pass). Martha will bring the totes, paper, and pens to Berry Pond for this purpose.

Sweeps – THC sweeps will hike behind E2E participants and Tom will be an “ultra” sweep as he does the entire trek, to ensure everyone is accounted for and off the trail at E2E event’s end. Tom noted that 2 participants are going for their “personal best” E2E time; we need to keep track of them to make sure their lunches/supplies are in place before they arrive at the check points. For an estimate of the timing, we will use the benchmark times from prior events.

Water Deliveries – Bob Armao will manage water delivery to the support stations; THC will reimburse his water costs.

Hospitality – We need 2 hospitality tents and tables – one at the Petersburg Pass checkpoint and another at Route 346 finish line. Martha will check with RJ on the location of pop-up tents and folding tables and follow up with Margaret; Karen will check her barn. It was noted that clipboards might be useful at each checkpoint. Tom suggested having Membership forms available at the finish line to make it easy for E2E participants to join THC.

E2E Certificate and Patches – Martha will locate the existing or purchase new certificates for the E2E event and Cliff will update them as needed. Certificates will be presented only to participants who finish the E2E course. THC members who finish the E2E will also get a “bloody foot” patch.

Publicity – Following the E2E event, Karen will submit an article to the Eastwick Press and the Chatham Courier telling what happened; Martha will provide the number of participants who completed the event.

SOCIAL:

The group decided to hold this year’s meeting/picnic/hike at Thacher State Park; Margaret will check the availability of a pavilion near the escarpment for Saturday June 11th. **Note:** Since Thacher SP could not accommodate the THC picnic on June 11th, Margaret will contact Grafton SP for availability on June 11th.

For the annual dinner, Margaret will contact Moscatiello’s on Route 4 in Troy for availability of a banquet room for a Sunday brunch or lunch on November 6th (or alternative Sundays, October

30th or November 13th). Karen will check into the availability of a speaker to talk about “Follow the Forest,” a regional conservation program in Columbia County.

MEMBERSHIP:

There are 216 members to date; 51 are brand new and 68 members have yet to renew. A renewal reminder notice was sent out and several renewals came in. Dave noted that trail stewards must be THC members to work on the trails.

TRAIL WORK:

Dave emailed the current “TCT Trail Work 2022” report and the “2022 Trail Stewards” list to all Board members.

Trail Work – Already in 2022, 70 hours of total trail work has been completed.

Trail Stewards – New steward, Bill Coyle, will cover the TCT section from Mattison Hollow to Berlin Mountain. Stewards who need to renew their THC memberships and fill out IVA forms are Anthony Richter, Cathy Keating, and James Grady. The steward position for the Petersburg Pass to Prosser Hollow section is currently available.

DEC Site Visit – Forester Patrick McGarity and Ranger Steve Jackson will conduct site visits with THC trail stewards to inspect planking at the northern end of the trail at Route 346 on March 21 and 24.

Highlights of Zoom Conference with DEC on February 17 – DEC was very supportive of facilitating access to the ridge where supplies and equipment are needed. DEC is strong on materials and supplies, but weak on labor; THC can help with the labor. The Caleb Cobb tract will be acquired by DEC along other tracts along the ridge. Every new acquisition sends the draft UMP back to the drawing board. DEC hedged on protecting Mattison Hollow as the land was purchased as a reforestation area. They did mention options such as 1) watershed protection, 2) recreation, and 3) wildlife protection to protect it. We need to address this during the public comment period when the draft UMP is released.

PUBLICITY:

In researching why THC’s newsletter emails sometimes end up in SPAM folders, Martha discovered that a paid for (vs. THC’s free) email address is more likely to be delivered to an intended recipient’s Inbox. Martha will take up the issue again after the End-to-End and bring options to the Board for further discussion.

OTHER BUSINESS:

The THC was invited to become formal partners with the Berkshire Taconic Regional Conservation Partnership (BTRCP). An email vote was held on 1/20/22, the Board unanimously approved for the THC to become a full partner with BTRCP, and Karen Ross was authorized to sign the MOU.

Karen obtained a quote for full year liability insurance for the Club, Underwriter - Dryden Insurance, which would cover outings, trail work, and the End-to-End event, at \$446/year. The

proposal was discussed via email and a Zoom meeting on 2/3/22. The Board approved the expenditure.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, July 21st via Zoom