

**Friends of the Little Miami State Park
General Board Meeting 3/13/2024
First Financial Bank, Mason
Meeting Agenda & Presentation_ minutes**

Minutes

Motions

Actions

AGENDA / STRATEGIC PLAN.

1. Introductions
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Treasurer's Report
4. ODNR Report
5. Outreach
6. FLMSP Administrative Business
7. Volunteer Management
8. Amenities/Convenience
9. Trail Condition & Drainage
10. Outreach
11. Beauty
12. Safety
13. Future General Board Meetings

Call to Order: Dick Feldmann

Introduction of Board:

Dick Feldmann	President
Ron Gorley	Vice President
Becky Retzer	Treasurer
Bill Brown	Secretary
Larry Bloomfield	Member at Large (Absent)
Bruce Cortright	Member at Large
Fritz Buschmann	Member at Large

Introduction of Members and Guests:

Robbie Trace	ODNR Cowan & Little Miami
Casey Marcum	ODNR Little Miami
Tiffany DeChant-Hunt,	ODNR Caesar Creek
Rick Forrester	FLMSP

Approval of Minutes: Bill Brown

- February Board Meeting, distributed March 1st.

MOTION: Bill made a motion to approve Feb. minutes

Bruce seconded

Motion Approved

Treasurer's Report: Becky Retzer

FLMSP CASH ON HAND	01/31/24	02/29/24	
Unrestricted	180,435	180,086	-349
Restricted	24,026	24,026	0
Memorial Benches	4,026	4,026	0
Pavement Fund	10,000	10,000	0
Grandin Rest & Info Station	10,000	10,000	0
Reserved	259	259	0
Pollinator Garden	259	259	0
Savings Account	42,554	42,561	7
CD(s)	132,226	132,226	0
Receivables	199	64	
Total	204,720	204,371	-349

P&L Comparison	YTD 2/2023	YTD 2/2024
Revenue	6,639	9,454
Expenses	7,129	7,466
Net Operating Revenue	-490	1,988

Treasurer Narrative, Becky Retzer

- Financials emailed to Board on 3/11/2024
- **CD's** - 30,000 matures 2/27/2024 – 4.86% Renewed on 3/13/2024

ODNR, Casey Marcum

Staff

- Staffing plan for 2024?

ODNR Native Plant greenhouse (Cowan Lake)

- Signed Memorandum of Understanding provided to Caden from FLMSP and Friends Caring for Cowan Lake SP.
- ODNR management concerned about long term support and maintenance for the greenhouse.
- Caden working on a detailed maintenance plan.
- FLMSP supplied names of 7 volunteers willing and able to visit the greenhouse and take care of the plants if a naturalist is unavailable or needs additional support. Each volunteer doesn't want to do it every day, but with at least 7 available we would have no problem working a schedule of volunteers to keep the place running.

- **Project on hold until Oct.**

Invasive Trees

- **Jim Mason is marking invasive trees along trail with orange ribbons**
- **The Tree of Heaven is one of the species marked.**
- **He is a private contractor we have used to spray honeysuckle and remove invasive trees.**

O'Bannon bridge (MM 41.5)

- Bridge is closed as of October 3.
- Steel structure has been delivered and installed.

Robbie Trace Reported

- **Bridge set two weeks ago.**
- **Concrete poured today.**
- **Asking Loveland to donate picnic tables to match park tables in Nisbet Park.**
- **On schedule for May 24th completion.**
- **Event planned by ODNR for grand opening.**
- **Dick said FLMSF will be there for the event.**
- **Plans being made for landscaping with native species.**



<https://www.chronolog.io/site/FLM101>

Caesar Creek / Middletown Rd. bridge (MM 16.5)

- Contract for bridge reclamation required re-awarded.
- Work will start this spring.
- Part of RFP is that we will reclaim the boards for future fence repair.
- Steel plates are holding up well.

Trail slip at I-71 Jeremiah Morrow Bridge (MM 22.1)

- No change.
- Mike, ODNR Engineers and ODOT continuing discussions a long-term solution to correct the issue.
- Trying to resolve a requirement for a detour during the work where no appropriate detour is available.

Robbie Trace Reported

- Taking trees down along the fence in Morrow.
- Bridge is being painted in Morrow.
- Started pouring the sidewalk. Painting will be over the next month.
- FLMSP will put this event on our website.

Oregonia / Caesar Creek Bridge

- Working on a pre-construction date.
- Will know more later.
- There is an easy detour location.
- Casey says ODNR can store steel plate FLMSP laid down.
- FLMSP will get the old wood for our use.

ODOT District 8 Rt. 73 Bridge in Corwin

- Bridge replacement began March 4.
- Trail closed at Rt. 73 for ODOT work overhead of trail.
- Trail open on weekends.
- April 15 planned for trail reopening.

Trail slip at Glendale-Milford Rd (MM 50)

- Investigating taking on leveling the blacktop as a joint park staff and FLMSP volunteer project.
- Casey and the South Trail Crew will do a temporary fix with cold patch this spring.
- Casey asked us to grind down concrete pads where she removed posts and signs.

ODNR LMSP Staffing

- Two people to help 1,000 hrs. over summer and winter.
- One has begun: Jimmy Dean.
- Robbie says this was approved in their budget.

New – Trail slip at Glady Run (MM 4.5)

- Dennis Lewis (Friends of Xenia Station) reported that slip is within 2 inches of pavement.

MM 4.5 Trail Slip at Glady Run

- Dennis Lewis hot line call. identified this item.
- Casey called Dennis to tell him they looked at the site
- Glady Run is a tributary and is covered by the wild rivers restrictions.

FLMSP ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Annual Meeting, Dick Feldmann

- To occur April or May at Waldschmidt Homestead
 - 7567 Glendale Milford Road, Camp Dennison, OH 45111
 - <https://www.dar.org/national-society/historic-sites-and-properties/christian-waldschmidt-homestead>
 - Dick is contacting a new person who runs the site about getting a date for the meeting.

Board Succession, Dick Feldmann

- President: Dick Feldmann – 2023-25
 - Plans to step down to vice president in 2025
- **Vice-President:** Ron Gorley – 2022-24
 - Is willing to continue as vice-president until 2025
- **Secretary:** Bill Brown – 2022-24 **Will return as secretary.**
- Treasurer: Becky Retzer – 2023-25
- **At Large:** Fritz Buschmann – 2022-24
- **At Large:** Larry Bloomfield – 2022-24
 - Intends to resign from the board this year.
- At Large: Bruce Cortright – 2023-25
- **Fritz Buschmann and Larry Bloomfield will not return when their term expires.**
- **Rick agreed to return to fill a board position.**
- **Bruce suggested Camy Dierking and John Telintelo**
- **Dick also has other names he will work on.**

S Lebanon Rain Garden, Becky Retzer,

- Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District awarded up to \$10,000 for rain garden along trail at S. Main St. and Zoar Road. Begins 1/01/2024 and we have 2 years to complete.
- Greenfield Farms to provide materials and finish the work other than possibly collaborating with S. Lebanon on use of equipment.
- Work will start this summer or fall.
- **Becky says we can start in late Aug. and plant in the Fall.**



Trail usage counters, Ron Gorley, Dick Feldmann

- Third quarter in a row, received short notice request from ODNR for trail usage. Discussed with Robbie. This will be an on-going request. Will work with Tri-State Trails to change contract to include providing quarterly trail usage.
- Due to O'Bannon Creek bridge repair, we decided to do our permanent counting between fosters and Grandin for 2024. As TriState Trails had an additional counter, we opted to leave our permanent counter in Loveland and TriState Trails installed theirs.
- The TriState Trails counter was stolen.
- Our Thursday work crew scoured the woods, located the counter and returned it to TriState Trails.
- We will once again be relying on Great Parks data from Avoca Park for our 2024 count.
- TriState Trails is working the issue and Ron will work a plan B when he gets back from vacation.

Ron Gorley summary of counter discussion:

- **In LMSP, we typically use one permanent counter that counts 365 days a year. Additionally, other counters are used to record the count at 24 additional locations, each for a 7-day period.**
- **In the past, we had two volunteers who managed this task. For the past five years, we've contracted with Tri State Trails (TST) to collect and analyze our counts, due to lack of an FLMSP volunteer. We pay TST about \$3,000 per year for data collection and analysis. (Additional cost for the counters themselves).**

- There have been issues with the permanent counter recently. In 2022 and 2023 the closure at Fosters impacted the permanent counter located between Loveland and Fosters. And in 2024, the closure at O'Bannon Creek is impacting the permanent counter.
- As a result, we've needed to rely on the permanent counter at Avoca Park (managed by Great Parks of Hamilton County) to supplement our data. We know that that counter has been undercounting in 2024.
- Knowing that the Loveland counter would be impacted by the O'Bannon Creek closure, we installed an additional permanent counter north of Grandin Road. This counter was vandalized and will likely cost around \$1000 to repair. We will not relocate another counter in this location.
- Based on all this, Ron will be recommending FLMSF purchase an additional permanent counter that will be located at a more northern location than Loveland. Motion to be expected at next meeting. Expected cost \$4,000 – 4,500.

Secretary Notes on counter discussion:

- TriState Trails have 8 permanent counters around the Cincinnati area, one of which is on our trail north of Loveland.
- 4 roving counters used a week at a time at different locations.
- 2 volunteers manage these counters. We lost our volunteers.
- We contract with Tri State Trails to do this now. About \$3,000 / yr.
- We've had issues over the last 3 years due to trail closures.
- The Loveland to Fosters section is the most used and has been affected significantly due to trail closures.
- The Loveland counter moved to Grandin and this site was vandalized. \$1,000 repair bill.
- Ron talked to Tri State Trails. We will owe them for counters.
- The Avoca Park counter we use in lieu of the Loveland counter is undercounting.

Benches:

- One bench going in between S. Lebanon and Morrow.
- Melissa, past park manager, was not in favor of benches closer than 2 miles apart.
- Mike, next manager, instituted 1 mile spacing.
- 3 more to install and then 3 more sites available.

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Proposed 2024 Volunteer Events, Dick Feldmann

- Linda Buschmann has had to resign as Volunteer Appreciation Coordinator due to health reasons.
- Becky and Dick are working to identify volunteers to pick up the Volunteer Appreciation events
 - Pat Klein has agreed to put together a grill-out at Morrow on June 1st.
 - Pat has set a date and contacted Morrow to secure the site.
 - Dick asked if anyone wanted to help with the Fall picnic event.

Far North Trail Maintenance Lead

- Carol Foell has agreed to take the position to manage the volunteers for Far North trail maintenance. Carol was formerly part time employee with Little Miami State Park.

South Blowing Crew Lead

- Ken Speicher has taken over the management of the South Blowing Crew.

AMENITIES/CONVENIENCE

Park Entry Signs, Dick Feldmann

- Proposing new signage at all entry points. Trail has
 - 33 Major Intersections – Require full sign tree in each direction.
 - 11 Minor Intersections – Requires just the Park sign in each direction
 - 2 Terminations – Already has a large park sign but needs the trail and rules signs only in one direction.
- Signs needed
 - 88 New LMSP park signs
 - 70 Route signs
 - 25 Street signs to replace missing street signs
 - 67 New Rules Signs
- Phase 1. Replace State Park signs
 - 90 signs have been ordered from A&A Safety. Expect delivery end of April.

King Ave/Grandin Rd/Peters Cartridge factory (MM 35.3)

- Rick Canavan, volunteer, has accepted the role of project manager for these projects.
- Future Amenities
 - Sign Tree
 - Information Kiosk
 - Picnic Shelter
 - Benches
 - Memorial to Steve
 - Township and State Park is working on a land swap in this area that may take another year to complete.

Restrooms

- Restroom buildings scheduled to be opened by April 1st.
- Portable restrooms will be removed from Corwin, Morrow, Fosters soon after.
- Portable restrooms will not be removed until the permanent restrooms are open. (April 1st.)
- Additional restroom to be placed at Miamiville April 1st.
- CORRECTION: No additional restroom at Miamiville. Bruce corrected that this is additional service during the summer.
- Bruce asked if we can install a restroom sign on the trail at Riverview Park near Loveland since there are restrooms close by in the park across the street from the trail.

TRAIL CONDITION & DRAINAGE

Funding for pavement replacement, Ron Gorley

- Project funding request for \$296,500 was submitted to Warren County Chamber Alliance who submitted to Ohio legislature as 2nd priority on their list.
- Ohio house passed their capital budget in an expedited manner. Only capital funding project included in the budget from Warren County is the \$13.75 million for the Cincinnati Open Tennis Tournament.
- Chamber Alliance has asked for a reformatting of our request to match Ohio Senate requirements. Ron will provide.

Route 42 Bridge over trail at Spring Valley (MM 7.0)

- Bridge Replacement began 15 February.
- Managed by ODOT District 8.
- <https://www.transportation.ohio.gov/projects/projects/102746>
- ODOT reports no closure of the trail is intended for this project. However, there will likely be some intermittent, short-term closures, and specifically when US 42 will be closed for two, separate weekends for beam setting. They will be constructing a trail canopy under 42 with lighting. So that's the good news. **No canopy has been installed.**
- The downside is that up to 6 closures of up to 5 days each are authorized in the project plan, and the contractor only needs to give one week's notice to do that. Hopefully they do not decide to use all of those closures.
- "The interim completion for the project is November 2024, and the final completion is June 2025."

Route 73 Bridge over trail at Corwin (MM 14.5)

- Bridge Replacement began 4 March.
- Managed by ODOT District 8.
- <https://www.transportation.ohio.gov/about-us/news/district-8/warren+county+bridge+rehab+project+set+to+begin+on+s.r.+73+02+14+24>
- "The Little Miami Scenic Trail, however, will remain open to bicyclists and pedestrians."
- "The project is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2024."

O'Bannon Creek bridge (MM 41.5)

- Bridge is closed as of October 3.
- Foundation work is finished.
- Steel structure installed.

Caesar Creek bridge at Middletown Rd. (MM 16.5)

- Contract for bridge reclamation required re-awarded.
- Work will start this spring.
- Part of RFP is that we will reclaim the boards for future fence repair.
- Steel plates are holding up well.

Future, Dick Feldmann

- Route 48 bridge over Little Miami River
 - In planning & community outreach stage.
 - Stakeholder Meeting #2 held 2/28/2024 at South Lebanon Elementary School. Dick Attended.
 - Construction will not happen till 2029 at the earliest, so am going to stop tracking for now.
- Foster Old 3C Highway.
 - Warren County upgrade to Bear Run Lift Station, Fosters Lift Station and the sewer line between the lift stations that runs on the side of the Old 3C Highway bridge.
 - This will include a replacement of the sewer line that crosses under the trail at Fosters.
 - Project is in the environmental impact study phase.
- Sewer Project, South Lebanon
 - Ron and Dick Met with Jerry Haddix, City Administrator, City of South Lebanon.
 - Project involves new sewer lines from Lebanon Wastewater Treatment Plant on Mason Morrow Millgrove Rd. across river at Lebanon Countryside Trail, into S Lebanon. It then will continue back to State Park and up the bike trail shy of a mile.
 - South of Main St., route will go under bike trail several times.
 - North of Main St., route will be directly under bike trail for 0.9 mile.
 - Project in the budget phase but goal is for construction to start in 2024 and run through 2025. Bike trail closure still to be scheduled out.

OUTREACH

Miami Valley Trails website, Dick Feldmann

- <https://www.miamivalleytrails.org>



Little Miami Scenic Trail

MENU

[-- Back to Map](#)

Trail Summary

 LMST Closed under SR 73 in Corwin

The longest single trail in the Miami Valley Trails network, the Little Miami Scenic Trail provides miles of well shaded trail with great destinations along the route. Two state parks, John Bryan and Caesar Creek can be reached from the trail. You'll definitely want to stop at the Xenia Station, the hub of four trails that meet in Xenia, Ohio. Further south, where the trail closely meanders with the Little Miami River is the Ft. Ancient State Historic Site.

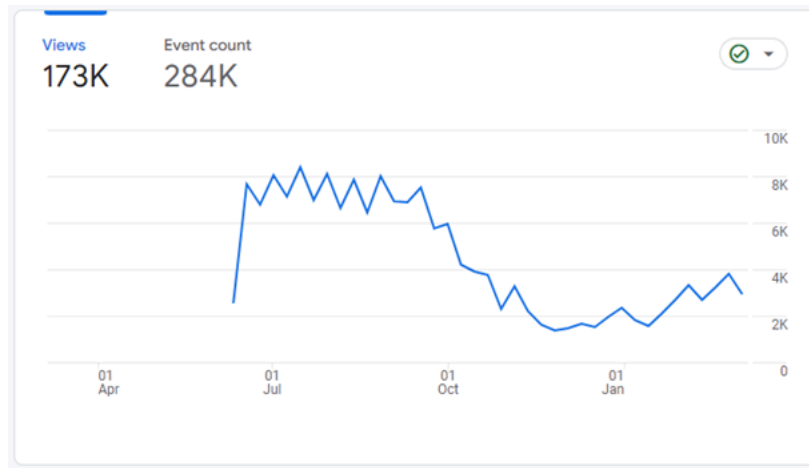
More Detail ↓

Trail Guide

Length	78 miles
Connecting Trails	Creekside Trail, Xenia-Jamestown Connector, Ohio to Erie Trail, Simon Kenton Trail, Lunken Airport Loop Trail
End Points	Beechmont Ave. in Anderson Township (south) to Springfield (north)
Counties	Hamilton, Clermont, Warren, Greene, Clark
Cities & Towns	Newtown, Milford, Loveland, Morrow, Oregonia, Corwin, Spring Valley, Xenia, Old Town, Yellow Springs, Springfield
Surfaces	Paved, multi-use.

[Interactive Map](#)
[Visitors Guide](#)

- Matt Lindsay, Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission, has been managing the site and reports:
- “Our Google Analytics report steady use of the site, particularly during the outdoor season. Weekly page views are in the range between 6000 and 8000. **MVRPC staff have received and responded to over 100 Contact Us messages since October of 2022. The “Report a Problem” form has been submitted 100 times since June of 2022. Staff have posted trail alerts related to closures and detours on a regular basis as we have become aware of them.**”



- “Fees for site hosting have recently increased. On an annual contract the per month cost for site hosting is \$166.66 (or \$1,925 per year). Pantheon.io has a basic plan which is significantly less expensive. We will be asking our web developer to assess whether the site can function on the lower cost server service. The domain name costs about \$24 per year.”
- “MVRPC is asking each of our web site partner agencies to consider contributing \$500.00 to support continued hosting and domain registration of the site for the next two years. As our account is already a little under, we would like to ask for your response to this request by April 4, 2024.”

MOTION: Dick made a motion to contribute \$500 to support hosting and domain registration for two years.

Ron seconded

Motion Approved

Other Outreach, Dick Feldmann

- SR 48 Over Little Miami River Stakeholder Meeting 2/28/2024. Dick attended. Preliminary Engineering designs presented. Earliest start of construction is 2029.
- Warren County Convention and Visitors Bureau Annual Partnership Meeting 3/1/2024 at Miami Valley Gaming.
 - **Little Miami Scenic Trail won 3rd place in category Best Outdoor Adventure.**
 - Morgan Canoe & Outdoor Adventure was the winner in the category.
 - <https://www.ohioslargestplayground.com/blog/tag/best-of-warren-county/>
- Miami Valley Regional Active Transportation Committee 3/8/2024. Dick attended via zoom.
- Ohio Legislature 2024 Trails Advocacy Day April 10th at the Ohio Statehouse. Sponsored by Rails to Trails Conservancy. Dick attended last year and is planning to attend again.
- Miami Valley Bike to Work day Friday May 17th. Dick planning to attend.
- Heritage at Miami Bluffs Health and Wellness Fair 4/27/2024. Dick and Ken Speicher will support.
- Greene County Cycling Classic August 22-24, 2024.

BEAUTY

Pollinator Gardens, Becky Retzer, Rick Forrester

- MM 19.9 Oregonia Pollinator Prairie
 - Rethinking about planting seeds again - looking into an educational garden area that would represent what native Americans would be using for medicinal, dyes, food.
- MM 39.1 under power lines doing well
- New area at MM 38.5.

SAFETY

FUTURE GENERAL BOARD MEETINGS

April General Board Meeting TBD

Annual Meeting, Sunday in April or May. **Waldschmidt Homestead**

Rick says they have worked with Duke on pollinator planting near power lines.

Girl Scouts working on participating.

Rick asked what kind of grass seed do we want for Morrow? Casey says summer mix.

MOTION: Dick made motion to adjourn

Ron seconded

Meeting Adjourned