



MARCH 5, 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, March 5, 2019 at the First Tennessee Development District, Johnson City, Tennessee.

Chairman Reese called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

I. Board Members Present

Dan Reese	Jerry Grindstaff	Mike Farmer
Ray Stout	Don Hurst	Frank Arnold
Carolyn Hawkins	Dave Jones	Gabby Lynch
Tim Sain		

DMRA Staff and Guests Present

Tate Davis, Executive Director
Lynn Hicks, Mountain Trail Riders Association
Angie Stout, Johnson County Health Department

II. Minutes from the January 8, 2019 meeting (as amended) were reviewed. F. Arnold motioned for approval of the minutes. **C. Hawkins 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 \$29,560.09 held by Johnson County. DMRA is continuing to await a reimbursement of about \$40,000 from the Johnson County Asset Based Development grant. \$10,639.82 is the balance in the Johnson County Bank account; a deposit of \$8,727.66 was made to the Johnson County Bank Account as an ARC grant reimbursement. This ARC deposit will be transferred into the funds held with Johnson County. T. Davis also noted there was a payment of \$650 to Northeast Tourism Association listed as an expense to purchase space in the Tennessee Visitor Guide; however, donations secured from Dennis Shekinah, Appalachian Outdoor Adventures and Director Davis covered at least half of that expense.

V. Executive Director's Report

T. Davis reported permit sales for January 2019 were \$3,658. A check from Blue Source for \$525 reimbursing DMRA for ATV rentals was deposited into the Johnson County Bank account and is reflected in the January permit total. Permit sales for February were \$3,009. At the end of February 2019, Fiscal Year permit sales totaled \$34,266.

RTP Trail 1 Rehabilitation project received an apparent successful bid of \$30,000. Paperwork is at TDEC RES office for a final review of whether or not to award the contract. ARC Trails 13 & 16 project received an apparent successful bid of \$80,000. Paperwork is at ARC pending decision on whether or not to award the contract. DMRA received notice that the ARC grant is extended to end of November 2019.

A major event is planned for March 17, 2019 with the Mountain Trail Riders Association (MTRA). MTRA and volunteers have created an 8.5-mile race track for the event. DMRA will participate in the 250K Tree Day with Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Partnership (NeTREP) and other partner agencies. DMRA is collaborating with R&D Campground to create a trail to a waterfall and work is about a day away from being completed. R&D Campground will build a bench to complement the view. The trail will be a loop off Trail 17 and will enter R&D's property, pass the falls and end at the campground. DMRA also collaborated with NeTREP on listening sessions for a new regional recreation plan, with the session at Johnson County Welcome Center being the largest public turnout of the week.

Doe Mountain suffered extensive flooding in February, including a landslide near DMRA's Morefield Branch gate. A significant problem occurred with a culvert on Trail 317, which will likely need hardening work around the culvert to complete repairs.

G. Lynch observed getting an extension of the RTP grant is essential due to the lengthy time frame for reimbursement. TDEC RES director Gerald Parish will be visiting with the Executive Committee later in March and DMRA is hopeful of getting an extension of the grant. Chairman Reese stated he wrote a letter to Senator Lundberg and Representative Hill requesting supplementary funding in the amount of \$25,000 to be used for grant reimbursements. Senator Lundberg acknowledged receipt of the letter.

D. Jones asked about past sales projections. T. Davis answered that from this point forward in the Fiscal Year, he would expect permit sales to exceed payroll and overhead expenses. DMRA plans to sell Mountain Trail Riders Association (MTRA) 50 permits for \$2,000, which MTRA will then issue to its members as a means of accelerating generation of revenue. T. Davis stated he hopes to find corporate sponsorship for a recently completed viewing platform and also for the Fire Tower as it is completed. Davis believes about \$80,000 to \$85,000 may remain unspent on the ARC project when planned work is finished, and he hopes ARC might allow DMRA to add back in some projects that could attract sponsors and generate revenue over their life spans, such as pavilions.

Discussion moved to anticipated carbon credit revenue. The DMRA's carbon consultant, Blue Source, reports that the Doe Mountain forest carbon project's verification is on track to be completed by the end of March. Lynch stated there is no definite date for the first round of funding to arrive in DMRA's bank account, all signs point to the funding coming soon. Chairman Reese asked G. Lynch to restate the manner for setting aside funds from the revenue. G. Lynch said it is a recommended best practice that money be set aside in a professionally managed, interest-bearing account (endowment) so DMRA can cover future monitoring costs required by the carbon agreement protocol. F. Arnold reported speaking

with local/Mountain City banks to see if they had any interest in managing the funds, but those conversations did not succeed in finding a fund manager. Chairman Reese has also been working on finding qualified managers in Johnson City who may be equipped to handle the endowment fund.

Mr. Jones asked if there is a plan for permit sales to rise to the level to sustain operational costs for DMRA. T. Davis stated he had provided the Board with a paper outlining projections last year showing the amount of increase needed to cover operational costs. F. Arnold agreed the goal should be for the permit sales to cover operational costs and have other funds, such as carbon revenue, provide the match for grants to fund improvements that would, in turn, generate more permit sales. T. Davis stated that having had another year in the job, he doubted permit sales could grow fast enough to fully fund operations but did think adding events, generating more sponsorships, and carbon revenue combined could bring DMRA closer to covering operational costs. He noted the Hatfield McCoy Trails model of relying on economic impact and sales tax revenues to justify major state subsidies of their trail system. Davis observed a need to do better with designing infrastructure under future grant projects to increase sponsorship opportunities.

T. Davis stated the Tourism Marketing grant had intentionally had a gap in time but became active again last week and that DMRA would be increasing social media marketing for the rest of the Fiscal Year. Davis stated the ads in the Northeast Tennessee Visitor Guide marked the first time Appalachian Outdoor Adventures had jointly marketed with DMRA. R&D Campground also joined as a partner. With more partners, DMRA could expand marketing even more. Davis stated the current DMRA cash crunch is limiting marketing that DMRA could accomplish across FY19, but even so, the Adventure Center is running out of parking whenever there is a sunny weekend. Davis stated adding more parking would require some assistance from Johnson County due to the location of the property line along the gravel trailer parking lot.

Discussion turned to lessons learned to date from experiences with grants, particularly those using federal funds. D. Jones stated there is an upcoming Tourism Enhancement grant and will be other Tourism Marketing grants coming available for application. There was consensus that DMRA should continue identifying a priority list of future projects for readiness when appropriate grant application opportunities arise.

D. Hurst remarked his agency has been working with Johnson County Mayor Taylor on economic developments issues, many of which are tailored to industrial sites, but that he could perhaps assist with better tracking of economic impact from DMRA at future points. G. Lynch, D. Hurst and D. Jones discussed more emphasis on economic impact factors in presenting DMRA budgets in the future.

VI. Individual Committee Reports:

- a. Master Planning: No report. Chairman Reese observed each quarter has been so dynamic that it has been difficult to re-establish the master planning process for Doe Mountain, but that it should be revisited when carbon funding arrives.
- b. Executive Committee: G. Lynch reminded the Board that, at its January meeting, each committee was asked to draft new DMRA policies that T. Davis has identified as being necessary to his achieving success as Executive Director. The goal is for each committee to have its draft policies ready for the full Board to review and/or approve at the July 2019 DMRA Board meeting.

- c. Marking & Outreach/Business Development: No report.
- d. Roads & Trails: J. Grindstaff stated there a Johnson County Constable who has offered to assist with patrolling Doe Mountain. He will issue a warning for initial violations and cite violators with trespassing for second violations. The Constable proposes using the DMRA Side-by-Side for patrol purposes. J. Grindstaff motioned to approve the Constable using DMRA vehicles on patrol the property. **R. Stout seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** M. Farmer noted the Committee wanted to establish a list of a variety of volunteer projects available beyond just brush removal and trail maintenance.
- e. Hunting & Shooting Sports: T. Sain is Committee Chair and reported he will hold a rescheduled Committee Meeting in Mountain City before the next DMRA Board Meeting. G. Lynch will send Captain Sain the list of policy issues for the Committee to resolve.
- f. Natural Resources: No report.

VII. Other Business: None.

VIII. Set Next Meeting Date/Time/Place

The next meeting will be set for Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. at the DMRA Adventure Center in Mountain City, Tennessee.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by D. Reese at 3:48 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.