

ATA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Saturday, April 16, 2016
10:00 am. – 2:00 pm.
Superior Chamber of Commerce
230 Main Street, Superior, AZ 85173

Board members present: Rob Mason, Larry Snead, Bernie Stalman, Jan Hancock, Jeff Whitney, Fred Gaudet, Lirain Urreiztieta, Ambika Balasubramaniyan, Denis Ryan

Board members present telephonically: Ben Murphy,

Board members absent: C.W. Payne, Todd Sadow, Steve Anderson

Staff members present: Matthew Nelson

Guests present: Phyllis Ralley, Aaron Seifert, Pete Casillas, Todd Pryor, Susan Lagerman

NO.	DESCRIPTION	ACTION ITEMS
1	<p><u>Call to Order & Welcome to Board Members and Guest Introductions</u> Meeting was called to order by President Rob Mason, and Rob introduced Todd Pryor, Town Manager of Superior (manager@superior.gov) and Pete Casillas, with the Superior Chamber of Commerce for the Town of Superior, (rebuildsuperior@gmail.com) who welcomed the Board of Directors and reported the Arizona National Scenic Trail was a good eco-tourism draw to their community. Pete Casillas is involved with the Superior Recreation Users Group and the Legends of Superior Trail (LOST) Committee.</p>	<p>Thank you to the Superior Chamber of Commerce for hosting our meeting.</p>
2	<p><u>Incoming President's Comments and Introduction of Susan Lagerman</u> Rob began the meeting by asking the Board to "Make this the year of the YES" and be proactive and support Matt Nelson with the Strategic Plan and keep the ATA's successful programs rolling. He introduced Susan Lagerman (Rob's guest) as a potential new Board member. She introduced herself and explained her background and community and nonprofit involvements.</p>	<p>Susan Lagerman's bio attached to these minutes.</p>
3	<p><u>Approval of Minutes from October 10, 2015 Board of Directors Meeting</u> Jan Hancock provided copies of the minutes to Board members prior to the meeting, and the Board was asked for any additions or corrections, and Rob Mason offered a few corrections to the minutes from the last meeting, which Jan recorded. Jeff Whitney made a motion to approve the minutes with the edits noted and Ambika seconded the motion. Minutes were approved, as amended, unanimously.</p>	<p>(Minutes attached, with corrections included.)</p>
4	<p><u>Approval of Proposed 2016 Budget Report (and Financial Report)</u> There was a brief discussion about some adjustments in the budget that Matthew detailed. He mentioned that Francisco Mendoza of the BLM Tucson Field Office had contacted him and BLM was going to be de-obligating \$30,000 of previously committed funds. Matt noted that this</p>	<p>See attached 2016 Budget and Financial Report. Phyllis will report back to Matt Nelson on any</p>

	<p>would cause ATA to find the funds to replace the BLM funds between now and September 30, 2016 when the new federal budget begins for 2017. Phyllis Ralley offered to try and find out the reason behind that.</p> <p>Matt reported that two grants have been announced: \$37,000 grant from National Forest Foundation (Mazatzal Wilderness projects) and \$79,000 from the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) for a trail realignment near Washington Park. Matt noted that Shawn Redfield continues to volunteer as the ATA's Trail Director with no acceptance of a stipend. Jeff Whitney proposed we find a way to recognize Shawn for his volunteer work.</p> <p>Larry Snead made a motion to approve the 2016 ATA Budget, Jeff Whitney seconded the motion, and the Board voted unanimous approval of the 2016 Budget.</p>	<p>information about the potential de-obligated BLM funds.</p> <p>Explore a way to recognize Shawn Redfield for his years of volunteer services for ATA.</p>
5	<p><u>Review of Planning Strategic Efforts for 2017-2021</u></p> <p>Matt Nelson reported a summary of the Phoenix and Tucson Strategic Planning Committee meeting progress results. There was an extended discussion of the work that has been done thus far toward a Strategic Plan for 2017-2021. The suggestion was made to adjust the mission statement from the word "build" to "enhance" because the Arizona Trail is essentially built and ATA is in the process of enhancing the trail route and experience.</p> <p>Trail Rights-of-Way (ROW's), especially State Land easement widths were highlighted, including a discussion about the 15-foot-wide ROW and the desire to expand this width to up to one mile. Discussion included potential funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and different mining projects such as Asarco's Ripsey Wash TSF with potential monetary offsets mitigations regarding the AZT corridor. Bernie Stalman was in favor of a one-mile ROW.</p> <p>Ambika asked about timelines for Strategic Goals within the Strategic Plan. Matthew agreed with her suggestion and said the timelines will be added in an additional Strategic Planning session to finalize the Plan.</p>	<p>Include timelines and priorities in the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Follow up with another Strategic Planning Committee meeting, date TBD, to finalize the suggestions from this Board of Directors meeting.</p>
6	<p><u>Strategies and Tactics Discussion</u></p> <p>Matt reported there may be an opportunity to fund a full-time Conservation Corps to conduct routine maintenance on the AZT. A proposal from Arizona Conservation Corps has been proposed to the USFS Region 3 and REI, with matching private and federal dollars to fund the corps.</p> <p>Rob Mason noted the term "comment" in the third Strategic Goal and suggested it could be changed to the word "address."</p> <p>There was a discussion regarding trail huts and whether ATA should</p>	<p>Further clarification and research on shade structures needed for trail users on desert areas of the AZT and other shelter.</p> <p>Further research and clarification needed on water catchments or</p>

<p>consider accommodating all levels of users, which was mentioned in the draft Strategic Plan. Fred Gaudet and Ambika expressed they were firmly opposed to the construction of huts. Rob Mason noted that Babbitt Ranch has approached ATA with an idea of building huts to expand recreational opportunities and protect resources on the ranch. The Babbitt Ranch would maintain the huts.</p> <p>Matt also noted that there were areas along the Arizona Trail where traditional-style shade ramadas have been installed, and other locations that may benefit from these structures.</p> <p>Matt mentioned that the US Forest Service Arizona Trail Comprehensive Management Plan does not include any plans for any infrastructure for the trail route, such a huts, so anything the ATA would want to add to enhance the trail experience would need to be provided by others, such as a third party company to develop and manage any huts provided along the route of the AZT.</p> <p>Fred Gaudet noted that the development of water sources would be an important infrastructure that would support the route’s important need for water for all AZT for all users. He suggested some creative water sources, such as water catchments and rain harvesting from the roofs of shade structures located along the AZT.</p> <p>It was suggested that one logical location for a hut on the route of the AZT would be in the Mazatzal Wilderness because it is so remote and a long distance to resupply locations.</p> <p>There were suggestions for providing a listing of campsites on the AZT in conjunction with the ATA maps and website information.</p> <p>Ben Murphy noted there were locations where yurts could be managed by others, such as at the Flagstaff Nordic Center, and that the CO Bar Babbitt Ranch could benefit financially from a hut system and that might help them preserve their land.</p> <p>Others commented that camping and hut locations could be both on federal and non-federal lands.</p> <p>Another trail enhancement discussed was the addition of more interpretive signs along the trail.</p> <p>The importance of including youth in our Strategic Plan, and Matt noted we receive funds to pay Youth Corps to conduct trail maintenance, and that we involve youth through our Seeds of Stewardship. He mentioned it would be important to research, identify, and plan how to find additional</p>	<p>harvesting on the AZT.</p> <p>Research need for maps showing camp site locations on the AZT.</p> <p>Research need for more Interpretive signs on the AZT as a possible enhancement.</p> <p>Research a need to include Youth Involvement in a section of the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Review ATA mission wording to possibly include words such as develop, grow, sustain and expand.</p> <p>Research need to spend some of the funding in reserves on an annual basis, and consult with financial advisors on this suggestion.</p> <p>Consider developing a consistent volunteer recognition article in the ATA newsletter.</p> <p>Ambika, Fred, Jan, and Rob, to help work on the Timelines for the Strategic Plan, and Matt, Shawn Redfield, Sirena Dufault, and Jeff Whitney were assigned to help develop the Priorities for the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Research other long-</p>
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<p>youth opportunities.</p> <p>The “sustain” goal would also include the ATA’s human resources and attention to providing training opportunities for staff. Rob Mason would like the mission be evolved into “develop, grow, sustain and expand” the AZT. He also hopes that Sirena and our Board would make efforts to continue to better connect with people in our Gateway Communities.</p> <p>There was a discussion of the \$300,000 reserves that ATA has and whether that may be preventing us from receiving grants. Ben suggested spending some of these funds to promote the trail locally, nationally and internationally. Eric Hiser, previous Board President, expressed concern in a Strategic Planning meeting that with \$300,000 in reserves, we may not be considered fundable and suggested the development of a list of criteria for which the funds could be used. Matt noted we have land acquisition and corridor protection issues that will require major funding in the future, and we may not want to reduce our reserves to a minimum amount of dollars for smaller more immediate projects.</p> <p>Matt asked Denis Ryan about his opinion, and Denis noted that \$300,000 isn’t a very large amount of money for a nonprofit’s reserves, and if the Board would like to consider spending any of the reserves, he recommended only spending the interest earned or designate a percent of the reserves for spending on special projects. An amount of not more than 22% could be designated one time, and this amount could be recaptured as funding became available.</p> <p>Rob reported the ATA Financial Committee had a discussion about how to retain staff. The Committee offered a raise of 7% to Matthew, and a medical reimbursement fund has also been set up for him. Rob commented that is had been difficult talking Matthew into accepting the raise, but he noted ATA needs to keep our compensation in line with other nonprofit executive director positions to help retain our staff.</p> <p>Rob also recommended our Board should consider adding more recognition for staff and volunteers, and Ambika suggested a “Volunteer of the Month” in the newsletter. Matthew pointed out there is already an article about volunteers in each newsletter. He agreed to use the newsletter for recognition of volunteers, stewards, and staff and said he would work with Wendy to identify volunteers needing recognition. Ambika noted that it would be important to be consistent with a program of recognition.</p> <p>There was a Board discussion about looking ahead and evaluating opportunities for fundraising on a long-term multi-year campaign that could help build our organization’s reserves to accomplish our Strategic</p>	<p>term fundraising opportunities, such as an Annual Campaign.</p> <p>Refer back to last Strategic Plan to determine the progress made on those goals.</p>
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	<p>Plan goals. Several Board members provided examples of annual fund raising campaigns for nonprofit organizations that are very successful.</p> <p>The Board asked that the Strategic Planning Committee look at the previous Strategic Plan to get a measure on how far we had progressed on those goals.</p> <p>The Board asked that the Strategic Plan have timelines and priorities added to the new plan. Four people were assigned to identify the timelines: Ambika, Fred, Jan, and Rob, and four people were assigned to develop the Strategic Plan priorities: Matt, Shawn Redfield, Sirena Dufault, and Jeff Whitney. Ambika noted that we would need to identify what data exists and evaluate how our new or current needs would result in informed decisions.</p> <p>Matt agreed that we need timelines and priorities. He uses the Strategic Plan to guide the organization’s operations. Rob called for another session on the Strategic Plan. Jan reminded the Board that once the Strategic Plan was finalized the Board can use it as a basis to produce a Prospectus document, which we had wanted to develop for soliciting funding and partnerships as recommended by the ATA Financial Development Committee several years ago.</p> <p>Larry asked for clarification on using more groups as trail stewards. Matt responded that getting groups involved has more sustainability than an individual. Currently, most of the trail stewards are individuals.</p> <p>Matthew commented that there is a historian working on the history along the Arizona Trail, being partially funded by the US Forest Service. The historian is occasionally referencing the work done by Chuck Lauer years ago and that Chuck will be recognized in this history project as a contributor.</p>	
7	LUNCH – Catered by Superior restaurant Jade Grill – Chef Lucy Wing - Awesome!	
8	<p><u>Board Officers Election</u></p> <p>Prior to the Officers Election, the Board decided to take a vote on Rob Mason’s nomination of Susan Lagerman to serve on the ATA Board of Directors until the upcoming election of board members at the February 2017 meeting, which would enable Susan to participate in the vote for election of officers for 2016 and serve their term until the Board meeting scheduled at the quarterly meeting following the Annual meeting.</p> <p>Fred Gaudet nominated Susan Lagerman to the ATA Board of Directors and Bernie Stalman seconded the motion. The Board voted to accept</p>	

	<p>Susan’s nomination unanimously.</p> <p>Matt asked Jan Hancock to announce the candidates being nominated for Board officers: Rob Mason, President; Fred Gaudet, Vice President of Trail Operations, and Jan Hancock, Secretary; as these members were re-elected for three-year terms to serve on the Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting. The current ATA Executive Board officers C.W. Payne, Treasurer, and Larry Snead, Vice President of Board Development, were also nominated for re-election. Susan Lagerman made a motion to accept the slate of officers, Larry Snead seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.</p>	
8	<p><u>Advisory Council Update</u></p> <p>Ambika provided an outline of her plans for recruiting and retaining members for an ATA Advisory Council. Eric Hiser and Lyn White will also be asked to serve and help recruit Advisor Council members. Ambika suggested an agreement for a 2-year engagement on the Council, and that there would be some “Core Council” members who would have a higher level of commitment, with more tasks and expectations and meet quarterly, serving as “ambassadors” to ATA. She mentioned that the Advisory Council would not be a “vanity list” membership and the participants would serve as actual advisors to ATA.</p> <p>She suggested the Advisory Council would operate on a “guilt-free” approach to service as a “love us” group and would also help provide credibility to our organization. There would also be an “Extended Council” of members who would be kept informed through a mailing list. Jan congratulated Ambika on the great planning Ambika has achieved in helping plan the guidelines and expectations for the Advisory Council. Ambika will make adjustments to the plan and provide an updated report back to the Board as the work on the formation of the Advisory Council continues.</p> <p>Lirain noted that we would need to distinguish between expectations and goals as the work of the Advisory Council gets underway. Jeff Whitney suggested we establish goals with sub points, and try to get this down to around 5 items. He noted that passion for what ATA does and identifying the attributes the Council members have that could be helpful to the Advisory Council’s goals. Jeff further noted our Advisory Council members should make efforts to keep up with the minutes from Board of Directors meetings to stay informed.</p> <p>Ambika suggested one quarterly conference phone call to Advisory Council members that would be mission-based and highlight the Council’s members and provide them with an ATA Advisory Council logo and publicize their names for recognition of their membership.</p>	<p>Suggestions for the Advisory Council should be directed to Ambika and her committee.</p>

	<p>Fred Gaudet noted it would be good to keep some of the Advisory Council members long term, and that we should offer but not require that the Advisory Council members become ATA members. He also suggested the Advisory Council members be encouraged to provide financial support and that they should receive newsletters and e-news whether they become ATA members or not.</p> <p>Another suggestion was to pull Advisory Council members from statewide locations and include Advisors in our Gateway Communities and that this would strengthen partnerships with their community. We would want to solicit their involvement and support for whatever the ATA needs are now. Eric Hiser agreed to serve on the ATA Advisory Council and he suggested Maria Baier as a potential ATA Advisory Council member. Eric noted that both he and Susan could act as legal advisors to ATA when a legal subcommittee is established.</p> <p>Aaron Seifert noted we would want to talk with our Advisory Council members about our ATA needs and ask them to help us market these to their contacts.</p> <p>We currently have “Honorary Advisory Council” members that include elected officials.</p>	
9	<p><u>Campaign for a Greater Buffalo Park</u> ATA received a request to endorse the efforts to preserve City of Flagstaff-owned lands around Buffalo Park as open space. The Mayor and some members of the business community oppose the plan.</p> <p>Lirian asked what the direct and indirect impacts to ATA could be. Fred Gaudet asked if the endorsement would be for a campaign or an initiative, and it was also noted that the Arizona Trail in Buffalo Park was an urban trail experience that was routed through Flagstaff for that purpose, and that if it does not directly affect the Arizona National Scenic Trail we should not take sides on the issue.</p> <p>Because ATA is a partner with the City of Flagstaff on the land it manages, it was decided it was best for ATA to remain neutral. Phyllis cited the decision made to remain neutral when Save the Scenic Santa Ritas asked ATA to oppose the Rosemont Mine. Larry commented that Dale Shewalter had always insisted ATA remain neutral on issues parallel to the AZT, as long as the trail is not impacted.</p> <p>Fred moved and Lirain seconded a motion that ATA remain neutral on the Greater Buffalo Park issue. The motion was approved with one dissenting vote.</p>	

10	<p><u>Questions/Comments on Staff/Program Reports</u></p> <p>Jan had a question on Shawn Redfield’s Trail Director’s Report regarding the progress on the Oak Tree Canyon Trailhead. Matt noted there had been discussions regarding the location of the trailhead, and there were concerns from the Arizona Department of Transportation, Coronado National Forest and local equestrian groups about the dangerous access off Hwy 83. The USFS is amendable to the idea of developing this location as a trailhead, but not with amenities as previously discussed. The BLM Empire-Las Cienegas National Conservation Area, located nearby, is better suited for equestrian rigs and a connector trail from there to Oak Tree Canyon has been planned for many years. Jan committed to assisting pro bono with the planning for the trailhead.</p> <p>Fred reported that ATA had commented on the Draft EIS for Grand Canyon Backcountry Management Plan. ATA provided comments on the EIS elements pertaining to the Arizona National Scenic Trail.</p> <p>Rob Mason told us of a request from the Lewis & Clark Heritage Foundation to partner with ATA to offer discounted memberships to each other. Following a brief discussion there was an informal approval with direction from the Board to follow up on this request. Rob Mason suggested ATA consider a shared half-price membership with the Lewis and Clark organization and he will follow up and provide more information on this for the Board’s consideration.</p> <p>Rob Mason suggested we invite Lyn White to serve as a member of our ATA Advisory Council to keep her involved with our organization.</p> <p>The Board expressed kudos to Sirena for her great work with the Warrior Hike program and her dedication to making their experience a success.</p> <p>Larry Snead expressed his feelings that the ATA to invest in a Development Director for our organization’s future growth. He felt ATA should look for a more sustainable funding model that did not depend on grants or membership dues for our budget and that our Strategic Plan Committees should take this into consideration.</p> <p>Phyllis Ralley asked if ATA knew what was happening with the Heritage Fund or any other legislative funding, and there were no updates available.</p>	<p>Follow up with the Lewis and Clark Heritage Foundation about potential joint memberships.</p> <p>Follow up on a possible staff expansion suggestion for the Strategic Plan and look for ways to include more sustainable funding opportunities in the Strategic Plan.</p>
11	<p><u>Future Meetings and Other Important Dates</u></p> <p>Matt asked if the Board dates of July 16, 2016 at the Nordic Center in Flagstaff, and the October 22, 2016 at El Rancho Robles in Oracle quarterly meeting dates were good for most Board members and no members voiced any conflicts.</p>	<p>Let Matt Nelson know if there are any other suggested locations for the ATA Grand Canyon IMAX theatre exhibit.</p>

	<p>Matt encouraged the Board to visit the Arizona Trail courtyard exhibit at the National Geographic Visitor Center – Grand Canyon in Tusayan within the next few months as this exhibit with 4 wall mural graphics panels that was sponsored by Nature Valley would be coming down. He asked if anyone had any ideas of another location for this exhibit, and it was suggested to consider Sky Harbor Airport.</p>	
12	<p><u>Other Business</u> (Please see all attached reports) Matthew Nelson announced that the two Warrior Hikers were in Superior. Phyllis reported that they had gotten in early and were already at the motel when she stopped by there on the way to the meeting. There was a question on who was taking care of their dinner, but that was resolved when Dick Erwin phoned Phyllis and told her that San Manuel VFW Post would feed them dinner that night.</p>	
13	<p><u>Adjourn</u> There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Bernie Stalmann and seconded by Jeff Whitney and the meeting adjourned at 2:04 p.m.</p>	