

MH AMC Ecomm Mtg Notes - May 12, 2014

Attending: Sharon Bonk, Chris Boucher, Jeff Carden, Dave Esmond, Mary Folsom, Kathleen Helfrich, Henry Schreiber, John Tiftt, Martha Waldman

The meeting began at 6:40 with the acceptance of the Secretary's minutes of the March 10th Ecomm meeting.

Treasurer's report:

Budget presentation/highlights: The Chapter's checkbook balance stands at \$8645.08. Activity has occurred in the following areas during March and April:

INCOME: April dues allocation and March and April credited web memberships, donations from the April Quarterly Meeting, and AMC Special Projects funding and the planned contribution to the project from the Underground Rail group. The income related to the special project is listed under Miscellaneous Income.

EXPEDITURES: Travel reimbursement, training, meeting costs, Meetup.com fee, and Underground Rail way project expenditures.

Regional Director:

Club plans and recommendations: Realignment of Chapters as discussed in previous meetings has been approved and will occur at the end of January 2015 at which point Mohawk-Hudson and Berkshire Chapters will belong to the same region. Progress is being made on the Club's plan to operate a facility in Harriman State Park. Much work remains to be done, but the goal is to have the facility operating at least partially between May and October of next year.

Chapter Chair:

Branding: The Club is undergoing a re-branding campaign – new logo, new motto (“AMC: Your connection to the Outdoors”) that will de-emphasize “Appalachian Mountain Club” in communications with outsiders. The implementation plan for the re-branding process is described in the attachment provided by Henry Schreiber.

Recognition: Recognition of members was stressed at a recent Chapters' Retreat, and expenditure of Chapter funds for that purpose was encouraged. Mary will return three dozen Club patches for redistribution to other Chapters, once she receives assurance that the Chapter will receive a comparable amount of new patches next year without additional cost.

Chapter & Committee Funds: Mohawk-Hudson and Maine Chapters were the only ones to receive CCCF funds. Our Chapter has received \$1200 from that funding source.

Committee reports:

Programs:

New Member Orientation: Ten people attended. The meeting went well and the 'Pizza Party' format was a good idea. The consensus was to wait until next year to hold another, possibly in March. The idea of doing a meeting for prospective members (using Club sources for invitations) was suggested.

April Pot Luck Dinner Meeting: Turnout was disappointing. Perhaps try a different venue, day of the week (avoid Mondays) or meeting format in the future?

July Picnic: We will need a grill pyro-technician – Kevin was suggested. A start time of 4:15-4:30 for hikes/activities at the Peebles Island venue and 5:30 for ‘social hour’ was suggested. We will need people to register for the event (Kathleen will handle that) to ensure we don’t go overboard with food purchase.

Combined Volunteer Recognition Event: Consensus was reached to hold a combined recognition event, rather than separate events for Trails and Outings volunteers. The event will be scheduled for sometime in October. A ‘light fare’ menu was suggested. Mary and Martha will help Kathleen research venue and price options for discussion and decision at July meeting. Henry discussed some other ideas of the New York Chapter for volunteer recognition service categories, including advocacy, ‘inspiration’, and mission support.

Annual Meeting: The annual meeting will take place at Schenectady County Community College culinary program on Monday, November 17th; Thursday of that week was not available. We will publicize the details of the meeting (including menu choices) in September. Potential program options were discussed. Henry indicated that he would consider giving a presentation on his trip to Mongolia; he has given that presentation before.

Other volunteers to assist Kathleen with programs: The possibility of recruiting other volunteers on a narrower, task-oriented basis was discussed. Also, perhaps directly asking participants at a future Chapter meeting would produce results.

Outings:

Magazine Outings listings: The Club magazine will no longer list outings. Instead, there will be a half-page ‘ad’ for each Chapter. The intention is to encourage members to consult information on their Chapter’s website and/or newsletter publication. The Club hopes to save \$50K annually through changes planned in the magazine. Henry mentioned that the New York Chapter has moved to a monthly email to members, which contains links to various information in a ‘blog’ format maintained by Chapter volunteers.

Training: At this point eleven Chapter leaders have had training to update their outdoor first aid skills. Training continues for a couple of new outings leaders (Ellen and Michele).

Other outings-related items: Mary will get ‘business cards’ to outings leaders, and also some hints about using Meetup to invite outing participants.

Trails:

Projects so far: Projects have gone well so far; many involved assisting the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy.

Upcoming plans: The Underground Railroad project schedule for May 24th is progressing. Edging has been ordered funded in part by Club special project funds as well as by the UR organization. The email ‘blast’ publicizing this event received some responses. The Tech Park project is in limbo due to non-responsiveness of the Tech Park representative who requested our assistance. The Stephentown trail project, on the other hand, is gaining traction and we may be asked to provide some help with that this

summer. Martha mentioned a new trail planned for the vicinity of Mud Pond, and suggested that John look into whether the Chapter could provide some help with that. Information about the project is available on the Town of Nassau website.

Webmaster:

Jeff has done the work to provide a new form for review that allows the trip leader to enter "**How did people find out about your activity**" separate from the activity description (<http://www.amcmohawkhudson.org/treport3/survey.asp>). He has also added a couple of reports that lists that info as well as a list of canceled trips. He also mentioned several web pages that contain hiking information including references to our Chapter.

Membership:

Stats and new member responses and activities: The Chapter acquired 15 new members in April. Currently the membership level is 544, which is seven less than the same time last year. Martha sent out 26 inquiries to new members, and has received 5 responses so far. She will wait for more responses before passing them along to Nancy Crowther for contact.

Newsletter:

Editor's report: Chris will include information about Martha's 'Catskills 35' achievement in the next newsletter, and will profile Michele as a new hike leader if she completes training by that time. The deadline for including outings listings in the next issue of the Chapter's newsletter will be June 12th

Delivery issues: Based on work by Mary, the Chapter has authorization by the Club to do an 'eBlast' to invite members to sign up to receive the Chapter's newsletter electronically.

Social Media: We have now achieved 96 'Likes' for our Facebook page, 90 Meetup Members. Mary stressed the importance of 'Liking' any Chapter postings that we see on our Facebook pages.

New business:

MH Chapter Weekend Sept 26th: Mary provided some preliminary cost analysis for the Chapter weekend at Taghkanic Lake State Park. She will send details of cost estimates via email for further discussion. It was decided to set a registration deadline of September 12th since that would still allow sufficient time to cancel without a major financial cost.

2015 Fall Gathering Committee and plans: The Committee is up and running and engaged in planning for this event.

Misc Chapters Retreat items: Three Chapters (not including ours) are piloting a 'dashboard' for the Club, designed to track Chapter progress toward goals, which was not very well received at the Chapters retreat.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.