



**2022 Fall Annual Voting Members Meeting
MINUTES**

Saturday, November 19th, 2022

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

NYNJTC

ZOOM virtual meeting

In attendance:

Andy Garrison
Barbara Evans
Beth Ravit
Carol Ann Benton
Carolyn Hoffman
Charles Gadol
Deborah Padula-Genna
Denise Jarvis
Don Tripp
Doug Sohn
Eddie Saiff
Emily Hague
Jane Daniels
John Magerlein
Patsy Wooters

Peter Reiner
Richard Barr
Ron Rosen
Rose Bonanno
Suse Bell
Walt Daniels
Josh Howard, Executive Director
Kathleen Bezik, Executive Assistant
Ashley Nester, Community Outreach Coordinator
Jackie Hanley, Grant & Contract Manager
Katie Kourakos, Volunteer Engagement Manager
Myra Romano, Trail Steward Program Coordinator
Zac Cole, Long-Distance Trails Program Coordinator
Krysti Sabins, Stewardship Communications
Coordinator

Welcome & Introductions: Josh Howard welcomed the Members to the Fall Annual Meeting and thanked them for their attendance. New staff members introduced themselves and their role at the Trail Conference.

Approval of [Spring 2022 Member Meeting minutes](#): Mr. Magerlein made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hoffman, to approve the Spring meeting minutes. All were in favor.

Board of Directors/At-Large Voting Member Nominations: Mr. Howard presented the nominated candidates for the Board of Directors to serve three-year terms and introduced three new board candidates: Juan Melli, Emily Hague, and Michael Pashley. David Felsenthal will renew a 3-year term on the board. Mr. Saiff motioned, and Ms. Wooters seconded to approve the nomination of board candidates.

Mr. Howard presented the nominated candidates to serve one-year terms as At-Large Voting Members. Mr. Gadol motioned, and Ms. Wooters seconded, the approval of nominations. All were in favor.

Executive Director's Report:

Mr. Howard shared exciting news about the completion of the Strategic Plan. After about 20 months of drafting and planning, the Strategic Plan will guide us through the next five years of operations. The drafting began internally to look at priorities for the organization. Following multiple round table discussions, information was collected to find opportunities and synergies within the organization. He notes that the Strategic Plan is not meant to change or eliminate work that we are currently doing. Instead, we have identified areas where there is an opportunity to amplify and improve the performance

of the organization. As part of this plan, implementation of a technology strategy will enhance the organization's capabilities.

In addition, Mr. Howard reported that the new plan will maximize strengths in existing programs to integrate ecological stewardship and trail stewards into trail programs and focus on long distance trails. He explained the benefit of this integration as a cross functional tool that will alleviate duplicate efforts and enhance the trail experience for both users and maintainers.

Mr. Howard further explains the plan to develop a road map for decision-making and what it takes to say yes. He notes that the organization is constantly asked to take on new trails and projects and there is a need for a system to help the organization identify what is needed to support the request or determine that we do not have the capacity to take on the project.

The organization is working towards achieving financial operating sustainability and growing and diversifying revenue streams. All goals outlined in the Strategic Plan will be integrated with an eye towards diversity, equity, and inclusion to encourage more people to be involved in making the outdoors accessible to all. The plan will give us the ability to be a more impactful organization and includes a system for key performance indicators to track our progress on the goals outlined in the plan. Mr. Howard notes that an executive summary will be shared on our website and on the dashboard and he thanked the Strategic Planning Committee for all their efforts.

Mr. Howard states that the organization has started collecting data, including a demographic survey of the board and staff, to get a better understanding of where the organization currently stands. The Nominating Committee has looked at diversifying the board as it should better represent our community. Mr. Howard is on the steering committee for Open Space Institute's Open Spaces for All project to create a comprehensive set of state-level recommendations designed to improve equity and access to parks and other open spaces for visitors and residents of New York State.

Mr. Howard introduced the Welch Trail Education Center, as a group camp in Harriman State Park. The organization signed a 10-year lease with PIPC with the expectation of making capital improvements of \$250k over this time frame. \$250k was awarded from New York State Parks to upgrade the facility. The Trail Conference, along with the help of outstanding volunteers, is making improvements by replacing roofs, upgrading electric and kitchen facilities, etc. He explains that the organization is in the process of getting approval for the construction of an education building to be used for outreach and training opportunities. The facility is currently used to house seasonal Conservation Corps members from May through the end of October.

Mr. Howard concluded the meeting by thanking the two board directors coming off the board this year, Ms. Wooters and Mr. Whitney. He emphasized their incredibly job supporting the organization during their tenure and announced that they will serve as delegates at large in the coming year.

Mr. Howard thanked everyone for their attendance.

Seeing no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:29 a.m. All were in favor.