

TRAILS TASK FORCE

May 15, 2019

Committee Members Present: Deb Root (Chair), C. Clark, D. Decker, W. Dibble, K. Dirlam, G. Hanchett, B. Harris

Others Present: J. Hopkins, C. Knapp, B. Riehle, M. Washer

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Trails Task Force Chair Debra Root.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Dirlam, seconded by Legislator Decker, and carried to approve the Trails Task Force minutes of May 8, 2019, with the following additions requested by Legislator Dibble:

Change: "Legislator Dibble suggested the Department of Environmental Conservation is a good place to start and noted that there are 60,000 acres of state land that need to be incorporated and focused on for non-motorized recreation. Legislator Dibble added that of these trail groups, 20 percent focus on the trails; the remaining 80 percent primarily focus on the gaming aspect that the trails permit."

To: "Legislator Dibble suggested the Department of Environmental Conservation is a good place to start and noted that there are about 60,000 acres of state land that is forest and wildlife management areas that need to be incorporated and focused on for non-motorized recreation. Legislator Dibble added that of the Saddle Dusters, 20 percent focus on the trails, and the remaining 80 percent primarily focus on gaming."

Groups and Contacts

The task force discussed and compiled a detailed list of established organizations as well as contacts related to the trails that they can reach out to for future meetings. Committee Chair Root stated that they need more contacts for the ATV/UTV trails, noting she does have a couple of people in mind that she plans on reaching out to. Legislator Harris suggested adding the three colleges as well as their Environmental Science and Survey Programs to perform labor and environmental impact analysis. Ms. Root indicated that Alfred State has a Heavy Equipment curriculum and believes they would be a good group to add as well because the students need live work. Mr. Dirlam stated the only downside would be that the students are limited with their timelines as well as how the season permits for them to be able to do the work. Legislator Dibble suggested looking into Endless Trails who could help the task force put together an Appalachian Regional Commission grant to digitize all of our existing trails. Mr. Dirlam indicated that the state forest already digitized everything. Legislator Dibble stated visitors need to be able to pull something up if they were to get lost on these trails. Mr. Dirlam stated they briefly discussed street biking and how there is a lot they would need to do in order to encourage it, adding that he wouldn't dismiss it as it's a growing activity. Ms. Hanchett indicated she received information that shows biking is popular and also references the money it brings into the United States. Mr. Dirlam stated that as the County's Department of Public Works upgrade our streets, they should do more complete street designs to provide a bike lane. Legislator Dibble noted that the Rochester Bicycle Club used to visit the County frequently. Legislator Dibble stated that there are a lot of mountain biking folks in the County and suggested reaching out to them to form a group and possibly obtain a D.B.A. Ms. Hanchett noted the importance of pulling all of the discussed organizations and contacts together to find out who they can combine and what groups will not want to be a part of each other. Legislator Harris stated he hopes these stakeholders will be able to assist with that step as it's very hard to hike on a trail that is used by horses due to the wetness and hoof holes, noting that horse riders more than likely don't want to share a trail with UTVs.

Utilities

Legislator Harris suggested including utilities for potential UTV trails, stating a lot of trails in Pennsylvania run on pipelines, and he believes ATVs do as well. Ms. Root stated that we used to be able to snowmobile on a pipeline trail; however, it is no longer allowed, and they should reach out to the Snowmobile Federation and inquire as to why. Mr. Dirlam mentioned Columbia, Dominion, and Fillmore Gas as some of the major gas lines in the County. Legislator Dibble suggested reaching out to the individual companies to find out who handles their Public Relations. Ms. Hanchett noted that they also should have talking points and key facts for those individual conversations.

Oswego Valley ATV Club, Inc.

Legislator Decker distributed an agreement and lease between the County of Cayuga and the Oswego Valley ATV Club, Inc. This agreement allows the Oswego Valley ATV Club to use agreed upon portions of land as ATV trails. Legislator Decker suggested the task force reach out to this group and possibly invite them to a meeting to find out what they did to get their trail system going. Legislator Decker continued that this group is also working to be able to get off on main roads so they can go to restaurants, etc., noting that even though they have an established club, they are still experiencing the same issues we are in Allegany County. Legislator Decker went on to say that the trails they use are all inclusive to foot traffic, motorized traffic, etc., and it is very well organized. If someone is riding and comes upon someone riding a horse or hikers, they slow down, get to the right, and sometimes shut off their vehicle until the foot traffic passes. Legislator Decker stated this agreement is the way to go because we can't just have hikers in Rushford, Cross Country Skiing in Swain, and ATVs in Bolivar. We need to be able to connect these trails and get around the entire County. Legislator Decker noted that as part of the agreement, the Oswego Valley ATV Club maintains the trails.

Public Relations

Ms. Root addressed the County's public relations and how we need to do a better job with it. Ms. Root briefly addressed the Town of Angelica board meeting where the acreage transfer to state forest land was discussed. Ms. Root indicated that the County's economic situation as well as how much money tourism brings into the County was questioned by constituents. Ms. Root stated that for every \$1 spent, \$450 comes back in, adding that we need to do better with our PR efforts so people are more aware of these facts. Ms. Root suggested getting our facts on the Allegany County website as well as more information on our hiking trails, noting that it's an issue getting people on board because while the task force sees it as a huge opportunity, everyone else sees it as a waste of time.

Future Meetings

The task force briefly discussed when the next meeting could be held. Ms. Root proposed that the next meeting include the Department of Environmental Conservation as well as a few other contacts she plans on reaching out to. Ms. Root noted that the date and time is to be determined. The next meeting was subsequently scheduled for Wednesday, June 12 at 2:30 p.m.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Legislator Dibble, seconded by Legislator Harris, and carried at 11:35 a.m. to adjourn the meeting.