

FCRT Board Meeting February 10, 2026, at Ernst Conservation Seed

Attending were: Dick Eglinton Ed Easley Jerry Boyle (via zoom) Marci Finton Bill Dross(via zoom) Sherry Mason Wally Mason Calvin Ernst Tom Maxeiner Keith Knighton Dave Hotchkiss Peter Oven Susan Miller Mark Miller Bill Eldridge Chris Adsit Erik Kulasa Kathy Kulasa Dennie Finton Chris and Wendy Brindle David Steele Bradley Stallsmith

Financial Report: Jerry sent before the meeting and reviewed at meeting. This month the insurance bill will be due.

Update of By-laws: Jerry Boyle and Dave Hotchkiss reviewed changes. Sherry Mason moved to approve the by-laws with the changes, Ed Easley seconded, motion passed. Marci and Jerry will send out an announcement to the general membership to attend the March 10 meeting. In order for these changes to be finalized, they must be approved by a majority vote of all members present at a membership meeting.

Trail Blazer July 12, 2026: Start times are the same as last year, 7:30 for the 15K, 7:35 5K. Sherry is updating the race posters and sponsorship commitment forms. Susan reported we have 2 participants signed up so far. Members are reminded to bring yard signs so Sherry can update those.

Shippen St to Bicentennial Park: No news. We are waiting to see if the City of Meadville will be hiring coordinator. Samantha Travis replaced Zach Norwood as new Crawford County Planning Office director. Dick has not heard back from Post about the possible parking area at Shippen St.

Parkway trail: Dick reported that Trace Landscaping is not interested in mowing as a donation. They will provide a quote to do it for pay. Peter Oven shared an email with the City Planner, Peter Grella about access points. Peter O will present ideas at a City Council meeting. Signage will be needed when the weather clears. Bill proposed a formal opening of the trail in the Springtime.

Bessemer Trail: no report

Trail Maintenance: Christopher Nuzback has been plowing the trail west of 79, Mercer Pike to Krider Rd. Dennie called Valley Lawn care to plow the lot once at the Bean's Trail head due to thick, slushy snow. We will see how the fence holds the asphalt sliding toward Home Depot's retention pond during the winter season. A heavier fencing will need to be installed after the snows. Two flood caution signs will need to be installed, one at Shippen Street, the other at the start of the Bailey-Shryock Connector.

We received \$1000 from the Winslow Grant for a paved handicap spot at Bean's trail head. Jerry applied to CHCF for the remainder of funds, we are still waiting to hear.

Tunnel under Rt 19: The state requires a sponsor. Vernon Township didn't seem interested. We could connect with Samantha Travis at the planning office.

Conneaut Lake End : Chris and Wendy Brindle, Bill Eldridge and Jay Verno have established a maintenance group.

Dennie reported that Wayne Shimmel is willing to construct the kiosk at the CL Trailhead. Carter Lumber is still willing to donate the supplies.

Grants: Bill Eldridge and Dennie Finton will be pursuing leads from Katie Wickert.

It was suggested the FCRT break down the paving project into 3-5 sections to show a commitment to finish. Peter will section those out.

A construction company, Glen O Hawbaker has suggested we apply for a grant from their annual golf outing. Dennie spoke with Todd Glenn from their Grove City office, Ed will follow up.

Bike Rentals: no report

Other business: Two trail use forms were submitted. One for a Run for Shelter 5k benefitting St James Haven on May 16, 6:30-10am. The second for Trail to Recovery through CCD&A for August 9, 7:30-11am. Both were approved.

Peter reported that he met with David Washousky, from the Trust for Public Land (TPL). He's a Project Manager for Appalachian Land Protection based in Cambridge Springs and is very familiar with the Ernst Trail. TPL does trail work all across the country, providing capacity to trail groups to help fill in gaps and assist in fulfilling the long term vision for trails in the region. He suggested we think about owning land. The railbed in Saegertown and Jamestown NY is going through transition and we may want to acquire some of it.

National Rail to Trails Day is April 25. Susan has agreed to have a table stationed at Bean's Trail Head with water, brochures and answer questions. We will advertise on FB and possibly the Meadville Tribune.

Meeting adjourned 8:10. Submitted by Marci Finton

Next meeting will be March 10, 2026, 7pm Ernst Conservation Seed, Race committee meeting at 6:15