

ATRA Meeting Minutes December 17, 2019 – Conference Call

Meeting Started at 6:02 with Adam's welcome.

Attendance: Adam Chase, Susan Kendrick, Greg Lanctot, Nancy Hobbs, Brandy Erholtz, Ellen Miller, Terry Chiplin, Peter Maksimow, Andy Ames

Apologies for absence: Dave Mackey and Ian Torrence

Elections

Current officers:

Adam Chase, president

Ellen Miller, vice president

Eve Mills, treasurer

Brandy Erholtz, secretary

Current officers are all running again and if we don't have any other nominations, we can vote by acclimation and move ahead.

Eve agreed to continue on as treasurer, although she was unable to be on tonight's call.

Motion by acclimation to accept the reinstate the current officers by Brandy.

Ellen 2nd the motion. All in favor.

Current Advisory Board

Andy Ames

Dave Mackey

Ian Torrence

Nancy and Adam have reviewed the advisory board and Adam had reached out to all of the members and several stepped down due to other commitments and were thanked for their long service including Tom Sobal, Doug Laufer, Chris Dunn, Ryan Kerrigan, Bart Yasso, Eric Black, and Danelle Ballengee. Nancy prepared a list of potential new advisory members and we are open to suggestions for inclusion. Susan Kendrick and Greg Lanctot, both on the call, expressed interest in being on the advisory board. It may also be great to get a specialty run store representative and some others who have specific skill sets to add to the board makeup. We can add to our advisory board at any time. Nancy suggested that we meet every quarter this year at which time we discuss theme, activities, participation, etc. We also discuss via email. Both Greg and Susan accepted a spot on the board. Nancy will work with Richard to add both to our website at: <https://trailrunner.com/about-atra/board-members-and-meeting-minutes/>. We will also have a write-up to share news of our new members and our returning members Ian, Dave and Andy. Both Greg and Susan excited to join us and received a warm welcome.

Finance/Budget

We received financial report from Eve ahead of time. Everything is looking good. Any questions?

Nancy-looking at current profit/loss. Income \$112,704 \$- Expenses 96, 543—Net just over \$15,000 at almost year end. This is a big increase from our early years as we used to operate on \$2000-3000/year. Consultants and board members have really worked hard to grow our organization.

One question from Andy on the mountain team income—is the \$1500 from USATF?

Nancy clarified; we raise money outside of USATF for the mountain teams

(<https://trailrunner.com/about-atra/partner-organizations/>); Allie MacLaughlin

(<https://alliemacproductions.squarespace.com/mutwildclothing>) sells T-shirts and Hoodies (\$5 for each sold going to the team); Ellen puts on an uphill race in Vail

(<https://trailrunner.com/event/vac-vail-mountain-winter-uphill/>) which raises fund; a promotion this year with Trail Butter (Tribute Blend -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Odq4LWwMoM8> and

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsMye6C7H_A&t=10s) \$5 from Trail Butter for each special blend Red, White & Blue jar purchased (the first batch sold out and a new batch has been made. Sales will go through March 2020). This will raise money for the team along with money from the New England Uphill Mountain Running Series (conducted by Fred Ross).

USATF amount to the this year's two mountain teams was about \$27,000. Budget \$62,000 for all of our teams from USATF.

Not all money has been paid out for the mountain team yet. Allie has also sold some more shirts recently (which will be added to the \$350 already donated).

D and O Insurance

Update from Nancy. We have insurance for the board (D&O) from Nicholas Hill group; just under \$1000 a year. Also, for events who are members of ATRA. We had a switch over in the last few months—the new carrier Nicholas Hill is working with is Everest. Process will be 100% online. Nicholas Hill Group is an ATRA member one of our partners in ATRA's Event Standards program (<https://trailrunner.com/about-atra/events-standards-program/>).

ATRA insurance do we extend to all races? They have to be a member of ATRA, and insurance can be purchased separately. **T.R.I.P. with Nicholas Insurance Group**

(<https://www.nicholashillgroup.com/trailrunninginsuranceapplication>)

Inquiries coming in at a steady pace.

Memberships (Nancy) – all-time high – 800 members (includes invoiced) compared to 700 members across all categories in 2018. 192 at Trail Times; 276 regular includes Trail Times and Trail Runner magazine; 91 race; 119 single track; 6 steep and rocky; 18 switchback; 1 all terrain; 13 double – budget \$71,950 and received to date \$71,773. We all continue to outreach. Our goal is to continue growth. Many of our individual members make donations. We have 3 Legacy members so far. Why the growth?

Nancy thinks its outreach/attending meetings. One-on-one conversations with people and being present at events all help with the growth. We provide value at events. Renewal rates have also been good. Some people still haven't heard of us; we need to keep spreading the word! Greg had an idea to add a membership with his registration and will talk with his registration provide (Mark Gilligan with UltraSignup) about this feature. This could be something that many other race directors could offer with their registration.

E-newsletter, Quarterly Newsletter *Trail Times* and Race Director e-news

Monthly and sometimes more than one per month newsletters; Race Director e-news monthly featuring a different event standards partner each month. Advertising can be a co-branded opportunity for ATRA members at \$100/ad along with partner promotions. Links in the e-news drive traffic to our website for articles and calendar events. We do get data/stats on how many people open and what links are clicked on.

Interesting reports from Richard with exact numbers/data of what content is valuable. Richard's report was compelling pass on kudos to Richard. (Ellen). 31% increase in page views over last year. Good marketing tool for our partners. Do sponsors supply content? Editorials?

Yes, we do get some content. Often advertising. We have a great partnership with Saucony right now in our Spotlight on Specialty program presented by Saucony which has been embraced also by the Saucony sales reps.

US Trail Running Conference

Quick update from Terry on 2019 event and what to expect in 2020. RFP to 10-12 destinations. Fayetteville was the best bidder in terms of financial support and what we want to offer. All kinds of connections have already happened. Rush Running contacts are very supportive (run specialty). Cherokee Nation in that area; hoping for maybe a Native American opening ceremony and some runs with the Ozark trail running club. Conference venue and dates were announced at the beginning of November and registration is open

(<https://ustrailrunningconference.com/>). Affirmation we made the right choice with all the connections so far. Theme 2020—will be announced soon in the new year.

2019 was fantastic on every level. Amazing speakers, great content, record number of attendees in all capacities. Looking forward to 2020 and working with ATRA to get more people informed and out on the trails. Adam suggested getting in touch with the Arkansas tourism board for media coverage. Adam was brought down about four years ago to write about a new trail down there. All elementary schools have their own trail systems. Terry has already spoken to some trail building people in that area.

ATRA Programs

Trail Ambassadors

View from the Pack

Spotlight on Specialty

Trail Towns

#ConnectWithTheTrail

Surveys – we have conducted four this year. Will work on the annual spring survey and Ellen requested that we look at the length and pare it down for more responses. Trail work survey had the highest responses. Nancy will share the survey draft before it is sent out.

Trail ambassador program going on for several years. Each month a different individual is nominated by their peers and we use a template with photos, and swag is provided by our partners (CEP Compression, CamelBak, adidas, and LEKI USA) the write-ups are shared on our website (<https://trailrunner.com/trail-news/category/trail-ambassadors/>).

View from the Pack presented by RaidLight —highlights runners, volunteers and others who do great things on the trail. (<https://trailrunner.com/trail-news/category/view-from-the-pack/>)

Spotlight on Specialty presented by Saucony (<https://trailrunner.com/trail-news/category/spotlight-on-specialty/>)

Trail Towns (<https://trailrunner.com/trail-news/category/trail-towns/>) —a new one tomorrow. Usually 20,000 or less people in the featured towns.

We used to write the articles. We now have templates and have others fill them out, many times by CVBs and Economic Development groups. Peter, Nancy, and Tayte's dad have all written features. Richard formats and edits these articles.

#ConnectwiththeTrail (<https://trailrunner.com/trail-news/were-partnering-with-ortholite-to-connect-with-the-trail/>) —partners in OrthoLite, Salomon, and Balega —started in May has not taken off as quickly as we'd hoped. Went well at conference. Going to discuss with OrthoLite ideas for next year. Adam, Peter, Nancy, and Dan Legore (Ortholite) met last year to get this program off the ground.

Articles written by all of us & book reviews (<https://trailrunner.com/trail-news/category/book-review/>) (Laura Clark does a lot of book reviews).

Gear review—Susan does quite a few. People love these. (<https://trailrunner.com/trail-news/category/hydration-equipment/>)

Open to more reviews.

Trail Work Discussion

Ellen—thank you to ATRA after the lazy parasite article was published, we gave a trail work survey which was great. Ellen is happy to head up more articles on hot topics. We need to be a leader when it comes to these issues. ATRA needs a voice.

New Trail Runner magazine covers some of these topics: Gear tagging, Climate Change, Leave No Trace, Public Use, etc.

Ellen would like for us an organization to be involved with these things.

We continued conversation around this and agreed we do need to have a presence/voice in these controversial matters. Can we provide surveys, resources, articles, etc.

Adam—thinks these should be our theme for 2020.

We all can think of our peer groups and the influence we can have/share about being good stewards of these principals.

More discussion around races requiring volunteer—mostly ultras at this point. Could we focus on highlighting some of these races in articles on Trail News?

Maybe offer a free ad to members who require trail work, or we highlight them in some way? Presently we highlight races for members of ATRA. Also highlighted if they meet event standards. We brainstormed other ideas we could promote too such as going on a group run from a trailhead and cleaning up the parking lot afterwards.

Greg—partners with CA group—opportunity –will take a lead. Local agencies—ask for trail work day volunteers.

Presence at Events

A sampling of events that ATRA has had a presence include Western States, Outdoor Retailer, TRE, RRCA Convention, USATF Annual Meeting, Sports Relationship Conference, Spartan Championships, various USATF championships, Skyrunning meetings (ISF)

Social Media (Richard sent report ahead of time.)

Video on YouTube has increased this year -90,000 video views in 2019—huge growth compared to 30,000 in 2018! Highest view was of the USMRT Championships.

ATRA Theme 2020 – working on Word Cloud

Nancy will send an invite to all of us. We have also been working through the same process with Terry for the theme of the US Trail Running Conference. We'll use this to pick out theme.

Past themes: Community (2017)

Stewardship (2018)

Trail Running Responsibly (2019)

Word Cloud works –spitball words – a couple of different steps—trending data—we'll all share ideas. Come up with a theme together via email—1st quarter—January/February timeframe.

Google Invite—plug in words.

Other

Peter is writing an article about the Spartan Trail Champs. Huge prize money. Getting quotes from athletes—some USMRT athletes competed and raced to the podium. Spartan is not going to be struggling to get new registrations as reflected that 80% of people typically new trail runners at Spartan. No trouble in growing their event and will be a huge asset to us as they have 5 million followers! A question that the course being mostly a dirt road? Fast course. No complaints. Nancy will follow up with Spartan to discuss whether they would provide bags for plogging—available for free to attendees at events where we have a presence —washable and reusable. Great way to partner with Spartan. Great idea as long as they aren't creating more trash. Maybe at OR we can find a supplier?

North Cal Series—Greg—trying to drive local membership. Points/rankings—100 people at least—this model could grow nationally—Greg give outline to Nancy and ATRA team to review.

Advisory Board—Greg would like to nominate one of the owners of San Francisco Running Company (Jorge Maravilla). Specialty running store too. Adam will reach out to Jorge to gauge his interest.

Nancy reached out to Vic Thasiah (Runners for Public Lands – <https://runnersforpubliclands.org/contact/>) who couldn't be on call tonight but also interested in being involved.

Discussion on how many advisory board members we should have. 12-15 advisors? We don't want to go overboard. Currently we'll have 9. MUT Exec Committee we have 14 as an example. Agreed that 12 would be a good number.

Logo

Nancy stated we have had the same logo for a long time. We were all in agreement it should be redone. Adam and Greg both know people who are good with graphics and also trail runners. They will both check and see if these individuals would be willing to help design/recreate our logo and for what cost.

The winter issue of *Trail Times* will come out before the year with new our advisors listed. It will also be on website and Nancy will do outreach to get this information public.

Anything else?

Quick question on US Sky-Running from Andy, as it doesn't look like there are any US events this year? Peter worked with Sky-Running last year at his Barr Trail race. Sky Running is going to Canada this year and it doesn't look like the US will have any races. Sky Running may not have the right "pulse" of the US market. The fees are very high to host a race with the Sky Running label. Richard is working with Broken Arrow to potentially host some other events. Greg had a few more ideas on how to grow membership with his races—he and Nancy will talk more.

Brandy made the motion to adjourn; Andy second. The meeting ended at 7:16.