

# Friends of the Outlet, Inc. Meeting

Wednesday, August 28, 2019

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## Attendees

Gwen Chamberlain, Rachel Knapton, Phil Rahr, Rob Schwarting, Steve Miller, Kristin Burch, Susan Spence, Dan Condella, Mickey Orr, Nancy Tharp, Steve Stork, Deb Clancy

## Guests

None present

**Gwen Chamberlain called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM**

## Public Comment

### Maintenance Report (Presented by Mickey Orr)

Not much to update, focus has been on maintaining.

Pavillion will be going up later this fall. There's no official date yet, but Phil has a group at the college that is ready to help out when the time comes.

Mickey is meeting next week with the maintenance volunteers. There is one new member from Geneva, Jim Culver. Another gentleman out of Dresden is also interested in joining the volunteers to help with maintenance of the trail.

Gwen wonders if an old sign along the trail near Cascade can be removed and Mickey is confident it can be done.

Mickey does report that the new fencing has been bent down by some trespassers. Gwen and Phil will check the cameras to see if we can figure out who the culprit was.

*7:10 PM Kristin motions to accept the minutes from June, Steve M seconds it. The motion passes.*

### Finance Report (presented by Steve Stork)

Met last week. Funds and accounts are in good shape, bills are being paid promptly.

*7:12 PM Rob makes a motion to accept the finance report. Nancy seconds. The motion passes.*

*7:13 PM Rob makes a motion for the CD at the Bank of the Finger Lakes be renewed at the end of the month. Deb seconds. The motion passes.*

## **Membership Report (Sent in by Kristi Hoag)**

### **Planning Committee (presented by Rob Schwarting)**

Rob has been in touch with Phil Palmesano's office to get referral to the NYS Parks and Recreation and Canal Corporation. He has also been in touch with Tom Reed's staff for grants about improvement for bikeways. They recommended initiatives available under water/sewage treatment/improvement grants. The Canal Corporation said the only part of the trail that qualifies for their grants is in the town of Torrey. Rob will be reaching out to the Director of Parks and Rec in Trumansburg to ask what their experience has been with the Catharine Valley trail and if they're intending to make any trail improvements.

### **Community Relations Report (presented by Phil Rahr)**

\$380 was raised at the Making Friends events at Climbing Bines this summer.

TAC money: Gwen ordered 5,000 new trail guides. A local graphic organizer volunteered to rework the design slightly just to make it look a little more clean. We may be looking at creating the Little Free Libraries to eventually add to the trail.

Phil will be speaking to Verizon about getting a hot spot (to add to the pavillion)

Refind on Main Street (Claudia Milroy) will be featuring FOTO for First Friday. There will be rock painting at the studio, and kids can take home one rock and the others will eventually make their way to the trail. (Sept 6, 5-8 PM). Deb and Gwen will be attending to help at the event.

Community Table Event (Chamber of Commerce). First annual event and proceeds will be donated to the FOTO. The Main Street bridge will be shut down for an 80 foot long table. Ben Comstock, a chef from Esperanza, and Smokin Pete's BBQ will be cooking, local wines.

September 21 from 6-10 PM.

### **President's Report (Presented by Gwen Chamberlain)**

Erosion repair at Cherry street has been completed and looks beautiful.

As we have been selected as a Point of Inspiration, we have banners we can hang that designate us as such (Kristin recommends typing up something short to add to the kiosks to explain what the posters mean).

Cascade Buildings: Arcadis hired a contractor to install fencing around the two remaining JT Baker buildings. The work was completed Aug. 13 & 14 at no cost to the Friends of the Outlet. It appears they will be proceeding with plans to demolish the buildings. Once that work is planned and a contractor is identified, we can see if that contractor will also demolish the Kelly Tire Building and the little brown block building at our cost, with payment coming from the Yates County Natural Resources funds.

Bank erosion repairs: The contractors at the FEMA site expected to complete that project by Aug. 24.

Signs: The sign for May's Mills/Cascade is ready for installation by the Milo Crew. Jeff Gifford has asked the Friends to work with Birkett Mills and the village to install a memorial site with a sign in memory of Jerry and Linda Nissen.

Trail Tour: The July 20 trail tour with Tracy Mitrano did not happen because of the extreme heat, but a round table session was held at the Dresden Hotel. It was an opportunity to talk with people from Keuka and Seneca Lakes.

Oak Hill Barbecue: This was another successful event, with income of \$650 plus roughly \$180 in tips and a few new members. Our crew was praised by Oak Hill owner Phil Riehl for their enthusiasm and energy. Thank you Deb, Kristin, Rachel, Hannah, Susan, Steve, Phil, and David!

#### New Items

Long Term Planning and State partnership: I have approached Assemblyman Phil Palmesano's office to schedule a time to meet to discuss the possibility of the state taking over ownership and overall management of the Keuka Outlet Trail. I took this step after discussions with members of the Planning Committee and Finance Committee.

Here is some of my reasoning for approaching the state:

More people are requesting campsite accessibility to the trail - they actually want to camp on the trail. We have land that should/could be used for camping, and we have more land that could be developed for camping. But we don't have the personnel to manage a campgrounds, nor do we have the financial resources to develop and manage one.

1. If the trail becomes part of the parks system, it would be promoted along with all the other state parks.

2. New York State's Parks & Recreation would have the resources to work with the village of Dresden toward establishing a true connection to Seneca Lake (Erie Canalway...) including a marina, etc.

3. The Catharine Valley Trail is now under the management of the Watkins Glen State Park. Likewise, the Seneca-Cayuga Trail is under the management of Seneca Lake State Park. The Keuka Outlet Trail could easily come under the management of the Keuka Lake State Park.

Outlet Trail Book: I have started communicating with publishers about re-printing the Outlet Trail Book with some color illustrations. Since May 31, I have taken 72 books to Longs' Cards & Books for re-sale.

Points of Inspiration: The Keuka Outlet Trail has been selected by Points of Inspiration to be a new point on their Science and Technology trail. More detail will be available at the meeting, but to learn more, visit [www.pointsofinspiration.net](http://www.pointsofinspiration.net).

*Nancy makes a motion to renew Land Trust Membership or \$425. Phil seconds. The motion passes.*

## **Board Comments**

Steve Miller went down to check out the Catharine Valley trail to compare it to ours. They rode their bikes from Watkins to Millport to see if the trail had changed after coming under ownership of the state park. Steve admits that he didn't notice much difference.

Managing the groups could cause some difficulties. Need to change how to communicate and work together. Can friends groups work on the trail? Need to look into it more.

Conversation around the state taking over-- could FOTO maintain ownership, and the state take over the camping? There are a variety of options. Gwen invites anyone who would want to be a part of the conversation with Phil Palmesano to join

Gwen discusses the cost cutting efforts of the newsletter crew. After this upcoming newsletter we'll be moving to electronic newsletters (though members are able to request paper copies). Rob hopes we will be able to print at least one publication for big donors and supporters once a year.

Dan talked with Coby Peterson with Yates County Soil and Water. He may come to the September meeting and get us an estimate and put us in for a grant.

Steve Stork nominated Gwen for a woman of distinction who contributes to her local community. She was a runner-up.

*Rachel makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:08. Steve Stork seconds it. Meeting adjourns at 8:08 PM.*