

Minutes of meeting of the Laurentian Chapter Adirondack Mountain Club 1/29/26

Present: Tom Wheeler, Tom Ortmeyer, Tom Vande Water, Dana Chudzinski, and Kim Baxter

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m.

In the absence of the Secretary, Debra Mitchell (excused because of illness) Tom Wheeler was selected to take minutes.

Tom mentioned the upcoming program for the discussion group and encouraged attendance.

Minutes of the December 11, 2025 meeting submitted by David Katz, former secretary, were reviewed. A motion was made by Tom Vande Water to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Tom Ortmeyer. After discussion the motion was approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Ellie Menz was unable to attend but had submitted a year end balance sheet and year to year profit and loss report for 2025. The committee reviewed the report. Motion by to approve the report was made by Dana Chudzinski and seconded by Tom Vande Water.

Tom Wheeler and Tom Ortmeyer discussed the status of a draft memorandum of understanding with Brookfield Power over maintenance of the Stone Valley and Red Sandstone Trails. This has been under development for months with substantial input from Trail Coordinators Mark Simond and Blair Madore. It was agreed unanimously that the chair was authorized to advise Brookfield that the draft was agreeable to the chapter. The next step will be for Brookfield to prepare the formal agreement and submit it to the Executive Director of ADK for signature by the Club.

The committee discussed the recent departure of Marianne Hebert by reason of illness. Marianne has for years been a stalwart leader of the club and her input and leadership will be missed by all. Tom Wheeler has received the club archives from her and will store them until a new archivist can be found. We will also be looking at replacements for other important roles that she has been playing.

Reports:

Tom Ortmeyer discussed the work of the advisory council on the requirements for trip leaders. Staff member Ray Fusco was at the most recent meeting and appeared to be understanding about the issues raised concerning trip leaders. The requirement for a two day Leave No Trace program will no longer be required for any level of trip leader certification. A trip leader's guide is in the final stages. Not all of the clubs IT needs are being met by the program chosen and some matters will be handled by other software. The club is using multiple insurance carriers and now outings can include bicycling activities and Class 1 and 2 paddling.

Tom O will be leading a bicycling event at Fall Outing and Tom Wheeler with Eileen will be leading a birding walk. John Omohundro has been organizing the event but will be moving to North Carolina.

Tom Vande Water has learned of an opportunity for a grant to purchase open space. He has thoughts of a property adjacent to the Adirondack Park that might be a candidate. TW mentioned that there is an area of forest along the River Road in Dekalb that is one of the few locations in the area where the Cerulean warbler breeds as a possible area to be preserved. TV will look into these possibilities.

Dana Chudzinski indicated continuing issues with respect to sufficient numbers of approved trip leaders. There are now four level one and two level two according to the club records. There are others who have completed one requirement but not the second. Some have simply not filed paperwork with the club. Some potential leaders do not respond well to his reminders. In a discussion of the map and compass requirement it came to light that TV with his work with the US forest service has the qualifications and experience to teach map and compass and we should work to have him approved as an educator in that subject.

Kim Baxter discussed the possibility of setting up educational programs to help meet requirements for outing leadership. TV suggested she might participate in the conservation field day event at Indian Creek Nature Center in early June.

Tom Wheeler discussed the need to address the vacancies in the organization and in particular those involving the newsletter. He also mentioned that both the November potluck and the January 1 event seemed quite successful and it was agreed that we should try to schedule a spring and/or summer event this year.

The next meeting will be held on Saturday, March 14, at 3 pm at the residence of Tom Vande Water 110 Orebed Road, Colton, New York.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Wheeler