

FCRT Annual Board Meeting November 15, 2023, at Iroquois Boat Club in Conneaut Lake, PA.

Board members attending were: Dick Eglinton, Ed Easley, Jerry Boyle, Bill Dross, Sherry Mason, Keith Knighton, Jean Weber, Dave Hotchkiss, Susan Miller, and Peter Oven.

Also attending were Calvin Ernst and a number of guests and visitors.

Guest Zach Norwood, Crawford County Planning Director made a presentation on the county's comprehensive planning initiative, Crawford Inspired.

Detailed information is available at;

<https://2024-county-comprehensive-plan-crawfordcountypa.hub.arcgis.com/>

Dick presented a short history of the trail from its beginning in 1990.

Board Members: Bill Dross nominated Cameron Guffey to be a board member beginning in 2024. Jerry made a motion and Sherry seconded;

To reappoint board members Dick Eglinton, Ed Easley, and Sherry Mason to terms expiring in 2026.

To add Cameron Guffey to a term expiring in 2026.

Motion approved by unanimous vote. See page 2 for a complete 2024 BOD roster.

Board Officers: Dick asked for nominations or volunteers for officers. None were voiced. Dick made a motion to re-elect current officers for 2024 and Dennis Finton(proxy for Marci Finton) seconded.

Motion approved by unanimous vote.

Trail Extension to Conneaut Lake: Calvin Ernst presented a review of the trail to Conneaut Lake, current status and future plans. Bridge for spanning Watson Run is being fabricated and should be completed by Dec 31st. Installation will have to be scheduled for a later date. He discussed the plan to build an underpass under rt 19 to improve user safety.

Volunteer of the Year award: Ed presented a VOY plaque to Paul and Melinda Hotchkiss to recognize their work on the extension to Conneaut Lake.

Shippen St to Bicentennial Park: Ed reviewed the status of consultant's work on mapping a route to Bicentennial Park. A strategic meeting to review the options identified by Michael Baker was postponed because a major landowner in the Mercer Street area necessary to gain access to Bicentennial park was totally against any cooperation with the trail or even having a discussion. This may require that the proposed trail path go all the way on Mercer Street to the Arterial highway. If PennDot agrees it may be possible to designate a trail path parallel to the highway to get to Bicentennial. A meeting is being planned for the smaller planning group between now and Christmas to discuss the new situation.

Connector Report: Ed reviewed the progress on the paving project. Costs had inevitably risen between the time of initial planning and grant applications and now, but Peter worked with the contractor (Horizon) to make some changes that brought the costs more in line with the budget without materially affecting the quality of the trail. We were able to include paving of the low lying area under Smock bridge and the current rough gravel trail between Bean's and Bill's bridge, but it was necessary to omit paving of part of the trail near

the Shippen Street end. We should be able to easily deal with that later. Cost will determine exactly where paving will end. Project should be completed next April or May.

Financial: Jerry presented an overview of finances for 2023. Board will need to consider fundraising work with the termination of the McNally Trust in 2023.

Planning Meeting: The board will meet to begin work on a comprehensive plan for Ernst Trail on December 12, 2023 7:00pm at Ernst Conservation Seeds. This will be a meeting to make long range plans, we will not hold a regular business meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

## **2024 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

Dick Eglinton, President (2026)

Ed Easley, Vice President (2026)

Marci Finton, Secretary (2025)

Jerry Boyle, Treasurer (2025)

David Hotchkiss (2024)

Keith Knighton (2024)

Tom Maxeiner (2024)

Jean Weber (2024)

Bill Dross (2025)

Peter Oven (2025)

Susan Miller (2025)

Tom Kennedy (2025)

Sherry Mason (2026)

Cameron Guffey (2026)