

Arizona Trail Association
Summer Board of Directors draft Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2022 (10 am – 12 pm)
meeting held virtually via Zoom

Board Members in attendance:

Ambika Balasubramanian; Kait Boyle; Dana Ernst; Lisa Schnebly Heidinger; Susan Lagerman; Victoria Levin; Phyllis Ralley; Bianca Salazar

Staff in attendance:

Wendy Lotze; Matthew Nelson; Aaron Seifert; Olivia Woods

Guests in attendance:

David Rabb (prospective board member)

I. Welcome and Introductions

President Susan Lagerman opened the meeting at 10:05 am, introduced each board member, and staff and guests introduced themselves. Susan added that meetings during times of Covid present challenges, including possibility of only virtual meetings; combination of outdoor meetings with virtual option; and spontaneously gathering whenever possible. Susan encouraged increased communication among Board Members and Committee Members to stay connected.

II. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes from March 2022

Victoria moved to approve the draft minutes; Phyllis seconded. Unanimously accepted.

III. Executive Director's Report

Matt Nelson highlighted new staff, including Clay Showalter; Chrissy Fichter; Makenzie Mabery; and Olivia Woods. Also mentioned completion of the Casa Blanca Canyon Trailhead – the ATA's first trailhead project on private land. Matt updated the Board that the Rosemont Copper project is on hold until a new EIS is completed and while Copper World is developed on the west side of the Santa Rita Mountains – if this project moves forward it's at least a decade away. ASARCO is delaying the Ripsey Wash Reroute project at least two years. Matt also provided a legislative update, including ongoing advocacy for a non-lapsing appropriation into the Arizona Trail Fund as well as opposition from the Arizona Mining Association.

Susan reminded all that letters to legislators are valuable, and outreach to friends to do the same could also help. Matt stressed importance of phone calls as well.

Ambika suggested linking to partner organization for outreach and advocacy. Susan agreed.

Matt added that the US Forest Service's Comprehensive Plan for the Arizona Trail will be released to public in July and asked help reviewing the document.

IV. Trail Operations & Volunteer Program Report

Wendy reported on Trail Operations and the Volunteer Program. Highlights include the San Rafael Fire in the Canelo Hills where the AZT was used as a fire break, and we will request funding for repair; Temporal Gulch Reroute Project has taken lots of work since October to build 11 miles; Casa Blanca Canyon Trailhead is a wonderful improvement to public access with a great opening event on June 4; Pusch Ridge Wilderness Bypass route reopened after Bighorn Fire; Eagle Mountain Mining is doing exploratory work near Oracle Ridge, and has agreed to signage and water source as a good neighbor gesture. Also, rehabilitation from Telegraph Fire is ongoing and illustrates further challenges as fires increase; recent volunteer vacation near Reavis Ranch; Babbitt Ranch Singletrack complete and named as destination trail by outdoor magazine; Orderville Singletrack nearly completed; and more. Volunteer training continues, stewards met in person but virtual training also serves well; welcomed Olivia & Chrissy. First quarter of 2022 set a new record for volunteer hours contributed!

V. Development and Finance Report

Matt mentioned generous grants from Arizona Dept of Forestry and Fire Management helped with trail repair projects in three counties (Pinal, Gila and Coconino) for nearly \$100K; an additional \$218K secured in grants; mentioned AZT VETS got an additional \$35K from Coronado National Forest; secured a \$50K donation from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona on honor of Lattie Coor to fund the Oak Tree Canyon Trailhead Project.

Upcoming events for board engagement in fundraising include Jim Click car raffle; Charon Vineyard launch party on July 9 to celebrate the official wine of the Arizona Trail (with future sales of wine benefitting the ATA); AZT in a Day on October 8th with \$50K goal – online registration begins July 1. Also, we secured \$80K in Covid relief funds through the Employee Retention Tax Credit. I

VI. Open Discussion

Susan mentioned financials appear sound and thanked David Rabb in advance for his help in reviewing financials as a former CPA.

VII. Committee Reports

Ambika reported that Board Development Committee is reviewing four candidates as prospective members; David joined today while Clark Tenakhongva and Karen Gresham could not. Shawn Redfield is well known to us already. If all are accepted, that would take us up to 13 members. Diversification improving. Susan thanked Ambika for her work in leading this committee.

On Membership Development, Matt said numbers lagged from platform switch, but we expect resurgence, growth and outreach to expired members is ongoing.

Policy and Advocacy, Kait reported several meetings discussing ATA engaging and working on guidelines.

Bianca talked about Gateway Community Program: discussed what day hikers

and thru-hikers expect, reviewed communities listed. Green Valley, Sahuarita, San Manuel, Mammoth, Florence, Globe, Tonto Basin, Strawberry, and Fredonia don't really deliver. Delisting discussed; don't want to be exclusionary but no one's ever listed these as visited. Gateway community review is ongoing.

VIII. Other Business

Aaron gave GIS Director report. Showed screens of apps, online maps from AzTrail.maps and Story Map. Gateway communities, fires, water sources all included, photos and signs have sections. Segment maps available and can be downloaded for trail users to see their location. Invited all to mention shared links to mapping with info that Aaron can provide pdfs and such. Topos can be purchased and printed although it's free to members. Matt said USFS and other agencies rely on Aaron for GIS services.

IX. Important Upcoming Dates

Upcoming dates were shared (refer to Agenda). Board will be polled about October reschedule date at Historic Y in Tucson in outdoor courtyard with virtual option.

X. Approval of New Board Members

The Board discussed David Rabb and Shawn Redfield as board candidates. Since Clark and Karen were not in attendance, their joining the board will be discussed at a future meeting.

Lisa made a motion for David to join the Board. Ambika seconded.
Unanimously approved.

Vicki made a motion for Shawn to join the Board. Kait seconded. Unanimously approved.

Ambika will communicate with both David and Shawn, letting them know the board has accepted them onto the board as "prospective Board Member" until the ATA membership votes them in per our bylaws, in February of 2023.

XI. Adjournment

Ambika made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:04 pm, Lisa seconded.
Unanimously approved.