

North Carolina Rail-Trails 21st Annual Meeting

October 9, 2010, 10:30-1:00
Woodcroft Community Building

Final Minutes

Board Members present: Dilys Bowman, AL Capehart, Alison Carpenter, Harry Clapp, Dave Connelly, Mike Domonkos, Jack Kiser, John Morck, Charles Farley, Nancy Pierce. **Board members absent:** Sam Erwin, Henry McKoy, Robert Menzies, Tony Reevy. **Staff members present:** CR Townsend, Carrie Banks, Curt Devereux

Welcome and 07/10/10minutes

Chair John Morck welcomed everyone and asked for a motion to approve July 10 minutes previously sent out to the Board. Motion by Bob, Second by Mike. Approval Unanimous.

Treasurer Report

Treasurer Bob Segal passed out copies of the financial report. NCRT has \$159,000 in the bank compared to projected \$139,000, overage due to later than expected Executive Director hiring date. Current issue: Should NCRT endowment fund of \$12,000 continue to be in separate (Wachovia money market) fund? AL clarified that the source of this money was a board fund-raising effort to finance stewardship of acquired property. As it turns out NCRT has transferred property to local entities so stewardship role does not currently exist. Bob moved to move the \$12,000 to general operating fund. Discussion: CR clarified that it is not a formal endowment fund but rather is board-designated, so can be legally moved. Second by AL. Approval unanimous. Bob asked for a motion that he and Carrie look at investments alternatives other than Wachovia money markets. Motion by Mike, Second by Charles. Approval unanimous.

(Dave Connelly entered).

AL Capehart resignation

AL Capehart read resignation letter. He asked for President Emeritus title and asked for NCRT-related expense reimbursement. He then read "A Gift from Santa AL", reflections on his work for NC rail-trail since 1983, beginning with the establishment of a committee looking for a safe bicycle route from downtown Durham to Research Triangle Park, ultimately resulting in the American Tobacco Trail, the incorporation of NCRT in 1990, his disappointment in failure to get North Carolina to effectively use federal railbanking, but pointing out a legacy of more than 100 miles of rail trails in the state. Discussion ensued. Charles: Can he vote? John: No, but NCRT can authorize expenses and AL can represent NCRT to the public.

Nominating Committee Report

In Nominating Committee Chair Tony Reevy's absence, Bob read Committee motion to elect AL president emeritus and to allow expense reimbursement, taking effect January 1, 2011. Approval unanimous. Bob said that four board members whose terms end December 31 -- John Morck, Mike Domonkos, Charles Farley and Tony Reevy -- have all agreed to serve again if elected. Nancy clarified that

term lengths are all three years. Mike clarified that with AL gone and Carrie on, the Board will have 15 members. Bob made Committee motion to approve these four members for another term. Approval unanimous. Bob made Committee motion to elect Carrie to Board, effective Jan 1. Charles clarified she will be voting but recues herself from personnel/salary discussions. (Carrie left for the vote) Approval unanimous. Bob made final Committee motion to elect Carrie President effective 01/01/11. Approval unanimous.

Administrative Report

Carolyn (CR) Townsend gave Admininstrative/Earthshare of North Carolina (ESNC) report, drawing attention to display board and materials. She said: Workplace giving campaigns are essential to NCRT. ESNC is the only conservation/environmental workplace giving entity in NC to which employees can give by means of payroll deduction. In NC there are 26 groups partnering with ESNC and 60 national partners. Partners are beginning to have their own campaign. Our new NCRT executive leadership gives us new reach in this respect. CR passed out envelopes for ESNC and encouraged BOD members to give, designating NCRT the recipient. Mike asked about online giving to ESNC. CR said to be aware of difference between ESNC and Earthshare, which is a national group. Jack: If you designate NCRT in workplace giving, all goes to NCRT, if no designation then it's parceled out. CR: 9-15 percent of money to ESNC is for admin fees. CR: NCRT gets a good share of ESNC funds because of AL, CR and David Coates' volunteer time.

Bylaws Committee Report

In Bylaw Committee chair Tony Reeve's absence Mike gave Committee report. Changes were made in verbiage to coincide with changes regarding President and Executive Director. Bylaws committee reiterates that directors must be NCRT members. An issue needing examination is that NCRT is technically a membership organization but has not acted that way insofar as there has not been an annual membership meeting, and there may also be ramifications regarding tax deductibility of members' dues. Mike will look into this. Mike made Committee motion to adopt recommended changes to bylaws. Approval unanimous.

Committees Discussion

John Morck introduced discussion regarding Board committees. Carrie proposed an ad hoc committee to revise mission statement, a standing fundraising committee (for projects and operating funds) and a standing membership committee. Charles: need PR committee. Nancy: include Little Toot, PR/Marketing. Jack suggested a legislation and advocacy committee. Board members should contact John with committee interest and John will send out list and appointees. Committee members must be NCRT member but not necessarily a board member. Carrie: Curt Devereaux and Dave Connelly have been doing membership committee work already, looking at using data base more effectively for building membership. Database can be more geared to fund raising. Curt is looking at a program called *Giftworks* to use for fundraising, Curt has already brought NCRT savings through use of *TechSoup*. Jean Middleton is ready to give up membership duties but will continue to check mailbox, send out renewals and thank-yous and receive mail. Carrie will coordinate with Jean regarding membership going forward.

Jack smacked a wasp on Al's shoulder .

Executive Director Report.

AL gave Carrie the key to the PO Box. Carrie introduced the idea hatched by her and AL to have a North Carolina Rail-Trail Network. Small trails groups would join the network and pay a small admin fee (NC Center *for* Nonprofits model). In return, NCRT would help them with grants, provide space on website, give best practices advice, foster networking among groups. NCRT would benefit by cutting down on travel time and phone calls. Admin fee would cover bimonthly conference calls.

Discussion: Charles: Like the concept of links to other rail trails. Jack: Greatest benefits are capacity building, transfer of knowledge, synergy. Carrie clarified it would be a program of NCRT. Nancy: It gets to the core of our mission. Jack: Limited to organizations with rail focus or trails? Dave: It makes sense for us to focus on rail trails. Jack: Start with rail network. John: Network could eventually consider other types of trails. Dave: Weblinks would be mutual. Jack: But expertise would be in rails. Dave: TRTC started its page on NCRT's website. Carrie: Opens up opportunity to work with rail trails that NCRT has nothing to do with, such as Gold Hill. Charles: Any trail group could get a hot link on NCRT website. John asked for motion to ask Carrie to develop a plan for a NCRT network. Motion by Dilys, Second by Dave. Approval unanimous.

HR 4277

Jack spoke about HR 4277 The Active Community Transportation Act of 2010. There are 73 cosponsors of this bill including Reps David Price, Larry Kissell and Bradley Miller from North Carolina. The bill rationale says most trips are short enough to walk or bicycle, incidental exercise is key to health and trails are integral to transportation infrastructure.

This act is unique in that it would set aside federal funding, which would not pass-through the states, which have a highway bias. Communities would apply directly to feds to help fund existing plans with demonstrated public support. It would not take away from other transportation funding states get. The degree to which a community already uses existing funds would help the community get more. HR 4277 would *authorize*, not appropriate or spend. Jack moved that NCRT Board endorse HR 4277 and take efforts individually or collectively to get our representatives to sign on to this bill. Second by Dave. Approval unanimous.

Curt will put this on website, Carrie will provide letter to all of NC delegation, copy to RTC web, urging all members of NCRT to contact their US House representatives.

Awards.

CR introduced Carol Thompson, chief author of production about the American Tobacco trail. Carol introduced Lorna Collingridge, stills photographer for the project. CR presented Golden Spike award to Carol, Dave Connelly took photos. Carol said the video will be on video and given to NCRT Board, TRTC, schools.

John presented the 2010 Carolyn R Townsend volunteer award to AL Capehart. "Without AL there would be no NCRT," John said. Dave Connelly took photos.

AL moved to authorize Golden Spike to Harvey Harman, who donated an easement to town of Franklinville for Deep River Rail Trail. Second by Charles. Approval unanimous. John, Carrie: Going forward, NCRT Executive Director will collect nominees for Golden Spike award so as to institutionalize selection of award winners. Clarification: There is no limit to number of Golden Spike awards.

Project Reports

Atlantic & Yadkin Greenway (a rail trail) in Greensboro steering committee asked for appointees to "Conductors Committee". Charles moved to appoint Harry Clapp as conductor with Joe Best (Greensboro) as assistant conductor. Second by Bob. Approval unanimous. Harry brought forth A&Y Greenway Committee's request for NCRT's endorsement of A&Y Greenway. Bob moved that NCRT formally endorse A&Y Greenway concept. Second by Dave. Approval unanimous.

Charles pointed out that Mike primed the pump for NC Safe Routes to School and that Brevard was the first to get a SRTS demo grant.

Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor: AL, Dave and Carrie went to meeting; Carrie spoke in favor of the trail beside the corridor. Dave: NCDOT prefers SEHSRC trail be a local matter. This presents problems since some rural communities may not see its benefit. Dave said NCRT should advocate for it to be regional or state oversight. AL said trail alignment should be purchased at same time as rail so it can be a bi-state park.

Mike will report back to NCRT on how Marion successfully negotiated a rail-trail with Norfolk Southern.

Nancy reported on early efforts to get a ped/bike trail along Charlotte's proposed Light Rail extension to the UNCC campus and a proposed diesel commuter line to the north suburbs and Iredell County. These trains are a decade or more in the future.

Logo, website & newsletter discussion.

David Newton's Little Toot contract is running out. Given new Executive Director position, more can be done by staff and Board. Carrie presented some alternatives. Bob moved to have publication/marketing committee research alternatives for production of Little Toot. Second by Dilys. Unanimous approval.

Next meeting location and dates

Winter Pender County January 8

Spring High Point April 9

Summer in Lansing, Ashe County July 9

Fall Durham October 8

Dave moved to adjourn, AL seconded.

John opened membership meeting. NCRT member Curt Devereux reminded board members to put forth content for FAQ page on NCRT website. Mike will work with Curt on making this section deeper.

1:00 Lunch, catered.