

FCRT Board Meeting February 11, 2025, at Ernst Conservation Seed

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

Calvin Ernst Tom Maxeiner Keith Knighton Cameron Guffey Susan Miller Mark Miller Erik Kulasa

Kathy Kulasa Karen Fabian Ed Fabian Tom Kennedy Jean Weber Bill Eldridge

Financial Report: Jerry sent before meeting, reviewed at the meeting. He noted that Directors & Officers liability is the same price as last year \$1,003. General liability from Chubb Insurance should be around \$2,500 unless they increase it significantly.

NEW - Our by-laws require our Treasurer to be bonded against misappropriation of funds. He has a quote from Monico for \$257 for a year for \$50,000 in coverage. He listed himself and Marci to be covered. Jerry recommend we approve this so as to comply with our by-laws. Susan motioned to approve this insurance coverage, Ed seconded, all approved.

Guest: Hannah Lovell, Grant Writer gave a presentation via Zoom. She would be willing to help us by finding grants. We need to find a project, she would find a grant then she could give us a quote. She will explore the County and City Parks and Recreation and Wellness Plans to be sure FCRT is aligned with their plans. Bill Eldridge is confident we are included in those plans already.

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. Members are encouraged to start finding sponsors, new sponsors are always welcomed. Marci will send out sponsor packets via email. 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, Peter Grella and MaryAnn Mennano met and it was confirmed that PennDOT will not allow the trail on route 102 due to lack of property. PennDOT prefers for users to use the berm of the bypass. The old road beside the tracks is not an option either. The city ordinance of snow removal and sidewalk upkeep may be an issue for FCRT if the trail continues from Mercer St bridge, in front of McGill, Power, Bell & Associates, to the bypass. One option of having no dedicated route was brought up, instead just arrows pointing toward Bicentennial Park.

Connector Report: Bill Dross has been in contact with Commercial Turf for spraying of weeds. Areas are from Bean's to the Dross Bridge, Bailey Road trail head to Krider Road Trail head and the Semerad Road access road. The quote was for \$2600. The issue of knotweed growing up through the Bessemer Trail was discussed. Bill will stay in touch with Commercial Turf about all the issues.

Trail Maintenance: Plowing half (the width) of the trail would allow the cross-country skiers a path as well as walkers/runners. Any volunteer is welcome to plow. Cameron noted that no fallen trees have been reported. Valley Lawn Care has treated Bean's parking lot a few times to reduce the ice build up. Erik thought the remilled asphalt would be a good product to apply on the Semerad Rd cut off. He will get a quote when the weather is conducive for the project due to fluctuation in pricing.

Conneaut Lake end: The library gazebo is on hold due to weather. Calvin and Erik believe landscape fabric and a gravel pad are all that are needed. Spring weed spraying should not be done until it is graded again.

Calvin reported that an engineer is working on a box culvert to be placed under Route 19 instead of a tunnel. Brian McNulty of PennDOT will advise us. He estimates it will be \$500k plus.

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: Some ideas to apply for: Tunnel/box culvert under Rt 19, paving a section at the CL end, bridge renovations, specifically the 3rd 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. Marci will continue to seek a person.

A 80th birthday card was circulated for signatures for Keith Mink, former board member. He and Debbie were active with the trail. Marci will order a plaque for the bridge we already refer to as the Keith Mink Bridge.

Next meeting will be March 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