

**NEW YORK STATE TRAILS COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Meeting Held In-Person and Virtually via WebEx**  
**April 15, 2023 10:30 am – 3:00 pm**

**Council Attendance:**

**4-Wheel Drive –**

**All-Terrain Vehicles –** Jeff Binga

**Equestrian –** Carol Schmelz, Bill Lasher, Wendy Wakula

**Hiking –** Donna Chapman, Stephanie Campbell

**Nordic Skiing –**

**Off-Highway Motorcycles –** Tim Hutchinson

**Off-road Bicycling –** Michael Vitti

**On-road Bicycling –** Ivan Vamos, Harvey Botzman

**Running –**

**Snowmobiles –** Jennifer Senf, Bill Cook

**Snowshoeing –**

**Universal Access –** Jason Thurston

**Water Trails –**

**ECNHC –**

**FHWA -**

**National Park Service –**

**HRV Greenway –**

**NYS Canal Corporation –**

**NYSDEC –** Jill Trunko

**NYSOPRHP –**Tom Hotaling, Chris Morris

**NYS DOT –**

**PTNY –**

**Guests:** Seth Reichlin, Palisades MTB

**Call to Order & Welcome:**

Meeting was called to order at 10:31 AM. Roll was called for in-person and virtual attendance.

**Correction/Approval of Minutes from October 15, 2022:**

Harvey asked for corrections to the minutes- no corrections. Motion carried with none opposed- minutes approved from 04/09/2022.

**New delegate introductions and acceptance**

- Wendy Wakula introduced and provided background.
- Charlotte Staats, hiking delegate. Not present
- Deb Nero, possible hiking alternate. User group to determine final list.

**Announcements:**

- Chris Morris noted vacancies in multiple user groups and encouraged delegates to solicit for interested folks.
- Chris noted Bill Lasher's departure as an Equestrian delegate and thanked him for his time with the Council.

**Presentation:** Palisades MTB Volunteer Efforts in Sterling Forest State Park

- Seth Reichlin with Palisades MTB organization presented on that group's efforts to implement multi-use trail projects in Sterling Forest State Park.
- Group has built and restored many miles of trails in the park with much more to go.
- Park has challenging topography and natural resources.
- Fundraised over \$50k to hire professional trailbuilder in 2022 to advance projects w machinery.
- Has applied for a \$100k PTNY Grant with Friends of Sterling Forest SP for Phase 2 of project.
- Seth described the public-private partnership between Parks, PIPC, PMTB, NY-NJ TC.

- Success comes from delivering on promises, volunteers, donations, persistence, and trust between partners.

### **Lunch Break**

### **Delegate Report Highlights and Q&A:**

Delegates submitted written reports electronically prior to the meeting. (attached)

- Harvey called out each report submitted and asked for highlights.
- Carol asked if the “tree cutting issue” was ever resolved?
  - Jill summarized the DEC policy regarding Work Plan development within the Blue Line. Policy is out for comment, Commissioner will sign after comment review.
  - >Chris asked Jill to send a summary for him to distribute to the group post-meeting.
  - Tim H asked for details regarding hazardous trees.
- Mike V. noted the best practices for Trails Council. New pocket bike park on LI. Received donations of soil for dirt jumps.
  - Carol discussed the best practices. Group discussed.
  - Carol, Mike and group discussed the comparative Volunteer agreements with DEC vs Parks.
  - Tim H. asked the group about volunteer groups and larger associations responsibility for monitoring tree clearing using safety equipment.
  - Jeff B. asked Jennifer S. about availability for their Game of Logging trainer to provide additional classes. Jennifer said she would inquire and follow up.
  - Chris noted that the requirements were likely for a MOU/Friends group agreement and that Parks still has a simple VSA form for day-to-day activities.
- Carol updated the group on her activities. The group discussed outdoor activities and the upcoming 2024 eclipse.
- Tom H queried the group on their interest in a State Trails Coalition, which could be a separate group from the Trails Council, or could be the same. Group seemed interested- Tom offered to reach out to Bob at American Trails for more info. Group discussed past coalition efforts in NY and the pros and cons of a statewide effort.
- Chris Morris noted the new Environmental Bond Act webpage with FAQs and other information.
- Chris noted the Monroe County Active Transportation plan underway. Ivan noted the NYS DOT Active Transportation Plan underway and asked that Karen L keep the group updated on that process.
- Jason T. reviewed his submission about accessible trails to the group. The group discussed accessible efforts across the state.
- Harvey noted potential presentation ideas for the fall meeting and asked folks to send along ideas. Chris mentioned the idea of Parks and Trails NY and HRVG presenting on their grant opportunities.
- Jill T discussed updates from NYS DEC including the ADK Rail Trail, EPF Stewardship funding for DEC, Env. Bond Act Open Space criteria being developed at DEC.
- Tim H and Ivan V discussed self-propelled rail cars on North Creek RR line.
- Harvey and the group discussed Amtrak coaches with bicycle accommodations in NY.
- Mike V inquired about travel reimbursement for delegates. Chris will send the information with the minutes and meeting follow up.

Harvey asked to adjourn the meeting with none opposed.

**Next meeting: October 14, 2023 In-person @ DEC’s Five Rivers location and virtual via WebEx.**