

FCRT Board Meeting April 14, 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 Tom Kennedy Jean and Brian Weber Dave Hotchkiss Peter Oven Susan Miller Mark Miller Cameron Guffey Bill Eldridge Marcel and Samantha Moody Chris Adsit Erik Kulasa Kathy Kulasa Bill McComas Dennie Finton Peter Grella

Financial Report: Jerry sent before the meeting and reviewed at meeting. Bills to be paid: \$7000 Wilson Engineering, approved via email before the meeting date; \$700 haF.AST for trail washout repair, \$58.47 for Trail Blazer awards, \$960 for trail signs. Jerry motioned to approve payment, Ed seconded, and the motion passed.

Trail Blazer July 12, 2026: Start times are the same as last year, 7:30 for the 15K, 7:35 5K. Sherry has updated the race posters and sponsorship commitment forms. Sponsor list was reviewed and members agreed to contact potential sponsors. Susan reported we have 17 participants signed up so far and 5 sponsors. Members are reminded to bring yard signs so Sherry can update those. T-shirts will probably be teal this year.

Spring Support – Membership letter: Jerry updated the letter and sent for review. Sherry will make changes then print and mail out.

Shippen St to Bicentennial Park: Ed E, Bill E and Dennie had a meeting with Sam Travis to make her aware of our current and future efforts. No news on the Post parking area.

Parkway trail: Emails about the condition of the ground on either side of the trail were circulated since the last meeting and who will be mowing. There are rocks, divots and rough terrain. Dick contacted PennDOT about the poor conditions and was told that project is closed and they will do nothing more to make it easier for us to mow. We can advertise on FB for volunteers. Peter Oven said we could place a shed on his property which is close, to store a mower. Bill Dross expects a new mower to cost \$5000-\$5500.

Peter Oven reached out to the City and Housing Authority about access paths to the new trail. He is thinking of having shovel ready projects for small grants. Peter Grella reported that City Council is fine with FCRT obtaining access through the closed Race St section from Terrace St but the city is not interested in doing any work there. Marci voiced opposition about developing an access from William Gill Village to the trail. She believes FCRT does not need the expense or liability with this project. The master plan had PennDOT making an access, but they did not complete it. Discussion was held on the topic, but no decisions were made. Discussion about the best way to mark the Parkway trail with mile signs will need to be held. Jerry suggested calling the Parkway Trail the Bessemer Trail also. Peter will make some proposals.

Bessemer Trail: Ed talked with Jim Dupont and he will supervise the continuation of mowing from work release participants. A shed was installed for equipment. Ed will see about getting a weed eater and fuel to store there.

Trail Maintenance: The mud on the connector seems to be washing off with the help of the recent rains. Bill D sent an email to the Adopt a Trail volunteers with a list of projects to be looking for to

keep each section clean. Karen F asked the knotweed on her section (behind Post) to not be sprayed this year. Spraying made it harder for her to maintain.

Bill and Cameron will schedule a workday to install signs that need to be replaced or initially placed. Still waiting on quotes from the fencing company for the trail beside the Home Depot retention pond. Susan has been re-tying the snow fence, but it is not holding up well.

Gary Worthington has been asked to design some interpretive signs explaining the timbers on the canal bed near the Oliver Bridge.

Bill McComas said he will see if he can get his mower to the Kiwanis Pavilion to mow this year.

Volunteer mowers are needed on the Parkway Trail, under I-79 bridge to Mercer Pike, Mercer Pike to Beans (or portions of) and Dross Bridge to Beans.

Tunnel under Rt 19: no news.

Conneaut Lake End : Dennie reported that he and Wayne Shimmel installed a framed bulletin/information board and Ernst Trail signage inside the pavilion. No views are obstructed. A large sign near 322 on Coleman Dr with the FCRT logo was installed. Dennie and Erik met with Sadsbury Township supervisors about the condition of Coleman Dr. The township offered a grader and operator to improve the road and parking area. Suite-Kote quoted to tar and chip the lane to the end of the pavilion and parking lot \$15270. Erik explained the need for an aggregate on top of the dirt with a cost of \$17000.

Grants: Bill Eldridge reported that he and Calvin met with Brad Roae, Parke Wentling, Adam Mattis, Katie Wickert and 2 others from DCNR to inform them of the plans to pave the trail from Conneaut Lake to Bailey Rd. They all agreed to support our efforts. Bill suggested applying for a \$600,000 grant with a 50% match with the application due April 30. Peter is working on engineering plans. Bill also suggested a CPT2 – non-motorized vehicle trail grant.

In filing for the grants, Bill discovered FCRT needs two authorizing officials to be able to sign for grants. Dave Hotchkiss motioned Dick Eglinton and Marci Finton be authorized, Tom Kennedy seconded, motion passed.

The DCED Grant is due May 30, Bill will look into it when the DCNR grant application is complete.

Bike Rentals: CATA bikes are at the Beans and Conneaut Lake trail heads, ready for rental.

Other business: Sherry reported the walks with Jan Hyatt have started and will continue Saturdays 9:30-11am. These walks raise funds for the city parks programs.

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. Keith and Dave H will be able to help also. We will advertise on FB.

Susan circulated via email a Facebook post of a trail user getting her purse stolen from her front seat while parked at Mercer Pike. She cleaned the glass from the lot. Discussion was held about people being responsible for securing their own valuables.

Reminder of trail events: May 16 – St James event; May 23 – Bradley Terry event; August 9 – Trail to Recovery event.

Meeting adjourned 8:42. Submitted by Marci Finton

Next meeting will be May 12 2026, 7pm Ernst Conservation Seed, Race committee meeting at 6:15