

Minutes  
MRATC Quarterly Meeting  
July 13, 2022

Club Attendees: Edie Bobko, Ron Bobko, Carol Broderson, Anne Maio, Sharon Trumbley, Jim Warden, Frank White, Heidi White

Partners: Jerry Kyle, ATC

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. by Administrative Assistant, Anne Maio. The meeting was conducted via Zoom.

The April, 2022 minutes were approved as written. Motion to approve made by Carol Broderson and seconded by Sharon Trumbley.

**Treasurer's Report** – Edie Bobko for Gloria Surber

Previous balance: \$22,545.37. Expenses since last report: 4,371.42; KVAT newsletter printing 92.14; AT Conservancy ridge runner 3,600.00; Supplies (tool cabinet, stamps) 679.28. Deposits since April report: 2,139.55; interest (April, May, June) .56; memberships: 330.70; Will Corbin Memorial gifts: 450.00; Charities Aid Foundation: 358.29, Ballad Health donation: 1000.

Current balance as of June bank statement: 20,313.50; Vanguard: 21,561.63; Trimpi Trust: 4,693.73 (as of 6/23/22); Stacey Levin Memorial: 1,530.00; ATC Contribution: 5,000 (earmarked for the wood sculpture near the Trail Center in Damascus); Kammer Memorial Fund: 378.72; Corbin Memorial Fund: 900.00.

**Updates:**

**Trails** – Jim Warden for Doug Levin:

In early June, the bog bridge project north of Wise shelter was completed by a partnership of the ATC, USFS, MRATC and a small group of students visiting from TX and NJ. This project also eliminated a confusing turn in the trail where the AT intersects the Scales trail. There is a substantial amount of material left over, stored near the bog bridge site, for which we have proposed two additional projects to the ATC. The first is to extend the new bog bridge about 12' to the south to raise the trail over a short perennially muddy section. The second is to create an additional bog bridge to replace a section of rocks that ford Quebec branch between the shelter and new bog bridge. The footing through that area can be difficult and the area floods out after a heavy rain. The ATC is pursuing those projects with USFS for approval and we hope to work on them in August, possibly with the help of the Konnarock crew. Eagle Scout-to-be Ethan Webb and a group of five other scouts and three adults completed his two-day Eagle project in late June to create a reroute at what was a confusing ninety degree turn off the old roadbed about ½ mile south of Wise Shelter. This eliminates another point of confusion for hikers on our section and in fact more than one commented about this when they hiked by. Recent club work efforts have been applied to installing new signage discussed in 2020/21 and finally delivered to USFS in June. A whole series of these signs have already been installed in the high country at confusing junctions near Rhododendron Gap and around Wise shelter to discourage tent camping where it is prohibited on state park property. Our efforts on this project will continue for the foreseeable future.

**Natural Resources** – Carol Broderson:

Thanks to everyone who has helped with plant monitoring; ten reports have been generated. There is special appreciation for the installation of the bog bridge, which will help protect rare St. John's

Wort. Those participating include: Anne Maio, Sharon Trumbley, Jim Warden, Felicia Mitchell, Jenny Hauser and Marywood Sparks. If interested in joining, please contact Carol Broderson.

**Outreach** – Heidi White:

MRATC's booth at Trail Days did not generate community interest as hoped, nor did the first pop-up session. The second pop-up session is scheduled for July 16. Grand opening for the Trail Center is August 27-28, and volunteers will be needed to help. MRATC will have a table, and it would be good to have some sort of activity to draw interest.

**Club Recreational Activities** – Sharon Trumbley:

There have been numerous hikes this spring/summer, including the Cabin Ridge Trail, which was a new one for some hikers. The club had a good picnic this past Sunday, with approximately twenty-five people attending. The group has traditionally helped with a meal for the Konnarock Crew, and are willing to do so again if that is wanted. Jerry Kyle confirmed that the Crew would welcome this.

**RPC** – Gerry Davis

No report

**ATC** – Jerry Kyle

Konnarock Crew will be working August 7-11 and 15-19, continuing with improvements in the high country. The large group in the second week may be able to help with the extension of the bog bridge. Jerry Kyle and Jim (ridge runner) will attend a campsite assessment training as part of the Visitor Use Management system, and includes three levels of assessment, two in the field and one at a later date. This could include MRATC members, but will require a two-day hike, and the ability to carry 40 pounds. The MRATC VUM plan was the best one received, and the next step will be to send out a draft. Once everybody is in agreement, the next step will be determined.

**Trail Center** – Emily Mayo

No report.

**Volunteer Engagement Plan for MRATC** – Heidi White and Anne Maio

Goals, objectives and strategies are being developed. The first goal is to attract people, and should include recognition of volunteers – something that will encourage volunteers to come back. Recruitment efforts have included: Trail Days, info at libraries, Abingdon's Whistle, without the hoped result. Hopefully, the opening of the Trail Center will help generate more interest in the community. May look at having a Volunteer Coordinator.

**Club Covid Protocols**

With local Covid numbers rising, MRATC's policy will remain requiring that everyone participating in work days be vaccinated. This is for the protection of those who most frequently attend work days, a group which is also largely made up of older members, who may be more at risk. The policy can be altered as conditions warrant.

**AT Vista** – Anne Maio

AT Vista will be held in August, 2023, at ETSU and organizers are asking MRATC for help with club members leading hikes. Ron Bobko suggested that instead of some of the originally proposed longer key swap hikes, perhaps hikes could be led by the maintainers on each section, and handed off to maintainers covering the adjacent sections. More information to come.

## **Partnership Meeting**

The Annual Partnership Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, November 9<sup>th</sup>. Our usual plan for this meeting is to meet at the work camp for the club's quarterly business meeting in the morning and meet with partners in the afternoon. It was suggested that this year, we plan to meet via Zoom from the Trail Center, which would decrease travel time for everybody, especially the partners. Both meetings could still occur on the same day, which seems preferable to most, instead of scheduling the meetings on two separate days. A suggestion is that we sign up for Zoom now to put it on the schedule. People could then attend via Zoom, or in person if preferred.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Eddie Bobko, Secretary