

Taconic Hiking Club Board Meeting
April 10, 2023 at 6:30 pm
Via Zoom

PRESENT: Martha Waldman, Karen Ross, Leslie Siegard, Margaret Parks, Michelle Filiault, Sue Jordan, David Pisaneschi

MINUTES: Minutes from the January 16, 2023 board meeting were accepted and approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT THROUGH MARCH 31, 2023:

First quarter receipts exceeded expenses by \$401.61. There were many membership renewals in these 3 months. Though dues are \$1020 short from the annual budget, this should be recovered in the fourth quarter. Map and Patches; receipts are slow due to the winter. We expect, and budgeted, less than prior years as the trend has been declining.

Expenses for the quarter were as anticipated, including annual memberships of \$250, Online banking fees, postage and the pavilion rental fee for the annual spring gathering. 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 audit of the 2022 books was completed in March by Kirk Cornwell. He provided the following statement:

In accordance with THC bylaws, I have examined the Taconic Hiking Club books, statements, billing and payments, Budget, and Treasurers Report for 2022 and found them to be complete and accurate. I can be contacted for any further questions @ kirkcornwell@gmail.com or (518) 522-1168.

SOCIAL:

Spring Gathering:

Will be held at Cherry Plain State Park on Saturday, June 10, 2023. Current agenda of the day is to start with a short meeting, go for a hike, and then have lunch. We discussed this and decided to keep the same agenda. People can stay after lunch and enjoy the park.

Fall Banquet/Luncheon:

Will be held on Sunday, November 5, 2023 at Muscatello's. Discussed the name of this event, and decided it will be called the "Fall Luncheon". Discussed buffet vs seated dinner. Since the seated dinner requires at least 30 people, and the buffet requires at least 25, we will go with the buffet. The speaker is TBD.

MEMBERSHIP:

We have 10 new members for a total of 208. There were 220 last year at this time. There were 68 who did not renew. This is not unusual since people join for the E2E and then do not renew.

TRAIL WORK:

Reached out to current trail section adopters to see if they wish to continue this year.

Reached out to volunteer list provided by Sue J to determine if anyone would be interested in adopting available trail sections:

Southeast Hollow to Berlin Mt (adopted by John Berninger)

Snow Hole to Prosser Hollow (adopted by Victoria Burdick)

Current Issues:

Expand / build parking lot on Mattison Hollow Road.

Widow maker on section between Robinson Hollow and Madden Road.

Ridge and access roads are ice and snow covered. Much of it should melt this week.

I plan to go out Sunday. My concern is condition of Robinson Hollow Road.

Dave will be sending out an email for trail work on Friday, April 14.

Review NYS DEC VSA requirements:

We have a signed VSA which is good for 5 years, expiring on 5/21/26. Each trail steward/adopter must complete an Individual Volunteer Stewardship Agreement (IVA), which is good for the term of the VSA. If a group is taken out for trail work, they need to sign the Limited Use Volunteer Application. Prior permission is not needed for regular trail work.

Review MA DCR Pittsfield State Forest VSA:

Prior permission is not needed for regular trail work. Large projects need prior permission. The club needs a VSA with the park annually. Individuals doing trail work need to sign a volunteer release form. We need to strengthen our relationship with the PSF. Chris Hajjar from DCR is the contact for PSF.

OUTINGS:

No update.

OLD BUSINESS:

End-to-End:

The E2E date of Saturday, May 11, 2024, has been confirmed with Chris Hajjar at PSF. The campsite may open this July. The composing toilet has not been approved yet. Paving of Circuit Road will be done at some point. Martha will not be the director for the next E2E. There are a couple of possible interested parties.

Volunteer Recognition:

Bandanas or buffs were considered for volunteer recognition. A buff/gaitor would be 30 for \$240. We need to choose a design and a color. Would use our patch on a background color. Leslie will get a mock-up. We could also print a design of our choosing rather than the patch. We would need a file (.jpg) to send them.

NEW BUSINESS:

We have received a \$500 grant from the Berkshire Taconic Regional Conservation Partnership (BTRCP). How should we spend this gift? Discussed several possible projects. The Rensselaer Land Trust (RLT) and Rensselaer Plateau Alliance (RPA) are merging. The RPA has recently acquired a new property, the Dill Brook Community Forest. A new bridge will be needed which is expected to cost \$1000-2000. We do have funds in our account to cover the difference. Karen will get more specifics about this project and get back to us for a vote.

NEXT MEETING DATE: July 17, 2023 at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Filiault, Secretary