



MASSACHUSETTS RECREATIONAL TRAILS ADVISORY BOARD

FALL MEETING - MINUTES

October 12, 2021

Remote Meeting

1:00 – 2:00pm

Members Present with Representation:

Tom Chamberland, Chair – Local Land Trust/Non-Profits

Bill Boles – Mountain Biking

Joe Geller – Rail Trail Users

Marianne Iarossi – Municipal Trail Planners

Becky Kalagher – Equestrian

Ben Phelps – All Terrain Vehicles

Larry Tucker – Snowmobiling

Mike White – 4-Wheel Drive Clubs

Liaisons:

Amanda Lewis – DCR MassTrails

Libby Knott – DCR MassTrails

Other Attendees:

Liam Cregan – Appalachian Mountain Club

Meeting Minutes:

Welcome

- Approve Minutes from June 8, 2021 Meeting
Tom asked for a motion to accept, which was made by Becky and seconded. A verbal vote was taken among members present. Minutes from June 8, 2021 were unanimously accepted.

MassTrails Update

- All recommended grants have been awarded. The federal funds for the RTP grants have recently been encumbered and approved for spending. RTP contracting has just started. All but one state funded grant has been contracted.
- Amanda and Libby are working on application and website updates for the November 1 announcement of the 2022 grant round.

2021 Grant Review

- **State Liaison's Role** – discussion focused on when it is appropriate for a state liaison to recuse him/herself from reviewing an application, from participating in the review discussion, and how this potentially overlaps with DCR's internal review of proposed trails projects before the application is reviewed. First, the recently adopted Conflict of Interest language in the Bylaws outlines MARTAB members' recusal procedures, including the liaisons. In taking a fresh look at that language after the most recent grant

review, it was determined that the liaison's role is somewhat nebulous. On one hand, the liaison's role on MARTAB is to facilitate and advocate for the trail user group he/she represents. On another, his/her involvement while not being of any financial gain or interest may still cause a perception of conflict due to participation in writing a grant application, helping advise on an application, being a proponent of a particular project, or being a participant in reviewing a project during any internal DCR review. Hence, the COI language will be revised to outline how to proceed in these cases. Proposed revisions will be presented to the MARTAB members before the January 2022 meeting for review. A vote to adopt will take place at that time to ensure that the measures are in place before the 2022 grant round review takes place.

- **OHV Outreach Prior to Grant Deadline** – Amanda proposed that we hold a workshop before the grant deadline to help motorized grant applicants better prepare their submittals. Scott will reach out to the OHV connections, and Larry will reach out to the snowmobile connections. It was decided to host a single, combined workshop instead of separate ones for each group. The process has been started and there will be updates on progress soon.
- **Buy America** - The compliance with Buy America has been difficult to obtain for many groups and Larry voiced concern that it may cause some snowmobile clubs to not apply for a grant. It was briefly discussed whether the equipment purchase awards could come out of the state funds rather than federal to avoid having to comply with Buy America.
- **Green Docket** – With DCR's new adoption of the Green Docket process, will the application this year make it clear what the applicant must do to comply with this process? Amanda answered that we have created new forms and new instructions within the application itself and the guidance documents to assist applicants in working through all the required documentation. This includes a new DCR Trail Form and new landowner and conservation restriction forms, too. All of the above (Buy America, Green Docket, landowner permissions, etc.) can be confusing so Amanda will help present the OHV/Snowmobile workshop so that she can talk to these points and requirements.

Education Grants

- Amanda is working on a revised method of announcing and managing the Education Grant funds. The earlier proposed shift to a May announcement, upon reflection, won't work well with the timing of other grant related duties at that time of year. She is looking for internal DCR feedback as she revamps the program.

MARTAB Membership

- **Terms** – Libby will delve into the files we have access to (digital Northampton files) and look for nomination papers for each member to verify term dates. Some nomination paperwork may be hard copy and we will need to look for it in the office. If paperwork is due for anyone we will make a list and send it to all to get our records updated and current.
- **Vacancies** – Please ask around, nominate someone you know who is a trails advocate or professional. We have several slots open. They are: Trail Users with Dogs, Canoe/Padding/Water Trails, Hiking, Community Trails and Greenways Groups, Off-Road Motorcycling, Universal Access, Statewide Land Conservation Organization, Skiers/Snowshoers. As well, we need alternates for all EXCEPT Equestrians and Snowmobiling.
- **Change in Affiliation** – Michael is requesting to change his affiliation from regional 4x4 representative to statewide 4x4 representative. Tom asked him to send an email to Amanda, Libby, and Tom with the request so that it is recorded in the MARTAB records.

- **Dick O'Brien Thank You** – Amanda spoke with Dick and he doesn't want or expect anything as a thank you for his service and time on MARTAB. He loves the idea of joining us for a field trip sometime soon, however.

Other Business

- **MARTAB Gathering / Hike** – Amanda asked for someone to take the lead on this. If we can plan a trip to a somewhat centrally-located natural surface trail that would be great. Once we have a date and location set we can invite Dick O'Brien, too.
- **Nomination of Liam Cregan** – Liam was introduced as a nominee for the hiking representative vacancy since Bridget Likely has stepped down. Nomination papers have been received but the nomination must be made according to the Bylaws. Accordingly, Liam's nomination papers will be shared with all MARTAB members. We will look at the Bylaws to direct how we proceed with the nomination and vote. Libby will talk with Tom regarding the options available to us as the Bylaws outline nominations only taking place at the Summer MARTAB meetings. Liam's nomination and other current MARTAB members terms may need to be addressed earlier than that date and we will determine if that is possible within the Bylaws framework.
- **Upcoming MARTAB Meetings**
Fall and winter meetings will be held virtually, with potential for holding the annual review and annual meeting in person depending on the current pandemic conditions. Meeting dates will be on Tuesdays (except the annual review, which is on Saturday):
 - Winter – January 11, 2022
 - Spring – Grant Review Meeting, March 12, 2022
 - Summer – Annual Meeting, June 7, 2022

Meeting Adjourned – 2:02pm

PUBLIC NOTICE: Access to the Massachusetts Recreation Trails Advisory Board meetings is encouraged. Please email Elizabeth.Knott@mass.gov at least 2 hours before any future meeting time to receive a link to the virtual meeting platform.