

FCRT Board Meeting May 12, 2026, at Ernst Conservation Seed

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

Calvin Ernst Tom Maxeiner Keith Knighton Tom Kennedy Jean Weber Dave Hotchkiss
Susan Miller Mark Miller Cameron Guffey Bill Eldridge Chris Adsit
Karen Fabian Bill McComas Dennie Finton Brad Stallsmith

Financial Report: Jerry sent before the meeting and reviewed at meeting. Bills to be paid: Specialty Group Printing \$465 for Spring Support letters and mailing. Jerry motioned to approve payment, Bill Dross 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. Susan reported we have 34 participants signed up so far, which is comparable to last year and 13 sponsors, which is lower than last year. A work day is scheduled for Wednesday, July 8 5:00 at Bean's Trailhead with a rain date of July 9. Volunteers should be at Ernst Conservation Seed by 6 am race day. Susan will supply watermelon and bananas for after the race. Marci, Leeann, Betty and whoever else wants to will supply cookies (no nuts in the cookies).

Spring Support – Membership letter: Sherry made changes and printed and mailed.

Shippen St to Bicentennial Park: no news

Parkway trail: Dick E took care of the first few mowings. The rough terrain did not seem to be an issue. Bill D circulated a volunteer mower list for the Parkway trail. He will set a schedule with the volunteers who signed up, using Peter's mower. Tom Kennedy sent photos of the debris blocking the Race Street access. There may be a need for large equipment to clear the pathway. Nothing was decided at this time.

Bessemer Trail: Ed and Tom K talked with Jim Dupont and he will supervise the continuation of mowing from Community Service participants. A shed was installed for equipment. Ed placed fuel and a weed eater in the shed.

Trail Maintenance: Discussion on where to place the new 4'x6' map sign at Bean's Trail Head was held. Bill D suggested placing it towards the donation box then moving the Chief Acker bench toward the map.

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. 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. A Facebook message was sent out by Karen F and Tom K. Bill received a few responses. He will follow up.

Discussion on where to place the new 4'x6' map sign at Mercer Pike Trail Head was held. The current map sign will be covered with Mercer County State Bank / FCRT sign. MCSB donated \$100K and requested 10 years of recognition. The new map sign will be placed across the trail from the parking lot access so users can view it without leaving the trail.

Bill D reported the red mower is not in service but will be ready soon.

There are several areas of lifted asphalt from tree roots. The asphalt grinder may be a solution but is not easy to use. Cutting the roots at the side of the trail may be a solution also. Bill discussed the placement of a concrete handicapped parking area at Bean's Trail Head. He will talk to Brian Bean about placing it on his property so that the parking area connects to the paved trail. Grant Funds for the project have been received. Erik K and Cameron will address the washout near Johnson Rd. Karen F reported some of the anti-slip strips on the Dross Bridge are peeling off and need to be replaced.

Tunnel under Rt 19: no news.

Conneaut Lake End : Dennie F reported that Chris and Wendy Brindle will oversee weed eating, trash pickup, etc at the Conneaut Lake Trail Head. The kayak launch and dock will be installed sometime in May.

The township offered a grater and operator to improve the road and parking area. There may be an opportunity to get asphalt millings from other projects in the area.

Grants: Bill Eldridge reported the DCNR grant application has been completed and sent in. He explained how the grant works were we to receive it and the work involved with managing the funds. This grant is for paving of the trail only, 8 feet wide, from the edge of the CL parking lot towards Bailey Rd as far as the money will allow. FCRT should be informed this summer whether we receive the grant or not.

Bike Rentals: CATA bikes are at the Beans and Conneaut Lake trail heads, ready for rental. Tim requests we advertise on our website and Facebook for them.

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. So far \$27000 has been raised.

Susan reported National Rail to Trails Day on April 25 was a success, despite the unfavorable weather. A table stationed at Bean's Trail Head with water, brochures and answering questions was manned by Susan, Keith, Jean, Dave H, and Marcell. They heard a lot of positive comments and stories about the trail.

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

Brad Stallsmith asked if FCRT could have a sign/post located at various points along the trail with a QR code to report downed trees, trail damage and other issues.

Meeting adjourned 8:32. Submitted by Marci Finton

Next meeting will be June 9 2026, 7pm Ernst Conservation Seed, Race committee meeting at 6:15

** Reminder that the July meeting will be July 7 to be before the Trail Blazer race. **