

**Minutes of the Laurentian ADK Executive Committee Meeting  
December 10, 2015 at the home of Marianne Hebert**

Present: Tom Wheeler, Chair; Jeff Miller, Education; Marianne Hebert, Outings; John Barron, EAP and Publicity; Lila Hunnewell, Membership; Tom Ortmeyer, Director; Mary Jane Watson, Treasurer; John Omohundro, Conservation

Guest: Eileen Wheeler

Regrets: Dana Chudzinski, Secretary

The meeting was called to order by Tom Wheeler. Dana was out of town on a work assignment so John Barron took notes.

Minutes of last meeting

The previous meeting was October 15, 2015 at Jeff Miller's. Approval of the minutes of that meeting was deferred until next meeting which will be January 28, 2016.

Treasurer (Mary Jane Watson)

Financial statements were distributed.

\$3,000 in checking.

\$1,100 at North Country Savings

Seacomm keeps sending advertising but never any statements. So far as is known there is no change in the status of those securities.

Dues are up.

Two teenagers were sponsored to attend summer camp compared with one last year.

\$500 was donated to ADK to sponsor a trail crew during National Trails Day (to general fund, unspecified).

Outdoors/Indoors - payment is still due to the Village for reserving the Community Room for the series.

Camperships - the cost will be the same next year as this year.

Note that a very early start in January is needed for sponsorships because of DEC's accelerated reservation system.

Director (Tom Ortmeyer)

The Club had a good year financially. The budget was presented and approved without comments or changes.

A new process was established for using unexpected windfalls from bequests. These will be

allowed to accumulate and periodically will be used to finance one-time costs (e.g. marquee tents for staging events; short-term staff positions such as Young Adult Coordinator).

The Boreas Tract was designated. ADK is "rallying the troops" and getting publicity out. A snowmobile connector trail from Indian Lake to Newcomb crosses the tract. Landowners in the area want it shifted elsewhere. Staff are concerned not only with the specifics of any undesirable accesses but also with precedent. There is concern that the hard-won access to navigable streams could be reversed.

A line in the budget concerns "Chapter Notes" - financial instruments by which chapters lend money to the Club at an interest rate that is advantageous to both the chapter and the Club. This generated some enthusiasm - Mary Jane would favor using these as a substitute for the current Seacomm securities. John Omohundro also thought this would be a good idea.

The Club plans to update its web site. There are plans for an all-Club outing calendar incorporating outings from all chapters. A global difficulty rating would be created (currently each chapter has its own and they vary greatly). While this sounds appealing a don't-jump-in-but-rather-wait-and-see approach was the consensus of the meeting.

It is understood that the Club offers web hosting service and to some extent web support to chapters that want it.

Marianne observed that the Club-level Outings Committee seems to be coming to life.

The Environmental Protection Fund seems to have recovered, having suffered during the recession.

DEC would like the size of the ADK professional trail crew doubled from sixteen to thirty-two. Tom Ortmeyer and John Barron have a manuscript of a cycling guide covering the Laurentian Chapter's region and have proposed that the ADK publish it as an electronic publication. We expected to present the idea to the Publications Committee or Publications Staff, but it had already been accepted by those groups by the time of the meeting and the presentation (led by Alan Via of the Publications Committee) was made to the entire board and seemed well received.

Tom Ortmeyer was nominated for and elected to the ADK Executive Committee.

Alan Via has offered to come up and present a slide talk to one of our spring or fall pot lucks - several topics are possible.

#### Conservation (John Omohundro)

Bob Davis, Tom Ortmeyer, and John Omohundro surveyed the Lampson Falls Trail for bridge requirements. Recently Bob Davis's students from Clarkson rebuilt four of the bridges that the Laurentian Chapter had constructed several years ago but were destroyed by Hurricane Irene.

John O has been trying to get an "invasive species steward" established seasonally on the Raquette to explain the need for boat cleaning. The campaign has succeeded. The steward would be located between Carry Falls and Rainbow Falls Reservoirs and would direct boaters to a cleaning station to be located in Colton. Adirondack Watershed Institute at Paul Smiths has funded the initiative; they will hire a SUNY Potsdam student and get it done.

Work is underway on the St. Lawrence Foothills UMP (Unit Management Plan). David Katz, Mary Jane Watson, and John Omohundro are taking part actively. In the State Forests within this area, environmental protection rather than recreation is considered likely to be the dominant requirement in most cases. There are quite a few very small parcels of land. John O recommends that we "treehuggers" be proactive and favor wildlife and the environment, even at the expense of recreational access. DEC is under great pressure from the ATV lobby and needs support. We can help.

#### Outings (Marianne Hebert)

10 outings were scheduled October to December. One was cancelled, one was rescheduled twice but went ahead, all the rest went ahead.

A last-ditch plea for winter outings succeeded and a good winter schedule is in place.

David Katz encourages us to schedule kid-friendly outings. There is an icon for the purpose - the "leaping kid".

Some ideas were discussed for identifying possibly kid-friendly events from among those proposed in the normal course of events.

Dick Mooers recommends merge Outdoors/Indoors presentations into the Outings schedule to give a complete list of chapter events in a season. There is concern that having to check in two places is enough extra trouble that some potential audience members may miss out by forgetting to check a separate calendar of presentations.

Dick Mooers is concerned about low levels of participation on outings.

#### Education (Jeff Miller)

The Outdoors/Indoors schedule is now up on the web site.

Jeff and his successor, Jeanna Matthews, will be getting together for a hand-over next week.

#### Membership (Lila Hunnewell)

Lila gave a summary of several membership category numbers and a list of new members. There are many new student members.

### Educational Affiliate Program (John Barron)

There are twenty EAP members this year. We qualified six new leaders at the EAP leadership course in November (there are now thirteen EAP leaders in all).

It was noted that Student Government Association is paying leaders a stipend for leading trips. There was concern that this might have impact on insurance and/or liability.

### Social Media (Marianne Hebert)

There are now 109 Facebook friends.

### New Business

#### Bylaws Review

The chapter bylaws state that the bylaws have to be reviewed and if necessary updated every five years. It is five years since the last review, so it is time. Tom Wheeler will appoint a committee. The deadline is to have proposed new bylaws in time for the chapter general meeting in November 2016.

#### Chapter Donations

There was general discussion of the 70%/30% division of membership dues between the Club and a chapter, and of the many other contributions chapters make to the Club including supporting Volunteer Trails, raising crews for local trail maintenance, and a great deal more.

The Friends of Higley Flow are planning to purchase a trail groomer to use on the ski trails this winter. John O mulled that a higher donation to them might be in order.

It was moved by John Omohundro, seconded by Marianne Hebert, to donate \$200 to the Friends of Higley. In favor all. Opposed nil. Carried.

There was discussion whether to direct a donation to the ADK main club to a specific area, make it unspecified, or what. All areas were considered to have merit.

It was moved by John Omohundro, seconded by Jeff Miller, to donate \$750 to the ADK main Club, to be used equally in advocacy, education, and trail work. In favor all. Opposed nil. Carried.

#### Paddling Trip Difficulty Ratings

There was brief discussion of this topic. John Omohundro will send an existing rating definition to Marianne Hebert to use with the schedules.

### Director Expenses

Tom Wheeler observed that now that Tom Ortmeyer is on the ADK Executive Committee his Director's expenses should be borne by the Club, not by the Chapter.

### Proposal to Amend Photo Contest Rules

Tom Ortmeyer indicated that the photo contest judges had recommended a change to the rules. Eileen Wheeler, who was one of the judges this year, attended to explain their views.

The judges are in agreement that they'd like photos under consideration for an award to have a specific connection with the ADK. Many photos have been being submitted that seem to have no connection to the ADK at all - vacation photos from other parts of the world, outdoor photos from outside the chapter's area that were not taken on a chapter outing, etc. It was felt the photos should illustrate ADK activities and/or values.

The second point is the rules are such as to heavily favor just one photographer in all classes. There were suggestions of ways to improve this including limiting the number of entries from one person, and/or requiring that the category in which a particular photo is being entered be specified in advance.

It was noted that the number of entries in each of the different categories was quite imbalanced.

On the positive side, there was feeling that the entirety of the photo contest entries makes an excellent photo record of activities in the chapter during the year, and that the more, and the more varied, entries that can be attracted the better, from this perspective.

The Adirondacks, the ADK, and the Laurentian Chapter's local region should be emphasized.

It was recommended to have each photographer submit a few words with each submission indicating how the photo related to ADK.

Tom Ortmeyer agreed to draft new contest rules incorporating these thoughts. The target date is to have them approved in time to publish them in the Spring North Wind.

### Concern about Low Participation Rates on Outings

Dick Mooers indicated concern about low turnouts. Dick asked what the committee might think of a survey of the chapter membership about what kind of outings might be preferred.

It was the consensus that such a survey is a good idea and should be conducted. On-paper and on-line options for completing the survey will be offered. Each executive committee member may suggest two or three questions for the survey.

### Closing Remarks

Tom Wheeler praised and thanked outgoing officers Jeff Miller for a great contribution in Education as well as in kids' events and outings, and also Lila Hunnewell for creativity and effort in Membership.

### Next Meeting

Next meeting will be at the Wheelers' residence on January 28, 2016, Topics on the agenda will include the membership survey, photo contest rules, and the budget.