

January 22nd, 2020

**Mountain State Trail Alliance (MSTA) Board meeting Summary
Nicholas County meeting, at the Public Library in Richwood WV**

Board members present:

Bill Wells

Adam Hodges

Kevin Rock

Pete Conrad

Jeff Evans

Andy Forron

Chris Hayes

Gary Morefield

NRGTA Employees: Billy Strasser and Kim Maxwell. We had 3 guests.

1) Bill Wells called the meeting to order (after 4:30 pm.)and welcomed our guests. We did not have a quorum.

2) **Treasurer's report:** Kevin gave the Treasurer's report. We have total assets of \$42,613.66 in four separate accounts. **Year to date (2019):** There was \$3040.00 in dues and \$4766.47 in donations collected. Grants funds income was \$172,888.70. **Total Income** was \$180,695.17 for January through December 2019. **Total expenses** were \$157,910.56 with \$140,038.60 spent on the Arc Grant expenses, \$8,341.25 spent on the Coal Heritage grant, \$5,000.00 spent on the HUB grant and \$4,530.71 on Operational expenses. This leaves us a net income of \$22,784.61.

3) **New Logo:** With our name change to "Mountain State Trail Alliance" and the addition of Webster County we now have a new Logo that will be passed out in the Future. We still need to update our name with the IRS (Kevin will update). We have new decals to pass out also. See Bill Wells.

4) Grants update:

ARC Grant Billy reports:

- The DOH has extended the construction grant out to December of 2022. The DOH will be doing the scoping and engineering during 2020 and start the construction in 2021 and close out in 2022. There's a scoping meeting scheduled next week with the DOH in Oak Hill. The DOH is extending the Rail Trail from 3 to 6 miles and they say that cost will use up most of the grant. The trail will extend into downtown Richwood. The next part is an extension of the White Oak Rail Trail North of Oak Hill, about 2 miles. The last piece is a 3-mile extension of the White Oak Rail Trail south. Then we'll need to write another grant to extend the trail from Pax to Richwood.
- Kim reports we're working with the WVU GIS center on mapping the trails in the counties and updating our Vision Map for our website. Webster County has met our criteria for joining the MSTA and is now a member. Mercer county has accepted our offer to join the MSTA and is working on meeting our criteria.
- Billy reports that they're in process of writing a new grant to the TA office for engineering. The Grants are due to be submitted by the end of next week. There are 2 grants being applied for. First one is an engineering and design grant that addresses parts of past grants that aren't completed. This a matched grant, Bill is working on our part for the match. The second grant is a staffing grant to fund a project manager and a trail maintenance manager. This grant would continue all the trail initiatives we have already

started in the last two years. We should know by the end of the summer whether the grant applications will be accepted

- Arc grant implementation. We finally received the scope of the project from the DOH and they're asking for an extension for construction. The grants that pay for Sam and Billy salary's run out in April and February respectively. The grant that pays for Kim salary runs out in May. Presently other grants are being explored to continue to Fund the salaries. This Summer we will be without any employees.
- Upper Kanawha Valley is working on a grant to construct a trail from Charleston to Gauley Bridge. Then the MSTA will write grants to run the trail from Gauley Bridge to Fayetteville. Most of the trail is in place already. We're on the steering committee for that grant.
- Coal Heritage grant last year funded a historical study and this year's grant funded trail construction (which Sam has completed), installing Way Side exhibits (in Construction) and installing some split Rail fence (also being worked on) at Wolf Creek Park. This Grant will finish by the end of May.

Sam reports we had around 30 people working on trails Sunday at Wolf Creek Park in inclement weather. Thanks to everyone for their support who came out.

5) Trail Authority Bill:

We have meet with all 6 counties about joining the Trail Authority. The Trail Authority will need to put together a steering committee to come up with a budget and funding mechanism that will inform the counties so they can decide whether to participate in the Trail Authority. We now need to request the counties to appoint their steering committee member.

6) New Meeting Schedule Bill: Currently with 6 counties it works out that we have a meeting every two months. We discussed our meeting schedule that has now expanded to 7 counties. The Board approved by email vote a new schedule that calls for us to meet in Alphabetical order by county name. Some counties will not have a meeting during the year because we now have 7 counties (with the addition of Webster County). The next meeting will be in Raleigh County in March. We will have a call-in number for members who can't attend.

We had discussions about meeting at a central location instead of travelling to a different county each month. Adam and Andy Forron will present a proposal that will have video conferencing and a call-in number.

7) Mini Excavator:

Bill proposes buying a Mini Excavator (around \$30,000) that we would use to construct our own trails. The DOH uses most of the grant money up for engineering and we could build more trails with less money with our own excavator. We'll get an exact price and have an email vote. We already have \$2000.00 donated and the Fayetteville Rotary club has proposed donating a \$1000.00.

8) Thanks to Billy Strasser:

Thanks to Billy for all the work he has done and accomplishing all that he has done in the last 30 months as grant manager. This will be his last meeting as our paid Grant Manager. Billy states he has enjoyed working with the MSTA members and accomplishing so much with the grants. Billy has plans to do some travelling while we work out getting funding to pay for salaries.

9) Old Business:

None

10) New Business:

Kim will take the lead in forming the Trail Authority. We're Applying for a grant to fund the Trail Authority. There may be some tweaks to the current Trail Authority legislation. We need to have a

strategic planning discussion on how the MSTA be structured around the Trail Authority. Who we are has changed since we started, and we need to discuss what our goals are and where we're going. This will be on our next meeting agenda.

Chris reports that ACE employee Brian Baker has started a nonprofit to get WV youth involved in the outdoors. This year there will be a Rim to River 100-mile Ultra Marathon run fund raiser on November 7th. He will be at our next meeting to do some cross promotions for this event.

Adjourn:

Submitted by:

Jeff Evans

Secretary

Public Meeting:

There were 5 public participates.

Bill welcomed our public guests. Bill explained how the ARC grant has impacted the Richwood and surrounding area. Our public guest offered some suggestions on other opportunities for grants that are available.

Email Votes taken:

There will 12 MSTA Board members who approved modifying the meeting schedule to allow the addition of new counties. The county meetings in the new schedule will meet in Alphabetical order every two months. There will still be 6 meetings in a year.