

FCRT Board Meeting April 8, 2025, at Ernst Conservation Seed

Attending were: Dick Eglinton Jerry Boyle (via Zoom) Marci Finton Bill Dross Sherry Mason Wally Mason Calvin Ernst Tom Maxeiner Tom Kennedy Jean Weber Dave Hotchkiss Susan Miller Mark Miller Bill Eldridge Marcel Moody Erik Kulasa Kathy Kulasa Bill McComas Jim Friar Kirk Braley

Financial Report: Jerry sent before meeting, reviewed at the meeting. Jerry reported that we received an insurance cancelation notice. He forwarded to Steve Monico and Steve said he would take care of it.

Trail Blazer 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. So far 7 participants for the 15K and 9 for the 5K have signed up. Chris Adsit measured from Ernst Farm to Shippen St for the 15k route traveling through the parking area and onto Wilson Chute Rd. He was able to get enough distance, but Calvin said there is to be removal of trees along the rear of the lot so that route will not be possible. Susan will try to find a route utilizing all of the Connector also. Sponsors are still needed as they are most of our profit.

Shippen St to Bicentennial Park:

Dick is getting an engineering quote from Steve Halmi. Valley will be sending a quote for snow removal in the event we proceed along Mercer Pike within the city limits. Peter sent an email with safety concerns - the crossing of Mercer Pike: Can we make this crossing safer? Are there appropriate signs warning drivers? Have we evaluated pavement markings for appropriateness? Are trail users appropriately warned of the risks, compared to, for example the crossing of Mt. Pleasant Rd., which is considerably different in risk? With Mercer Pike, we may run into some roadblocks with PennDOT, and have to compromise, but we should do what we can in each situation. There is much to consider.

Connector Report: Commercial Turf will spray for weeds when the weather clears. Moss on the asphalt will be sprayed as well. Dick reported that the Allegheny College Community Day volunteers were a great help. The silt sock was removed from the connector and trash was removed from the Bessemer trail. Marci will send a thank you to Colin and Jon, the contacts at AC.

Trail Maintenance: A number of dead Ash trees were noticed around the curve and south of the covered bridge. Dick received a quote of \$5k and \$2.5k from Nichols Tree service for removal. The Parker-Lord grant could be used to get as many menacing trees as possible down before they fall and cause great issues. Erik looked at the Johnson Rd crossing to see if gravel is needed to reduce the mud where cars park to access the trail. Discussion was held about the need, and do we necessarily want to encourage parking there? With parking available close to that crossing, there probably is no need for us to spend money on that area. Cameron notified 911, fire departments and other emergency services about the re-marking of the miles on the trail. Authorized vehicle signs will be installed soon. Bill reminded anyone who needs to drive a vehicle on the trail to use hazard lights and give the right of way to bikes and pedestrians. Bill reported that the Keith Mink bridge has some loose bolts, and the third bridge needs to be resurfaced. Peter asked via email to notice anything about the trail that touches on safety and to please email him so he can start a list. He reminded us that these things can probably be small amounts of money to improve, and there are always small grant opportunities every year, so having a list of shovel ready projects would be nice. A paved

handicap space at the Bean's Trail Head would be nice. Erik said a pad 16' x 20' to the right when entering the lot would be a great spot. He estimated \$4500. We will ask Hannah Lovell for guidance on getting a grant.

Conneaut Lake end: The library gazebo is on hold until the yard dries. Calvin and Erik believe landscape fabric and a gravel pad are all that are needed. It will be located in the trail parking area. Bill, Erik and Calvin will investigate how it is attached at the Library and decide on a location which to put the pad.

Calvin has been talking with Brian McNulty at PennDOT. He will get a plan to Brian for the tunnel under 19

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

Bessemer Trail: Volunteers from Allegheny College removed a lot of garbage and debris. Jean took a load of tires for recycling. Thank you to Dick for donating the cost. Mowing will be completed by probation office participants. We will watch for knot weed penetrating the surface and tackle the issues as needed. Information kiosks were noticed on that trail. FCRT should plan on similar ones along the existing Ernst Trail

Grants: Jerry reported applying for a grant from Parker-Lord for \$6000 for general operations. CHCF grant due in April. DCED grant due in May requiring a 15% match.

Bike Rentals: no report

Vernon Township: no report

Other business: Chelsea Smith has agreed to coordinate Trail Apparel sales. She will put on our FB and possibly our website and look for outlets around the area.

Cameron showed FCRT shirts with a Conneaut Lake logo. He will make these available for purchase.

Marci ordered a plaque for the bridge we already refer to as the Keith Mink Bridge to honor Keith.

Drug and Alcohol Commission has requested use of the trail August 10 for their Trail to Recovery Run.

Next meeting will be April 8, 2025 7:00 at Ernst Conservation Seed. Trail Blazer race meeting will start at 6:15.

Meeting adjourned 8:00. Submitted by Marci Finton