

## Topsham TrailRiders January Meeting



Date: Tuesday, January 30, 2023

Location: Topsham Public Library, Topsham, ME 04086

Executive Board Present: Jenny Little

Tim Williams

Tim Moody

Jessica Emmert

Board of Directors Present: Mike Little

Randy Bickford

Noah Herrick

Don Curtis

Mike Little

Evan Curtis

Sam Bulmer

Charlie Parkinson

James Belanger

Board of Directors absent: Matt Nixon

Dan Parlin

Brad Hoskins

Richard Arsenault

Meeting Called to Order at: 6:33 PM

Meeting Adjourned at 7:39 PM

Approximately 24 people attended the meeting and signed the attendance sheet.

### **Secretary's Report:**

Jessica Emmert emailed a copy of the November minutes to all club members. No one in attendance requested for any edits to be made to the minutes that were sent out.

- Motion was made by Tim Williams to approve the Secretary's report.
- Motion Accepted by Noah Herrick
- Was passed with no opposition

## **President's Remarks**

During the meeting Jenny Little provided updates on the following:

### **ATV Maine**

I attended the ATV Maine meeting on December 9<sup>th</sup> held in Phippsburg facilitated by the West Bath ATV club. There was a lot of information shared at the meeting by the group and I will do my best to relay it back to you.

### **Registration Bill**

In an effort to push folks to join an ATV club, ATV Maine tried to push a bill through in Augusta that would alter the registration costs. If you belonged to an ATV club the cost to register your machine would be \$70 and if you do not belong to a club your cost would be \$100. Unfortunately, the bill did not progress last year because it became apparent committee members needed to be educated a little more about this and ATV Maine is seeking the assistance from Steve Wilkie from New Hampshire since they are currently doing this type of registration.

### **Gas Tax Bill (LD 977)**

Email received from Brian Bronson on 01/17/2024

As most of you know the ATV community receives a very small portion of the actual gas tax we pay. ATV Maine submitted a bill last session (LD 977) to try and get this fixed. The result of that legislation was the University of Maine Margaret Chase Smith Center being directed to update the numbers on the 20 year old study. I have been providing information and answering questions etc all year. They have finally finished updating their report. Unfortunately, they were not directed to do an entirely new report just to update the old report based on current registration numbers. So, while the numbers will show an update based on the increasing number of ATV registrations and the difference in the gas tax fee it doesn't take into account the increased amount of use due to the expanded trail system nor will it take into account the change in machines specifically the side by sides versus quads and the increased fuel consumption tied to those changes. The numbers still show that the ATV Program is getting pennies on the dollar as compared to what we should be receiving so hopefully we can make an argument for getting more gas tax money into the ATV Recreational Management fund for trail work and grants. Ultimately that will be up to the legislators. This is being heard at the IFW committee, but since the gas tax would ultimately come from the highway fund it may be transferred to the Transportation Committee if it is going to move forward.

Email received from Brian Bronson on 01/17/2024

As you can see from the table on the last page boating is getting more than they pay and ATV and snowmobile are getting much less. ATV shortfall is much worse than it shows because they only updated the old 2001 study, so it doesn't take into account for the newer side by sides which are much bigger and heavier and burn more gas nor does it take into account the fact that we had 1500 miles of trail then and we have 6000 miles of trail now. The real fuel consumption for ATVs in Maine is probably at least double if not 3 times as much as they show but this was the process the legislature asked them to follow. Hopefully we can at least get the million dollars a year this shows! Of course, if the current splits remain the same only half of the increase will go to trails the rest will go into the general fund at IFW.

Email Received from Brian Bronson on 01/20/2024

The IFW legislative committee seems to be interested in making a recommendation that we get more gas tax to the trail fund. Hopefully they will send that to the Transportation committee next week. It will ultimately have to come from that committee if it moves forward since it will change the amount of money going to MDOT.

We should know more by middle of next week. Clubs will probably need to be talking to their legislators to generate additional support.

### **Recreational Bill – LD 1156**

To be honest I have not researched this bill extensively but I have heard it mentioned in meetings that I have attended including both Maine ATV Coalition along with ATV Maine. This bill currently has more than 460 businesses, town, and organizations that support LD 1156. It is my understanding that it would provide \$30 million dollars over four years in grant funding to towns, organizations, and clubs to work on creating and/or maintaining of trails. The proposed distribution of funds would be 25% to motorized, 25% to non-motorized, and 50% to multi-use trails. This bill would be administered by Bureau of Parks and Lands. I ask you tonight if Topsham Trailriders would like to sign up as a supporter of this bill.

NOTE: A motion was made by Tim Williams to allow Topsham Trailriders to become a supporter for the Recreational Bill LD 1156. Motion was accepted by Noah. The motion was approved.

UPDATE: After the meeting, I contacted Maine ATV Coalition to inquire how a club can sign on as a supporter for LD 1156. They directed her to the appropriate individual and I have completed the document adding Topsham Trailriders name to LD 1156.

Lobbyist Keith Herrick

It was voted during the December meeting to continue working with Keith Herrick the Lobbyist for ATV Maine. He has proven as an asset in getting the gas study bill moving forward in

conjunction with efforts completed by the ATV Maine board. For reference I learned that ATV Maine pays Keith \$1,000 a month for his services.

### **Maine ATV/UTV Expo**

A reminder that ATV Maine is facilitating an expo at Cross Insurance Arena in Bangor from Friday, May 17<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. They are working on acquiring additional vendors at this time and I'm sure they will be seeking assistance from clubs to volunteer at different times doing different tasks during the weekend.

### **Annual ATV Maine Banquet**

The 2024 ATV Maine banquet has been scheduled for Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup> at Jeff's Catering in Brewer, Maine. If you are interested in going, please know that you will need to complete a registration form along with remitting a form of payment.

### **West Side Park and Ride**

The access trail leaving the West Side Park and Ride still remains closed at this time. Unfortunately, the landowner has asked that it remain close for the foreseeable future until the buildings and fencing are completed. I am happy to report that the storage units appear to be nearly complete from what I have seen.

If you recall we were asked by the landowner to help, get MEDEP out there to get a section of the access trail leaving the park and ride reviewed. I am excited to share with you that TTR finally connected with a member of MEDEP in December. They came out to review the access trail on Thursday, January 4<sup>th</sup> to complete their analysis and shortly afterwards we received MEDEP's formal analysis. Upon receiving the report, we remitted it to the Director of Planning & Code Enforcement for the Town of Topsham for her review. It is my pleasure to share that MEDEP only had a couple of small requests/recommendations that they would like to see us do when recreating the access trail leaving the West Side Park and Ride and the Director of Planning & Code Enforcement did not see any issues with report provided from MEDEP.

At this time, we've remitted an email to the landowner to reinitiate discussion with him. We have heard back from the landowner and at this time it would seem that he is pleased with the efforts that have been made and would like to connect once the snow melts. We are hopeful, based on the positive feedback from both MEDEP and Topsham, that we can arrive at a mutually beneficial solution for both the landowner's business endeavor and the needs of the Topsham Trailriders.

**Stay tuned!**

## **Maine ATV Coalition (MAC)**

During our June 2023 we had invited Maine ATV Coalition to attend our meeting so that they could tell us about the organization and Doug Dickinson, President of Maine ATV Coalition came. During the following meeting, we discussed joining MAC but the majority of members in attendance during this meeting opted to hold off joining but to continue monitoring the organization. During board meeting this evening I shared with the board members that I have continued to attend their meetings as well take in what MAC has been doing. MAC has made great strides with business partnerships and continues to gain more and more exposure among fellow ATV enthusiasts. For example, they announced in late December that they have partnered up with New England Trail GPS and GPSTRAILMASTERS.COM to help clubs with getting their trails mapped. Maine ATV Coalition has partnered up with Central Maine Powersports and they will soon be taking over the CMPS trail fund program that Craig Anderson started. As you know TTR has participated and supported the CMPS trail fund for a few years now. One piece of the CMPS Trail Fund program that we are probably most familiar with is the volunteer gift certificate program. For volunteers who completed 40+ hours of trail work time were generously given a \$200 gift certificate to use at Central Maine Powersports. At this time, I cannot say for certain that the \$200 gift certificates will continue. I do know that MAC actively is working on soliciting additional funds to hopefully come up with a unique way to acknowledge the generous volunteers who work the trails.

I am happy to share with you that the board voted this evening to join Maine ATV Coalition in support for what they are doing for the sport.

NOTE: During the Board meeting a motion was made by Noah Herrick for Topsham

Trailriders to become a member of the Maine ATV Coalition and to remit a check in the amount of \$150.00. Motion was accepted by Tim Williams. Motion was passed.

## **Merrymeeting Trail Update**

The Merrymeeting Trail would be a 25-mile regional trail that runs along the unused rail corridor. A committee was formed and they have been meeting off and on since October of 2022 I believe. Topsham Trailriders has been invited to some of these meetings. Matthew Nixon, our Landowner Relations chair recently contacted me to share that he is typing up a memo for the Town of Topsham Selectboard to reaffirm their position about the Merrymeeting Trail being a true multi-use trail. It is worth mentioning the Matt Nixon is a member of the Town of Topsham Selectman who was elected to represent the Town of Topsham on the Merrymeeting Trail committee. I think Matt would agree with me when I say it has been an arduous process.

## **Topsham Community Center**

Topsham Trailriders was invited to participate in a Town of Topsham, Community Center Focus Group. I met with other community member's yesterday evening to officially kick off the process. We discussed the current and future needs for the Topsham Community. I will update the club as more information comes up.

## **Treasurer Report**

Tim Moody reported that as of 1/26/2024, we had \$510.00 in the cash box and a balance of \$1,578.53 in the checking account and \$10,730.45 the savings account. Tim also provided an update of the apparel account which now has a balance \$1,297.95. He also shared that the food events account currently has a balance of \$2,089.43. The account pertaining to Events/Raffles has a balance of \$645.17.

- Motion was made by Randy Bickford to approve the treasurer's report as provided on the agenda
- Motion accepted by Don Curtis
- Was Passed with No Opposition
- Tim Moody abstained from the vote

## **Trail Master Report**

Charlie provided the following update:

All trails are still officially closed until the first groomable snow. However, we are hopeful that the grooming will soon begin on the east side so when it is deemed safe to do so we will update the website and Facebook accordingly.

## **Upcoming Trail Work Parties**

Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup>

West Side Trail Inspection Work Party

Arrive ready to work for 9 am

Bring ATV, Chainsaw, warm clothes, and be ready to work!

## **Topsham Fair Skijoring**

Jenny Little provided the following update:

### **February 3<sup>rd</sup> – Skijoring Track Prep Work Party**

- At this time, provided there is no inclement weather the following folks should plan on meeting Charlie near or around the Exhibition Hall located on the Topsham Fairgrounds at 9 am. Volunteers are:
  - Charlie Parkinson
  - Michael Little
  - Stephanie Arsenault
  - Tim Williams
  - Kyle McComiskey
- Should there be inclement weather or anything changes either Charlie or I will reach out to you in sufficient time.

### **February 10<sup>th</sup> – Skijoring Event**

- We have had the following folks sign up to help during the event:
  - Charlie Parkinson – bringing the club machine, drag, and his personal machine
  - Michael Little
  - Jenny Little
  - Tim Williams – will be bringing his machine
  - Stephanie Arsenault – will bring a machine
  - Kyle McComiskey – will bring a machine
  - John Bursley – will bring a machine
- At this time, all volunteers who are helping during this event should plan on arriving between 9:00-9:15 on February 10<sup>th</sup>. You will be parking in the infield closer to the finish line. Please do not be alarmed if you are asked to sign a waiver at the gate.
- To those folks who are bringing their machine please exercise caution when approaching the finish line area as there will be horses around.
- The event does not begin until 10 am and should be done around 1:00-1:30 pm

## **Municipal Grant**

Jenny Little provided the following update:

During the board meeting this evening the board is in agreement to once again apply for a municipal grant similar to what we did last year. We will begin the process of getting the application and other documents prepared for this year's grant.

## **Committee Section:**

### **BBQ Committee**

Jenny Little provided the following update:

A reminder that we will be simplifying this event and are looking for a couple of members to step up and help plan this and other events. More information will be provided in February.

### **Apparel Committee**

Jenny provided the following update:

There is nothing to report at this time but we will soon begin conversations with the Coastal Locker room about creating an online store. Additional information will be provided in February.

### **Maine Sportsman Show Committee**

Jenny provided the following update on behalf of the committee:

Date of the show: Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup> – 1 pm to 8 pm

Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> – 9 am to 7 pm

Sunday, April 21<sup>st</sup> – 9 am to 4 pm

Basic information about the show:

- The booth will be in the same location as it was last year. Despite, recommendations to increase our booth size we couldn't justify that with how much it would have cost.
- MOMS Topsham is once again taken care of the cost for our booth



## Material for the table:

- Rick Emmert is working on creating a slide show that will highlight 25 years of TTR
- Promotional Material for the table includes ride schedules, membership forms, and informational sheet.
  - All items that are being printed with the exception of the business membership form should have 400 of each
  - Printing is being completed by Charlie and Jenny
- Miscellaneous signage:
  - Jenny will create as needed

## Needs for the show from Members:

### Raffle

- The committee will once again be seeking donations to help create a raffle. An email will be sent out in the next couple of weeks to members which will include a signup sheet for the raffle. We will begin to sell tickets for the raffle during the sportsman show and we will continue to sell tickets until our House in the Woods event on June 8<sup>th</sup> where we will then draw the winner for the raffle.
  - Proceeds from the raffle will benefit trails maintained by Topsham Trailriders.
- In the past, the club has approved spending money to help create this raffle but this year we are hopeful that we can create the raffle entirely by donations. Should anything change, we will reach out to the board.

### Volunteers

- During the February meeting a sign-up sheet will be circulated seeking volunteers to help man the booth during the weekend. If you have a burning desire to let me know this evening, please feel free and see me after the meeting.

## Discussion Items that require money to help make this event successful:

- Free giveaway item during the show but that might be sold at other events

NOTE: During the Board meeting we reviewed the prices of the following promotional items: gaiters, small TTR flags, key chains, pens, drawstring cinch bags, TTR socks, and water bottles.

A motion was made by Tim Williams to approve spending up to \$550 to purchase 100 gaiters and the minimum amount, of key chains. Motion was accepted by Noah Herrick. Motion was accepted by the Board.

The original thought of the board seem to be to have the gaiters available during the show for folks to purchase and give away the key chains at no cost. Upon further discussion an idea was presented by a member to give away some of the gaiters to build up some excitement and keep some to sell – this method would prevent having overstock of products for too long. We will finalize this discussion during February’s meeting!

## **Ride Coordinator Update**

Mike Little provided the following update:

There is not much to report to members at this time other than if you have not received a copy of the TTR/We-ATV 207 ride schedule for 2024 please see me after the meeting. Otherwise, I would like to share with the group that:

46 days remain till March 16<sup>th</sup> TTR’s first possible trail work party

123 days remain till June 1<sup>st</sup> TTR/We-ATV 207’s first out of town ride which is the Ken Snowden Memorial Ride – Pittsfield to Greenville.

On a side note, We-ATV 207 is heading to Fairfield on Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup> to participate in the Bon Fire that the Fairfield Snowmobile and Central Maine ATV club is facilitating. Please check out the event on the We-ATV 207 Facebook page. We would love to fill the field! It is my understanding that this event is weather dependent so continue to check the event for update.

If you are interested in helping during any of these events, please do not be shy and reach out to me. We are always looking for folks to help.

And finally, I always love hearing any suggestions that you would like us to consider please contact me (Michael Little), Ride Coordinator, for Topsham Trailriders at 207-522-3780.

## **Club Membership Update**

Dan Parlin provided the following update about our current membership totals for TTR. As of January 26th, 2024, TTR has the following for club memberships:

Total Number of Memberships: 124

Business Sponsors: 10

Of the 124 Number of Memberships;

They can be broken down to:

104 Regular Members

69 ATV Maine Members

25 MSA Members

10 Honorary Members

8 Associate Members

## **Safety Course Committee Update**

On behalf of the following Safety Course committee, Ron Dumont provided the following update:

Happy to share that all of our safety instructors are state certified. Hopeful to have more information about a course next month.

Please take note that the State does offer online safety courses now. Please feel free and contact Topsham Trailriders for more information.

## Old Business

### TTR Spreads Christmas Cheer in Downtown Bath

- Thank you to all of those who came and helped during this event. We went to several long care senior homes. The residents were greeted with the Santa gang, including 2 reindeers, a Christmas tree, the Grinch, Gingerbread Woman, Snowman, 2 elves, Mrs. Claus and others. We danced, smiled and passed out Christmas cards and wooden Christmas trees generously made by Santa's #1 reindeer – Kyle McComiskey!!
- TTR had a great time along with the seniors and community enjoyed our company.
- We definitely lucked out in the weather department for the event.

### 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of TTR

Jenny Little provided the following update:

2024 officially underway and this should be a year of celebration since it is the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of TTR. Big plans for next year especially our July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 ride! I'd like to create a committee to help plan special things for 2024 especially the July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 ride. The committee will be instrumental seeking a food truck for our July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 night ride along with creating uniqueness throughout the year. If there is anyone attending the meeting or at home that has any interest please contact me at [topshamtrailriders@gmail.com](mailto:topshamtrailriders@gmail.com) or see me after the meeting.

## New Business

### American Legion Post 202 – Softball Tournament

Jenny Little provided the following update:

In late January, I was contacted by Rebeka LaRose, member of the Marketing team at Binnie Media in Westbrook. She contacted me on behalf of 99.9 The WOLF which for those who don't know is a prominent radio station in the area. She and I had chatted during last year's Sportsman show about our House in the Woods event that we were doing and recalled that conversation and looked us up.

The WOLF 99.9 was contacted by the American Legion Post 202 in Topsham about their upcoming softball tournament scheduled for Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9 am. Post 202 has completed this event for years now but last year they raised over \$37,000 and this year they are hoping to surpass that amount. The proceeds for this event go to Maine Veterans in Need. Post 202 was quite surprised to find out how much it would cost to get 99.9 The Wolf out there for the day. Rebekah shared with me that the Post 202 is looking at a charge close to \$3,000.00! I

was shocked to hear that it cost that much for the radio station to come out for the day. Given the cost Rebekah advised Post 202 to seek donations from local businesses and perhaps other local nonprofits to help cover some of the cost.

Rebekah thought TTR might consider making a donation given that it was an event to benefit Maine Veterans and we could easily promote our House in the Woods event being held on June 8<sup>th</sup>. If a business/nonprofit considers makes a donation they would be invited to set up a table during the event along with receiving on-air mention by The WOLF 99.9 although they are there promoting Post 202's event. This is an opportunity to get a jump start on promoting our House in the Woods event along with promoting TTR in general while supporting our local Veterans.

I contacted the TTR Board on Wednesday, January 24<sup>th</sup> via our group text to inquire if they would approve making a donation. I am happy to share with everyone that TTR will be making a \$250.00 to Post 202 to help them with the cost of the radio station.

I reached out to the Legion and hope to hear from the Commander about the set-up for the day. I chatted with Bob Lemont and he shared that booths are being set-up inside but the Commander was the best individual to speak to about it. Bob did share that last year they had 12 teams so it took two days for the tournament to complete but at this time they only have 6 teams signed up.

Stay tuned for updates!

In all seriousness, if anyone has any interest in creating a softball team for this event, please let me know and I can get you the information.

## **Social Night**

Jenny Little provided the following update:

The next social night for the club is scheduled for Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm. Given that social night falls on Valentine's Day the board and I have agreed that moving the social night is appropriate. We've opted to move the social night to Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup> at Sea Dogs in Topsham at 6 pm. The restaurant appreciates receiving a headcount as to how many folks will be coming. Please let Jenny know if you will be coming by either updating your status to going within the Facebook event or by contacting her personally.

## **Open Member Comment**

- No additional comments were made by Members

A motion was made by Randy Bickford to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 pm. The motion was accepted by Tim Williams.

## Upcoming TTR Events

February 10th – TTR Helps during the Topsham Fair Ground Ski Joring Event- 9am

February 11<sup>th</sup> – TTR Trail Work Party- West Side Trail -8:45am

February 15<sup>th</sup> – TTR's February Social Night – Seadog Brewing Company, Topsham Maine-6pm

February 17<sup>th</sup> – TTR Support's the American Legion Post 202 Softball Tournament-9am

February 27<sup>th</sup> - Regular Monthly Meeting – Take note of the day change and time change—Topsham Public Library at 6:30 pm located at 25 Foreside Road.

Submitted by

Jessica Emmert

02/04/2024

January 2024 minutes were approved during our February 27<sup>th</sup> meeting with only one change requested. The social night was written as January 15<sup>th</sup> rather than February 15<sup>th</sup> which has since been corrected. JLL 02.28.2024