

## FCRT Board Meeting January 14, 2025, at Ernst Conservation Seed

Attending were: Dick Eglinton Ed Easley Jerry Boyle (via Zoom) Marci Finton Bill Dross (via Zoom)

Sherry and Wally Mason Calvin Ernst Tom Maxeiner Keith Knighton Cameron Guffey Susan Miller Mark Miller Erik Kulasa Kathy Kulasa Karen Fabian Ed Fabian Tom Kennedy Jean Weber

Review of officers – President Dick Eglinton, VP Ed Easley, Treasurer Jerry Boyle, Secretary Marci Finton

No new nominations via email or from the floor. Susan Miller made a motion to approve, Cameron Guffey seconded, Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report: Jerry sent before meeting. Jerry explained the Yearly Treasurer Report as well as the December Financial Report. The accounting bill increased substantially from previous years due to regulations.

Trail Blazer July 13, 2025: Susan reported the date is July 13, 2025. We will keep the start times at 7:30am and 7:35am due to heat. We will not advertise wheelchair category but can accommodate if there is a need. Sherry will rework the sponsor commitment forms. We will start getting sponsors next month. Chris Adsit will measure from Ernst Farm to Shippen St for the 15k route to see if it is feasible. That may reduce the need for crossings at Mt Pleasant Rd and Kennedy Hill Rd. We hope to move the award tents to the start/finish line.

Shippen St to Bicentennial Park: Peter, Ed, Dick and Tom K met to discuss. The question of ownership of the old city street and bridge needs to be evaluated, Tom K will look further into it. A route through Kerrtown Community lot, behind Boot Box up to rt 102 may be the best option. Peter will contact the railroad and PennDot. There is still a question with crossing the Mercer St Bridge.

Connector Report: Dick met with Scott Phyllis about the access beside the Plaza driveway. Remilled asphalt and bollards are being discussed to allow emergency vehicles access. That will be further discussed in May when the weather is appropriate.

Trail Maintenance: With the significant snow, the possibility of plowing half the trail was brought up. This would allow the cross-country skiers a path as well as walkers/runners. Any volunteer is welcome to plow. Cameron reported that other than cutting up fallen trees, not much has been needed. Sherry delivered signs “Emergency Vehicles Only” to be placed to hopefully prevent cars from driving on the trail. Megan Miller has reached out from Mercer County Conservation District. She is the coordinator of the Mercer Vector-borne illness coalition. Last year they sampled mosquitos on Ernst Trail. They received funding to host a litter cleanup in Crawford County and were hoping to do it on the Ernst Trail in the spring. Dick suggested under the Smock Bridge, behind Post. He will keep in touch with her. Maybe we could get some suggestions about the abundant mosquitos on the trail

Conneaut Lake end: The hearing with G Griggs resulted in no ruling by Judge Schultz. Calvin reported that all is not lost. He stated “Regarding the possible loss of the lawsuit with Gary Griggs, FCRT can develop an agreement with the PA Game Commission to place a trail between the east side of the commission road to the west side of the Coleman allotment, to the west end of the existing

trail and the east end of the Coleman allotment and access to the bird watching station and the trail to Meadville.”

There was much discussion about moving the Meadville Public Library gazebo out to Conneaut Lake. The cost from Derek Stoll to transport it was \$300-400. We will have to get someone else to bore the holes and pour the cement piers out at the winery so we have a place to set the gazebo when we get it there. We will also need a carpenter and someone to repair the splices on the posts after we get it jacked up at the winery.

Jerry asked how this would benefit FCRT? Discussion will continue.

By-Pass Trail end: no report but PennDot has been working on the road.

Bessemer Trail: Volunteers need to watch for branches, garbage in the weeds and surface issues. Mowing will be completed by probation office participants.

Grants: Ed and Dick met with Hannah Lovell, a grant writer. She may be able to find grants we do not know about. She may attend the February meeting via zoom to find out more about FCRT. She would be a paid hire. Some ideas to apply for: Tunnel under Rt 19, paving a section at the CL end, bridge renovations, specifically the 3<sup>rd</sup> from Beans.

Bike Rentals: Bikes are still at the Bean's Trail head but have been removed at the CL Trail head.

Vernon Township: no report

Other business: Marci has coordinated shirts in the past. She will reach out to the volunteer list to see if anyone will be willing to find venues to sell shirts and keep track of the inventory.

Next meeting will be February 11, 2025 7:00 at Ernst Conservation Seed. Trail Blazer race meeting will start at 6:15.

Meeting adjourned 8:00. Submitted by Marci Finton