

FCRT Board Meeting April 11, 2023, at Ernst Conservation Seed

Attending were: Marci Finton, Sherry and Wally Mason, Bill Dross, Keith Knighton, Tom Maxeiner, Calvin Ernst, Jean Weber, Tom Kennedy, Bill Eldridge, Dave Hotchkiss, Peter Oven and Marcel Moody.

Financial Report: Jerry sent before meeting. Marci did not know of any upcoming bills.

Trail Blazer 2023: Date has been set for Sunday, July 9, 2023. Tom K took printed registrations for distribution at local fitness clubs. Marci emailed 330 registrations. Sponsors should be contacted in May. Members can ask any business or individual to be a sponsor. Dick is planning on attending the Union Township meeting. Marci will email sponsor letters.

Spring Support Letter: Sherry will rewrite the letter and send it around for approval.

Connector Report: Grant money received will depend on how much paving can be done. Hopes are to start at the current trail behind Bean's and get as far as possible towards Smock Bridge. Ed applied for ACT 13 grant to complete further paving, plus the balance of the McNally Trust. Commercial Turf will be spraying this week. Bill requested they extend the spray a few feet off each side of the trail.

MGP to Bicentennial Park: No report

Trail Maintenance: Bill reported the batteries are charged and ready.

Bill is still planning to rent a brush style scraper, or two, to remove the moss on the sides of the trail. Erik is still working on a metal pusher to help remove the debris that continues to build up under the bridge.

Members are reminded to empty the trash at Bean's Trail head as often as possible. It seems the general public is using our trash cans for household waste. Jean Weber has offered to empty the waste cans at Bailey Rd and Krider Rd Trail Heads this summer.

A group from Allegheny College used their Service Saturday on April 1 to clear the brush on the creek side of the trail behind Smuckers for a view of the creek from the benches. There is still some work to be done, but it is a good start. Dick E wrote an article for the Meadville Tribune.

A group cleared trees and overgrowth around the piers of the old rail bridge over Watson Run. Peter measured and is getting quotes for a pre-fab bridge.

Monday, April 24, 5:00 is a planned work night. The focus will be to remove the debris from the downed trees from the ditches and sides of the trail from the recent storm clean up. The section from Kennedy to Krider will be done at a later date because of loggers still working in that area.

Bill reported that railing repair to the second bridge on the connector still needs to be completed due to storm damage.

Conneaut Lake end: We have planned a general meeting at the pavilion at Conneaut Cellars Winery June 13 to generate interest from people from Conneaut Lake. CL Garden Club will be hosting us.

A kiosk with information about the canal is in the plans. Bill Eldridge provided us with a report on the canal from the CL Historical Society.

We will need to pay for the engineering through our funds or grants for the tunnel project under Rt 19. Calvin plans to use a machine to pick up sticks and grade the Nature Trail. We will want to put a sign near the Nature Trail sign indicating the parking area beyond the property of Mr Griggs.

Dick and Bill will be attending a Vernon Twsp meeting soon to inform them of our progress, thank them for mowing and we will need their support/sponsor for the tunnel project.

By-Pass Trail end: no report

Grants: Act 13 grant is complete, DCNR due April 5, DCED due end of May.

Bike Rentals: Marci reported we are still waiting on two bike workstations and posts ordered through Pat Emig. They should arrived in April.

Dick E reminded members to add to the goals planning list. Further discussion is needed.

Powells delivered the Porta Johns - six units – Bean's, Mercer Pike and Bailey Rd Trail head, Brown Hill Rd, Krider Rd and Coleman Drive. The units will be year active all year.

Bill Dross had been in contact with the Girl Scout Group that adopted the trail at MGP. Some of their members may be doing a badge project identifying plants and trees along their mile.

Marci will be sending thank you notes along with gas cards to the tree cutters/ storm clean up crew that went above and beyond. Brian Simpson, Bryan Rhodes, George Overton, Skip Wykoff and Tom Maxeiner. If there was anyone else that should be thanked, let Marci know.

The by-laws were consulted and new board members can be added at any time. Nominations were taken. Tom Kennedy accepted; the vote was tabled until May.

Next meeting will be May 9, 2023 7:00, Trail Blazer organizational meeting 6:15.

Meeting adjourned 8:14 pm. Submitted by Marci Finton

Reminder: June meeting will be at Conn Cellars Winery Pavilion.