



# Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2006 † Grand Rapids, Mich.

**Board Attendees:** Appel, Baldwin, Bialk, Coffin, Cornell, Dill,  
Hoffarth, Julien, Klein, Koeplin, Larmann, Leinen,

**Staff Attendees:** Stram, Szabo, Tripp

**Guest:** Gilbert, Szarka, Robert Wetherell, Young

**Call to Order:** by Szabo at 9:10 am

**Introduction of New Board Member:**

Garry Dill

**Executive Session Opens:** 9:15 am

Discussion of personnel matters

**Executive Session Closes:** 12:15 pm

**Lunch Break**

Meeting reconvened at 12:45

**Consent Agenda:** Board of Director's meeting minutes: Page 2 – Remove “Bobby move,” from 6<sup>th</sup> bullet point. Page 3 – 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet under “Sea-to-Sea Route”, change “since” to “sense”. Add health insurance statement under “Miscellaneous” in the Oct 10, 2006, and Executive Committee meeting minutes to the Board of Directors' meeting minutes. Change the incorrect mission statement on the back of the affiliate agreements to the correct one. Cornell moved, Baldwin 2<sup>nd</sup>, passed.

**Discussion Items**

**Chainsaw Policy – Robert Wetherell, U.S.**

**Forest Service:** Establish a policy with NCTA on sawyer practices. The policy would:

- Help the USFS in trying to emphasize a consistent level of agency involvement.

- Meet the requirements of managing agencies.
- Fulfill the direction of 2005 Triad MOU.
- Communicate consistent level of worker safety.
- Treat all sawyers fairly through standardization.
- May help limit NCTA liability.

ATC has a good webpage for sawyer certification. USFS uses Missoula Technology and Development Center (MTDC) curriculum and doesn't recognize others. If under Volunteers in Forests (VIF), a volunteer would need to complete training to operate a chainsaw on Forest Service lands. Wetherell is in the process of setting up a sawyer workshop for Region 9 Forest Service employees. NPS does not cover injuries for non-certified sawyers. Wetherell and Szarka will work together to determine if Corps of Engineers sawyer rating is accepted by NPS & USFS. Cornell moves to adopt the Chainsaw Policy, Baldwin 2<sup>nd</sup>. Baldwin – on page 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet end of last sentence, amend policy to say “... as instructors by a Forest Service qualified instructor-certifier.” Sawyers have a 3-year recertification requirement. CPR has 1-year recertification requirement and First Aid training has 3 years recertification requirement. Motion passed.

**2006 YTD Financial Reports:**

- Future financial statements should be a clean cut-off at the end of the nearest month.
- On Balance Sheet Detail page, National Operations - Other (100.100) is entry error. Should be in 100 National Operations account.
- BOD will receive detailed balance sheet in the future. When restricted funds are used, 101 will show a negative figure.

#### **Report on New Accountant:**

- Current accountant is on contract and does good work but there are some communication problems.
- Szabo will keep watching the situation.
- Julien: Can we have a bookkeeper and at the end of the year an accountant review? Baldwin: original agreement was that once the accountant's feet were on the ground, the contract would convert to a fixed monthly cost.

#### **National Park Service:**

Dayton route adjustment – need to setup follow-up meeting with stakeholders, signing needs, etc.

#### **The Future of the NCTA, Strategic Planning and Capacity Building:**

- Koeplin: GIS goals have been implemented. We need to move Development at the top of our priority list. Without development, the rest won't grow. Dill: agree, but unfortunate time to approach it. Should be topic at next board meeting: priority of Executive Director.
- Young: In the interim we should drop GIS as a priority since the GIS goals have been fulfilled or are in progress. We should add Development as a priority and use the plan we have until a new plan can be updated.
- Tripp: We need to talk about the Strategic Plan so we have some expectations for new ED. We need a plan to move organization forward. We should include others (non-board

members) on committees. They can become future board members.

- Gilbert: discussion shows challenges that we face. A major future task should be resolving communication, operational challenges.
- Cornell: It will be premature until we have full-time ED. We need to have one person in charge to lead us.
- Hoffarth: Can we give staff direction now?
- Koeplin: Development should now be #1 and everything else under it (maintaining trail, regional program).
- Hoffarth moved to adopt 3 items as organizational goals: Development, Trail Maintenance, and Regional Trail Management. Baldwin second. Passed.

#### **Presidential Succession/Board Member Recruitment:**

- Leinen is president for one more meeting. Leinen believes that we won't find a new president outside of current BOD.
- We need President, VP East and VP West for next year. There will be three vacancies for At-Large positions.
- Julien: In the future, VP should become president so s/he is already trained and up to speed. Gilbert – with our bylaws, it would be difficult to find a 4 year commitment.
- Koeplin and Nominating Committee will submit names for President, Vice Presidents and at large members.

#### **Chapter Relations:**

- Szabo: There has been long term dissatisfaction from chapters regarding communication – even monthly reports.
- Tripp: we do have a disconnect with the chapters. Information is not always passed down to them.
- Coffin: We should send the minutes to the chapter chairs.
- Young: Also hears concerns. We should revive e-newsletter. It would also help to have staff watch bulleting board on the web page.

- Hoffarth: e-newsletter would be a good tool.
- Julien: Szabo should let Tripp know of what needs to go in newsletter.
- There should be two communications – an email to chapter presidents if there is a change in policy or the like, e-newsletter to all members who opt-in.

#### **Employee Handbook:**

- Szabo: Executive Committee began reviewing the personnel handbook rewrite that Koepplin was working on. We are trying to simplify handbook and add new information. Staff reviewed first draft, but their suggestions are not yet fully incorporated. Does committee have authorization to revise handbook or does it need to be brought to BOD for approval?
- Cornell: No committee can adopt policy unless it is the Executive Committee. Executive Committee is working on it and can adopt it, but it should be on the consent agenda at the next meeting.
- Koepplin : When handbook is adopted, it will affect staff on their anniversary date, not the date the handbook is adopted.

#### **Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) Conference:**

- Gilbert : PNTS started in 1991 at the 2<sup>nd</sup> national conference on national scenic & historic trails. Gary Werner & the president of Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation proposed that organizations attending the conference form an ad hoc committee of 17. The top topic was to get more money from Congress to hand down to partners. In 1991, the NCT received \$0 from the NPS; in 1992 NCT received \$50,000 due to Gilbert filing for it. Now \$684,000 is received through the efforts of Werner & NCTA. Conferences are held every other year. Last year in Vegas, Rob Corbett offered to host next meeting in 2007.
- Tripp: This is our chance to shine. Meeting is September 8 – 12. Staff and

Board members should be there. It will be great networking. This is an opportunity for us to grow and learn from other trails. We need people for program and logistics committees, help host – registration, field trips, etc.

- Gilbert: Will support and help where needed. Need to know what the needs are.

#### **PNTS Representation:**

- PNTS has representatives from each organization. Derek Blount has been our representative for many years, but is no longer on our board and may not be up to speed. Werner asked if we still want Blount to be our representative or do we want to change it to someone else. PNTS has 2 meetings/yr – one at conference and one with Hike the Hill.
- Leinen – doesn't think Blount should be our representative.
- Young – Perhaps when Blount's time is up as President he would be more involved with NCTA.
- Tripp will talk to Blount.

#### **07 Annual Conference, Bemidji, MN:**

Tripp: Planning is underway. Everything is all set at the University with some speakers secured. The dates are Aug 2-5.

#### **NCTA, NPS, USFS Triad Report:**

- Szabo: Forest Service announced FSTAG (Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines) final. Summary is on website in news column. John Romanowski will send power point CD if interested. Many other agencies (state & fed) sign on to FSTAG.
- Szarka: Accessibility cannot change basic character of trail.
- Gilbert: Janet Zeller is coming out to IAPTF annual conference for accessibility training. Gilbert would sponsor it for NCTA if interested.
- Wetherell: The training is outstanding and an eye-opener. Basic message is: Don't inadvertently create obstacles on trail when building/maintaining trail.

- Gilbert: Create a barrier free trail.

- Leinen: Board will be receiving their own letter asking for donation.

#### **New Business:**

##### **Affiliate Grant Money:**

- Szabo: Based on \$5/yr/mile certified trail and \$10 if 10% of organization's members are NCTA member's agreement states if money is available and the Association can afford it, NCTA will want to provide this money. FLTC is approaching 15% dual membership. This information is useful conversation with landowners when certification means money. Since money is tight, do we fund this request this year? FLTC would cost approximately \$2000.
- Dill: The agreement has been with BTA that money will be provided if Association has the money. Suggests we drop it this year and he will explain to BTA.
- Cornell: It's in the budget, suggests compromise. Cornell motion \$5/certified mile and no doubling for membership for 2006. Larmann 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion amended by Hoffarth –We will fund half of the request. Larmann 2<sup>nd</sup>. Not passed.
- Baldwin: Motion that we do not fund affiliate agreements in 2006. Klein 2<sup>nd</sup>. Passed. Cornell opposed.

#### **Next Meeting – April 21, 2007**

Adjournment moved by Cornell with Hoffarth 2<sup>nd</sup>, passed.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45.

##### **Western Terminus Route Modification:**

Gilbert: NCT may possibly modify trail route at western terminus. During summer visit to Audubon NWR received cold shoulder. Indicated trail could go on auto tour road. This route could never be certified. Corps of Engineers in Riverdale suggested there would be challenges. Lewis & Clark interpretive center would like the trail to go through their area.

##### **Annual Appeal:**

- Szabo passed out Annual Appeal letter going out next week. Board members will be receiving letters for people in their area to sign and mail out.