

Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Committee
MINUTES
June 17, 2015

Location: 2pm: Freetown Fall River State Forest Headquarters, Pilgrim Sands Trail
Riders RTP Project Site Visit
4pm: Freetown Fall River State Forest Headquarters Meeting Room

Time: 2pm to 6pm

Members Present:

Bill Boles: Mountain Biking
Benton Phelps: ATV
Becky Kalagher: Equestrian
Larry Tucker: Snowmobiles
Dick O'Brien: Community Trail and Greenways
Dick Williamson: Rail Trails
Michele Biscoe: Dog-walking
Heather Clish: Hiking
Mike White: 4-Wheel Driving

Larry Tucker: Presentation on RTP Snowmobile Trail Grooming Grants

- Larry gave a presentation focused on the need for snowmobile clubs to obtain RTP funds for grooming equipment. The presentation included a description of the snowmobile trail system in Massachusetts, club membership numbers and trail use, grooming efforts by clubs, grooming equipment descriptions and needs according to trail type and size and why clubs need and apply for grant funds for particular groomers and drags.
- Amanda will be sending out an explanation of the investigation into equipment bulk purchasing within a given RTP grant cycle (the determination is that this would provide no economic gains for clubs and/or the RTP).
- Amanda will also be sending out a new worksheet to be added to the RTP application – an Equipment Purchase Request Supplemental. This is aimed at providing information for all equipment purchases and then more detailed information about trail grooming equipment in particular, in order to allow MARTAB reviewers to better assess applications for grooming equipment against each other and the rest of the application pool. MARTAB should review this supplemental and provide comments to Amanda by June 30th.

MARTAB Terms Discussion

- As it is time for a review of MARTAB term limits and need for new nominations, Amanda passed out a list of MARTAB members whose terms are nearing an end.

Nomination forms for new members or for a second term for sitting members must be submitted by the next meeting.

- Amanda asked if the MARTAB bylaws might be adjusted to a greater length term and/or just one term, to make it easier to manage MARTAB term limits. General reaction was that lengthening terms was not necessarily the best solution.
- Mike White volunteered to look at the bylaws and review for possible changes.
- Heather volunteered to act as a “term manager” to ensure that MARTAB acts in accordance with its bylaws as term end dates approach.
- Discussion of new members being recruited onto MARTAB: when the bylaws were created, a list of the recreational trail uses in Massachusetts was created and identified, leaving openings for recruiting members from all possible recreational interest groups. MARTAB should actively pursue additional members for these representative groups. The conference is one place to announce openings. Perhaps via email announcement as well. One MARTAB member should take charge of member recruitment and retention.
- Michele asked if MARTAB could be reimbursed for mileage to get to and from meetings. Amanda will look into this further.

Follow-up: Amanda will send out MARTAB bylaws to all members for their review. Mike and Amanda will have a follow-up discussion on possible changes to bylaws which will be discussed at the next meeting, if any changes are recommended. Amanda will send out the list of term limits for all sitting members and members should follow up with nomination forms where needed, by the next MARTAB meeting.

MARTAB Letter to DCR Discussion

- Bill Boles summed up the letter that was sent to DCR by MARTAB, discussing trail use at Ware River Watershed, specifically mountain biking trails. The letter was sent out last week and DCR has received it.
- Heather noted that there are still mountain bike trails being created illegally which undermines this request by MARTAB. Bill stated that the trails are being made illegally by other users as well.
- The board discussed a location for a possible test area for mountain bike trails, possibly on a non-watershed DCR property.
- Becky described the meeting that took place on Tuesday, June 9th concerning trail use on Ware River Watershed, attended by Jonathan Yeo of DCR and Matthew Sisk, Deputy Commissioner of DCR. The conclusion of the meeting was that the mountain bike community will need to submit a proposal in writing, describing their vision and goals for mountain bike trails on DCR land, including the watershed.

MARTAB Nomination

- Michele Biscoe has formally resigned from MARTAB and the trail dog-walking community has nominated Charlene Saulnier to replace her. Dick Williamson

moved to appoint Charlene as the dog-walking representative on MARTAB. Becky Kalagher seconded the motion. The vote to approve her was unanimous.

Other MARTAB Business

- MARTAB should appoint a Secretary and add that to the bylaws
- Heather brought the board up to date on the status of the RTP in the US Transportation Bill. AMC is going to send out an announcement with updates for the trails groups in the region to respond to by contacting the Massachusetts delegation in Washington to remind them of the importance of the RTP. Although the delegation is supportive, it is important to always remind them of the popularity of this program.
- Within the state of Massachusetts, the RTP money that has been included in the Environmental Bond Bill has not yet been added to the Capital Plan. MARTAB will work to advocate for this, when appropriate. Dick proposed that a letter be written to DCR with this request. He will work on the letter in the coming weeks.
- Amanda asked that, going forward, MARTAB formally nominate Massachusetts RTP projects for the Coalition for Recreational Trail's Annual Achievement Awards. Each year, these awards are given out for exceptional RTP projects across the country. It would be good for MARTAB to take on the role of nominating projects in Massachusetts on an annual basis. And, every other year, MARTAB should submit nominations for the American Trails' National Trails Awards, which are presented at the International Trails Symposium.

Meeting Adjourned