



**Eastern Trail Management District Board Meeting  
September 21, 2022  
Minutes**

Saco Community Center, Rm 104, 75 Franklin St

**In attendance:**

- South Portland – none
- Scarborough – Jami Fitch
- Old Orchard Beach – none
- Saco – Ryan Sommer, Pres.
- Biddeford – Matthew Grooms
- Eastern Trail Alliance – Joe Yuhas, Bob Hamblen
- Executive Director Jon Kachmar, Trail Program Manager Patrick Conlan
- Arundel -- none
- Kennebunk – Bryan Laverriere
- Wells -- none
- North Berwick – none
- South Berwick – Tom McCollom

■ **8:30** Welcome & Introductions

■ Consent Agenda – Discussion and vote: Ryan

- May and July meeting minutes (attached)

- May/June and July/August Treasurer’s Report (attached)

Motion by Bob to accept the minutes and Treasurer’s Report as submitted, seconded by Patrick, and so voted, unanimous.

■ ET Signage/Trail Connection Agreements Ryan

- Agreements for Kennebunk Land Trust and Arundel Conservation Trust (for review at meeting) – must be a connection agreement in place for any non-municipal, for-profit abutters to provide access to the Trail. The KLT has moved its sign out of the Unitil right of way, added a kiosk, and improved trails on its parcel. ROW width is 66 feet. Discussion turned to signage on the trail, such as directional. Keep it generic rather than specific businesses or commercial references. Food and drink, restrooms, bike shops, trails and breweries were mentioned as being valuable info/destinations for trail users.

■ **9:30** Trail Operations and Projects Jon

- Trail Maintenance Report (attached) Fence into Arundel has been repaired. Repairs to fence by Thornton Academy may be complete; Ryan will check. The chainlink fence under the Biddeford Connector needs attention. George Monteif, Biddeford CEO, has been helpful in the past. In Arundel, on Limerick Road and damaged the wooden guardrail. In Kennebunk there has been ATV activity on the trail. Bollards have been dropped to allow access. The town has loc-tited the bolts and tightened; may have an idea as to the offending party. In Scarborough a tree is leaning over the trail south of Pine Point Road. A fence has fallen along the Greenbelt in SoPo, and trail users are crossing through a woman’s backyard as a result. SoPo has recently requested the ETA’s vendor #; may begin paying dues? The Maine Lighthouse Ride featured over 800 registrants, a lot of merchandise sold, beer tent was popular, overall another successful event. 2023 will be Year 20 of the MLR.

■ Updates on active projects

- Gap – the reluctant abutter has had a new attorney draft a fourth draft of the easement that would allow the Trail to cross his property. Scarborough continues to take the lead on this, and the MDOT is still solidly involved. A chainlink fence has become another point of discussion for the abutter, but no



intention of putting this back on the table for discussion. Scarborough has drafted the bid proposal that will be used to seek contractors this fall/winter.

- Over the River – this project would complete the gap between Thornton Academy and Southern Maine Health Care. A feasibility study is complete. Hard copies are available for host communities Biddeford and Saco. The engineering design is the next step. The earmark request submitted to Sen. King’s office has been rejected, as have several other trail funding requests. His office will stay alert to other opportunities. CSX, the rail line owner, and the cities will hold the key to securing rights to build trail in the rail right of way and across the RR bridge.
- Blaze the Trail South – an 11 mile future section of Trail from Kennebunk to North Berwick. Feasibility study is complete. Engineering design will cost roughly \$910,000, for which a \$700,000 Congressional earmark is slated, with the balance due as a local match that the ETA has in the bank. Is exempt from environmental review; should be moving forward by year’s end. MDOT is satisfied with a no-bid selection process, keeping feasibility report firm VHB on board for design work. HUD may make the final decision on bid requirements.
- 2022 and 2023 Congressionally Directed Spending requests – as noted above, the 2022 earmark has been approved in the form of a \$700,000 grant being handled by HUD. The request for a 2023 earmark has been denied. Will be preparing for a 2024 request.
- Status reports from municipalities, ETA – see above under trail maintenance. Ryan (ETMD) and Eric Wright (ETA) are communicating about Jon’s annual review.
- Previous Action Items -- Ryan
  - “Outside Interest” nonvoting board seats – the towns of Eliot and Kittery are being brought into the conversation re: the trail advancing south. Tom recognized the two as non-voting towns, with no annual dues paid for several years. Jon has talked to North Berwick and South Berwick, Eliot, York and Kittery through the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission (SMPDC) – each is interested.

The ETA has received an anonymous donation of \$130,000 intended to help with the costs of two more feasibility studies covering 16 miles of trail in the above referenced communities. The MDOT is excited with this development. The donation would be viewed as the local match, with an estimated cost of \$200,000 under the Planning Partnership Initiative (PPI) program (<https://www.maine.gov/mdot/ppi/>).

- Winter trail use policy (bikes, skiing) – Ryan: there is no winter maintenance performed on the trail in Saco (nor any other towns). Jon noted there is no policy for winter maintenance. The issue is conflict between users. The trail is not managed for winter conditions. (Nor has Unitil encouraged grooming of the trail by motorized vehicles).

- Trail Counts for 2022—these have been completed in 5 locations along the trail. Summary data will be completed along with graphics. The Bike Coalition of Maine (BCM), Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG), and SMPDC have been involved, utilizing EcoCounters and MyoVision (a pole-mounted camera). Cost to the ETA has been \$2500. The same locations as previous years are being counted, took place two weeks in August. The BCM has done other spot locations with the EcoCounter. Ryan: do we account for weather, too? Probably not. Eric Wright, ETA, continues to employ the older counters acquired by John Andrews, they have proven to be finicky.

#### ■ New Business -- Ryan

- Athletic Brewing grant fence replacement in Arundel – in the sum of \$5,000, which will cover the worst spots; damaged fence is extensive in Arundel. There is \$1,000 in budget also allotted. Public works director in Arundel has been asked to prioritize the needed work, working with Anchor Fence in Kennebunk. Emphasis will be given to trailhead crossings at roads.

- Turtle management in Arundel – have been nesting on the trail, like sunny, sandy spots. Jon has met with IFW and Unitil. Unitil is removing a couple of trees that threaten to fall over in Kennebunk and Arundel. The tree removal will open land up as preferred by turtles – sunny. A berm will be created to encourage nesting off the trail.



■ ED's Report

- Annual dues – all dues have been paid. The increase from \$5,000 to \$6,000 has been well received by all but Biddeford. South Berwick continues to pay \$500.
- Unitil has voiced its preference for a trail-wide co-location agreement, rather than the historic project by project approach. Jon is working with a land use attorney provided by Unitil on a full trail agreement. Existing agreements call for the ETA to be responsible for culvert maintenance. In practice, Unitil is doing the work. Unitil is assessing all culverts in the corridor, and has plans to do away with exposed pipeline – it will be re-routed to go beneath stream crossings. Unitil is aware of the impending Kennebunk to North Berwick project; Jon hopes to have the agreement in place prior to that moving forward.

**Meeting adjourned at 10:30.**

**Next meeting: Nov 9, 8:30-10:00AM at the Saco Community Center, Room 104, 75 Franklin Street – an in-person meeting.**

Submitted by Bob Hamblen, Secretary