



2017 Annual Voting Members Meeting
MINUTES

Saturday, November 4
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

At the Darlington Schoolhouse, 600 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah, NJ

In attendance:

Sue Barbuto, At-Large Voting Member
Richard Barr, NY Ramblers/Catskill 3500 Club
Suse Bell, At-Large Voting Member
Cliff Berchtold, At-Large Voting Member
Norman Blumenstein, At-Large Voting Member
Jack Driller, At-Large Voting Member
Bill Gannett, At-Large Voting Member
John Gunzler, Chair, Investment/M&D
Committees
David Hogenauer, Tri-State Ramblers
John Jurasek, Publications Committee Chair

Barry Leibowitz, ADK Mohican Chapter
John Mack, West Hudson South Trails Chair
Jim Piombino, At-Large Voting Member
Karen Rose, At-Large Voting Member
Ruth Rosenthal, At-Large Voting Member
Doug Sohn, At-Large Voting Member
Don Tripp, West Jersey Trail Chair
Patsy Wooters, Board Vice-Chair

Ed Goodell, Executive Director
Erica Colace, Executive Assistant

Welcome: Ed Goodell welcomed the Voting Members and invited those present to join the Vista Loop hike at the Ramapo County Reservation, planned for after the meeting. Ed explained the re-route of the loop that was completed last year by Trail Conference volunteers.

Approval of April 22, 2017 meeting minutes: Don Tripp made a motion, seconded by David Hogenauer, to approve the April meeting minutes. All were in favor.

Board of Directors/At-large Voting Member Nominations: Ed Goodell explained that, per the bylaws, a vote was not required on the 2018 nominations because a full slate of nominees was presented. The Board and At-Large Voting members, as presented, are appointed to serve for 3-year and 1-year terms, respectively.

Introduce new member clubs: Ed welcomed 2 new members clubs:

Greener NJ Productions which works to further public awareness and appreciation of New Jersey's outstanding scenic beauty; significant agricultural legacy; and diverse natural, historic and cultural treasures through the production of public and educational videos for web, television, radio and educational organizations.

Somers Land Trust which works to preserve open space in the Town of Somers, N.Y. Together with the Westchester Land Trust, the SLT holds a number of conservations easements throughout Somers. In addition, they promote environmentally sensitive planning and helped devise the town survey soliciting public input for the Somers Master Plan.

Executive Director's Report: Ed presented the updated Mission Statement and Values for the Trail Conference. Ed explained the process and how this messaging ties into the strategic goal of communicating our work to a broad audience. There was discussion among those in attendance

regarding the new mission statement aligning with the current bylaws, and how each new project or initiative can be determined on a case-by-case basis, but that the mission, vision, and values need to be broad enough as to not limit the scope of work of the organization.

The discussion then moved to the Trail Use Policy. Ed explained that final decisions about permitted trail uses are the prerogative of the land owners. He also noted that this policy aims to collectively afford an appropriate and satisfying outdoor experience to the widest possible segment of non-motorized trail users. He discussed in more detail how the policy relates to the overall trail experience, resource protection, safety, and management.

Ed then presented the new Code of Conduct, which lays out the expectation of all involved in the organization related to professionalism, safety, creating a harassment free environment, and conflict resolution. There was some discussion about what qualified as harassing behavior and how this policy would be applied to trail use.

Finally, Ed announced the recent hire of Volunteer Engagement Manager, Kendra Baumer. Ed indicated that Kendra will begin working at a high level to assess the current volunteer management programs.

Other Business: Ed was asked to update on the Kiryas Joel project in Monroe, N.Y. that would negatively impact sections of the Highlands Trail and the Long Path. Ed explained the many efforts that staff and volunteers have undertaken and progress communicating our requests to local elected officials. Ed was also asked about the closing of Breakneck Ridge Trail and how it may impact the Manitou Train Station. Ed explained that the project is being driven by New York State and Scenic Hudson and that the Trail Conference has been helping to communicate plans for Breakneck. Members also asked for an acknowledgement of problems reported on trails. The mechanism to report trail issues is sufficient, but there is no follow-up as to whether the issue was addressed. Ed recognized it as a problem related to the website. Those in attendance were also curious if cuts to the federal AmeriCorps budget would impact that Trail Conference's program, and Ed indicated that it would.

Seeing no other business, Bill Gannett made a motion, seconded by Doug Sohn, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.

Recorded by Erica Colace.