



JANUARY 8, 2019 BOARD MEETING MINUTES
DOE MOUNTAIN RECREATION AUTHORITY BOARD

A meeting of the Doe Mountain Recreation Authority (DMRA) Board of Directors was held at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 8, 2019 at the First Tennessee Development District, Johnson City, Tennessee.

Vice Chairman Taylor called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

I. Board Members Present

Mayor Mike Taylor
Capt. Tim Sain
Ray Stout

Jerry Grindstaff
Gabrielle Lynch
Mike Farmer

Kristy Herman
Frank Arnold
Dave Jones

DMRA Staff and Guests Present

Tate Davis, Executive Director
Dennis Shekinah, Marketing, Outreach and Business Development Committee Chair
Lynn Hicks, Mountain Trail Riders Association
Angie Stout, Johnson County Health Department
Robin Cooper

II. Minutes from the November 6, 2018 meeting were reviewed. J. Grindstaff motioned for approval of the minutes. **R. Stout seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

III. Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

IV. Financial Report

F. Arnold, Treasurer, reported the balance of DMRA funds is \$48,269.26 held by Johnson County. There is \$1,695.15 in DMRA's Johnson County Bank account. Funds from ARC Grant reimbursements are anticipated and will be deposited to the Johnson County Bank account, then transferred back to Johnson County funds. There is a problem with the address on some paperwork with ARC, so this will be resolved with First Tennessee Development District. J. Grindstaff motioned to approve the financial report. **T. Sain seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

V. New Policy Development by Committees

G. Lynch presented discussion of the Executive Director's request for DMRA Committees to focus on developing formal policies this year. The Director and Executive Committee developed a list of the issues for committees to determine formal policies for discussion by the full DMRA Board at the June 2019 meeting for adoption and implementation during the upcoming Fiscal Year beginning July 2019. The list was distributed to Committee Chairs for review.

VI. Executive Director's Report

T. Davis reported new records for permit sales for the months of October, November and December. Permit sales for the first half of the Fiscal Year totaled \$27,689. On December 31st, permit sales were \$780 lower than the same point last year. Davis attributed that to rain on weekends and holidays. Davis reported January 2019 had started out very strong, exceeding the entire month's total from last January.

Davis discussed the successful First Day Hike held at Doe Mountain, thanking Mayor Taylor, Johnson County Farmers Market, Johnson County Health Department, Angie Stout, the UT Extension and the GoJoCo Healthier Tennessee Initiative.

Structural work has been completed on the ARC grant work for the Fire Lookout Tower. Three trails are to be built under the grant and are in process.

Davis reported the carbon project verification remains on track. G. Lynch explained the verification process for the carbon credit sales process, involving random sampling of the forest to verify the amount of carbon being stored.

Davis reported test events held recently on Doe Mountain. The Harescramble motorcycle race was held with Mountain Trail Riders Association in November. Davis reported increased visits from dirt bikes ever since the event. A small-scale holiday party was held, resulting in the donation of a beverage maker, a small cash donation and the organizers decorated the Adventure Center for the holidays. This led to additional inquiries from other local community groups about holding meetings at the Adventure Center. Davis again mentioned the First Day Hike and the increased local community support from positive feelings created by the event.

Davis discussed future events planned and in discussion. The Harescramble will return, probably in March 2019. Trek Bikes will hold an E-Bike demo day in May 2019. Another First Day Hike will take place next year. There are discussions in participating in Tennessee Songwriters Week (February 2019); and Brushy Mountain Powersports.

Davis identified proposal goals for the year. Those included: better visitor maps; more vistas and points of interest; better signs; creating interpretive programming; cooperating with Johnson County to improve OHV access to local services; increasing parking for visitors; and revamping the permit system for more efficiency. Davis reported at least five more meetings with Blue Ridge Marketing and Greg LaVecchia had been scheduled, with LaVecchia failing to show. Davis personally purchased two domain names and has donated them to DMRA after discovering the DoeMountainTN.com domain listed for sale, with the DMRA website down. D. Jones asked who owns DoeMountainTN. Davis reported DMRA is supposed to own those domains, per contract, but that there appears to be a breach of the contract. Mayor Taylor offered to have the Johnson County attorney assist with writing a letter to Blue Ridge Marketing about this issue. G. Lynch observed that this would be appropriate since DMRA has a MOU with Johnson County Government.

D. Jones motioned for the Johnson County attorney to assist with the matter and notify Mr. LaVecchia of apparent breach of agreement. **T. Sain seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Davis stated he would like modest expansion of the trail system to address dead end trails and opined that adding a single biking connector might transform the biking trails into a legitimate system. Davis offered a vision of improvements to three key areas: the Fire Tower; the satellite property above Mountain City and Chimney Rock. R. Stout observed there are other places along Doe Valley that offer value and Davis agreed, stating he just didn't see that happening in 2019. Davis closed his report with data showing DMRA is slightly outperforming Hatfield McCoy Trails in terms of number of permits per mile of trail.

VII. Individual Committee Reports:

- a. Natural Resources: No report.
- b. Master Planning: No report.
- c. Executive Committee: G. Lynch stated the critical issue is policy development as already addressed. Also noted was the fact that the Executive Committee, at its December 2018 meeting, approved increasing pay for DMRA's part-time staff person to \$9 per hour unless the Board objected.
- d. Marking & Outreach/Business Development: D. Shekinah reported an upcoming meeting with Kelley Germain as a potential professional for future engagement handling the DMRA website. D. Shekinah suggested interest in adjusting permit pricing to even numbers.
- e. Roads & Trails: J. Grindstaff stated there had been no meeting this month and offered no report.
- f. Hunting & Shooting Sports: T. Sain is Committee Chair and reported he will hold a Committee Meeting in Mountain City before the next DMRA Board Meeting. M. Farmer stated he has communicated with birding community members and the NeTREP stewardship committee could assist with developing relationships to expand birding and wildlife opportunities on Doe Mountain. G. Lynch expressed support for using the cleared power line strip to develop wildlife food plots.

VIII. Other Business:

- a) D. Jones noted Mr. Mark Ezell will become the Commissioner of Tennessee Department of Tourism Development on January 19th. The new TN Vacation Guide has been published and Doe Mountain appears on page 141.
- b) G. Lynch stated The Nature Conservancy plans to install monitoring equipment to track animal and bird migration at a variety of sites across the Appalachians, and Doe Mountain could potentially be one of those sites. R. Stout motioned to approve pursuing joining the initiative. **K. Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

- c) T. Davis noted DMRA appeared on a map celebrating The Nature Conservancy's 40th Anniversary of service in Tennessee. The map listed nine specific projects and Davis expressed pride in having Doe Mountain as one of those. Davis thanked G. Lynch for the map and also her efforts and those of TNC in preserving and conserving Doe Mountain.
- d) D. Jones observed the Great Smokey Mountains National Park benefited from having plans for "shovel ready" projects in the past. Jones expressed interest in DMRA preparing a list of priority projects for funding as it becomes available. T. Davis offered to prepare such a list for the Board to review moving forward.
- e) L. Hicks, from Mountain Trail Riders Association, discussed having seedlings from the 250K Tree Day and working with Director Davis to participate in planting seedlings on Doe Mountain.
- f) M. Farmer discussed working with Ruffed Grouse Society to establish food plots on Doe Mountain. R. Stout motioned for approval of pursuing planning with the Society. **F. Arnold seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.**

IX. Set Next Meeting Date/Time/Place

The next meeting will be set for Tuesday, March 5, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. at First Tennessee Development District in Johnson City, Tennessee. R. Stout noted the Board Meeting is typically held at Doe Mountain in May.

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

Minutes Taken By:



Gabrielle K. Lynch
DMRA Corresponding Secretary

The mission of the Doe Mountain Recreation Authority is to transform Doe Mountain into a safe, fun, family-oriented, multi-use outdoor recreational destination that promotes local economic development while conserving and protecting its beauty, woods, water and wildlife.