



Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia

Jessie Powers, Executive Director
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Proudly managing the [Baileys Trail System](#) in Athens County, Ohio

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Meeting Minutes March 21, 2022, 1:00pm

Prepared by Elle Dickerman, elle.baileystrails@gmail.com

ORCA Board Members Present: ORCA Chair City of Athens Mayor Steve Patterson, ORCA Vice Chair Chauncey Mayor Amy Renner, York Township Trustee President Tim Warren, Nelsonville City Manager Scott Frank, Athens County Commissioner Lenny Eliason, (Not present: Buchtel Council Member Jay Kline)

Others Present: Jessie Powers, Elle Dickerman, Molly Jo Stanley from the Ohio Environmental Council)

- **Meeting Agenda**
 - Approve Agenda
 - Approve February 28, 2022 Meeting Minutes
 - Financial Report
 - ORCA Board Member & Partner Updates
 - Legal Update
 - Social Media Report
 - Director's Report
 - Public Comments
 - Other
 - Adjourn

(Motion to Approve Agenda: Lenny Eliason, Second: Tim Warren, *Approved*)

(Motion to Approve Meeting Minutes from Feb 28, 2022: Lenny Eliason, Second, Tim Warren, *Approved*)

- **Financial Report, Executive Director Jessie Powers**
 - Account Balance March 21, 2022: \$18,821
 - ORCA has requested the transfer of \$25,000 Just Transition Fund grant from the Athens Bicycle Club to ORCA.
 - From Phase III Construction there are drainage issues on Gorges Curves and The Underground trails, longstanding seeps and clay soils. The solution recommended by trail designer is rock armoring by the original trail builder, Linear Active as a Change Order.



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- Outdoor Recreation Economy conference was postponed for the pandemic, now scheduled for April 4-7 in Cherokee, North Carolina. Rural action covered Elle's registration and hotel costs. We need coverage for travel and hotel accommodation for Jessie. Based on our Policy and Procedures – booking accommodations is a reimbursable expense. I am requesting authorization to move that to an up-front expense, this will allow us to use ORCA's credit card for room expenses.

(Motion to approve Financial Report: Lenny Eliason, Second: Tim Warren, *Approved*)

(Motion to authorize the transfer of Just Transition Funds from Athens Bicycle Club to ORCA: Lenny Eliason, Second: Tim Warren, *Approved*)

(Motion to authorize payment of Linear Active in an amount of up to \$4200 for repairs on Phase 3 trails: Lenny Eliason, Second: Tim Warren, *Approved*)

(Motion to pay up to \$12,000 for Applied Trails Research Crew Leader Training: Lenny Eliason, Second: Tim Warren, *Approved*)

(Motion to approve travel, accommodation, and mileage for Outdoor Economy Conference: Lenny Eliason, Second: Tim Warren, *Approved*)

○ **Board Member Updates**

- Tim Warren, there are two different people wanting to do park upkeep
- Jessie Powers, I suggest will solicit quotes competitively before awarding a contract and have our legal counsel concur with the award for contract services.
- Board Member Discussion of partner and neighboring county perception of Athens County Commissioners decision to not fund February 8th, 2022 ORCA ARPA Staff Expansion Request. ORCA Board agrees to meet with Sunday Creek Horizons to discuss future partnerships.

○ **Director's Report, Executive Director Jessie Powers**

- ORCA & WNF have updated the FS Special Use Permit for Recreation events, which is valid through June 30, 2025.
- ORCA has provided ODNR, our updated agreement from the Wayne National Forest, which should fulfill their requirements to release state funding.
- Need authorization from Villages of Chauncey and Buchtel to do work on property owned by those places, and guarantee these facilities will be open to the public for at



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least 15 years.

- We hired Applied Trails Research for construction management oversight and trail design.
 - Contacted EDA last week, there is no update on the application status for the Buchtel Trailhead.
 - AWOADC Updates: Working on bike rental, campground development, will meet with the Village of Chauncey to discuss campground design.
 - ARC Grant at Ohio University at the Voinovich School may have some funding to develop financial policy for ORCA.
 - Amy Renner, At Chauncey's meeting last week, we shared campground layout with council and they did not have any objections. The property is located in Dover Township, but is owned by Chauncey
 - Jessie Powers, we have ordered our 2022 membership stickers.
 - ORCA hired Kay-Linn enterprises to develop an outdoor recreation assets inventory and development plan, which will highlight the top 5-7 projects in the region with the highest ROI and suggest best practices for development. This will be a useful tool for seeking large-scale investments.
 - The new Public Lands store in Columbus, which Mayor Patterson told about our work will host us on April 10th. We will give a 45-minute presentation about the Baileys, meet and greet customers, and distribute our new visitor brochures.
 - Jessie, I will be presenting to Athens City Council on March 28th, have submitted invoice for 2022 membership dues, and a report outlining progress to date.
- **ORCA Membership Expansion/ Staff/ Other**
- Jessie Powers, One option for staff funding would be utilizing 80% ARPA funds / 20% other funds, which will ensure that ARPA funds are being used solely within Athens County to address a concern of the Commissioners.
 - Lenny Eliason, you should prioritize your positions. I do think the sharing costs option is helpful. An option could be funding the maintenance and program positions with the 80/20 split, and reevaluating communications and finance positions.
 - Amy Renner, I was hoping with the 80/20 split that we were still leaving the door open for those positions to work on growth with that 20%



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- Lenny Eliason, leaving it at 80/20 would still allow for expansion efforts, however ORCA would need to come up with a different plan for the finance and communications positions.
- Amy Renner, The ARC grant can only fund one position, that was the reason for the 20 percent to cover 4 positions. My concern is we wouldn't be able to cover the additional positions with ARC funds plus the 20% from the other two positions.
- Jessie Powers, We could also utilize funds from the Just Transition Fund and Forest Service Cost Share to cover the of two 20% salaries.
- Steve Patterson, finding a way to morph the finance and communications directors seems impossible as those are two completely different skill sets.
- Jessie Powers, the finance position includes grant management as well as tracking private impact investments and returns on those investments.
- Scott Frank, so what are the reasonings for the different salaries?
- Jessie Powers, the median salary for a finance director in Ohio is \$140,000; I have talked to this board and advisory board for salary recommendations. I learned one partner organization pays their director less than our proposed rate, however they work remotely and in person once a month.
- For other three, these positions are high-level, these positions will be responsible for writing grants, bringing in revenues, managing interns and other staff. Their salary amount is at \$60,000, which also compensates for our lack of health insurance.
- Amy Renner, is there any opportunity to consider shared services, is there another COG out there with similar needs where we could share the cost of the finance person?
- Jessie Powers, SOPEC comes to mind, but I'm not sure how they manage their finances.
- Steve Patterson, it's all through the executive director and their team.
- Amy Renner, does Joyce manage their finances? She manages their finances and wears multiple hats; the idea of shared services is very popular and is picking up steam for these sorts of services. Many villages are doing shared fiscal officers, the idea of providing this service for multiple villages can create a full-time position; another example is police, share maintenance costs, insurances, etc. Scott may have some insight into this, what about when Buchtel pays a flat rate for services?



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- Lenny Eliason, let's look into contracting for the finance services
- Steve Patterson, if this is in alignment, Amy, with what you are saying, I can sit down with city staff to evaluate opportunities to potentially share services. The City has a grants director.
- Amy Renner, we should figure out the minimum amount of hours we need.
- Lenny Eliason, what is in the job description for the finance director?
- Jessie Powers, grant management, oversight, monitoring revenue streams, payroll, projected revenues for projects. We could potentially contract that out if we need to on an as-needed basis.
- Steve Patterson, I will explore the possibility of managing just the grant components.
- Jessie Powers, if someone could oversee one of the grants, that would be helpful, but may be a significant amount of work.
- Lenny Eliason, for operational costs, is that for ongoing funding?
- Jessie Powers, some are, some are as needed, we are looking at pretty accurate numbers here in terms of projections
- Lenny Eliason, what about our needs for trail building?
- Jessie Powers, The current 88-mile trail design does not include any easy trails in the Buchtel area. It's not very logical to not have any beginner trails there, to add that component we are looking at an additional 5-8 miles overall. In the worst case scenario, we build 28 miles built with state budget award. If EDA gives us the grant for the Buchtel trailhead, and we use \$1 million of state budget award to match the trailhead, we would have more remaining trail miles to construct. If the trailhead is not funded, we will complete a water line improvement at the Chauncey trailhead for bike washing, water fountain, which overtime could potentially expand to serve campground with restrooms. If this is the case, we will split the remaining \$1 million between waterline and trail miles; which results in less remaining miles to build overall. So, we are looking at roughly \$714,000 to 1.3 million to complete trail system construction. The county has the ARPA funds to spend through 2024, could bid out all the construction even this year if the county was willing to fund for construction.
- Lenny Eliason, I will talk with Jessie to re-vamp request to the county, then we can finish this discussion next month.
- Jessie Powers, we completed our 2019-2020 audit and I will share the report once it's



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finalized.

- Jessie Powers, per our policy and procedures travel policy, meal costs are to be reimbursed 100% of the meal and 15% of tip. I believe it would be easier to use the Government Service Agency standard rates' instead of itemized reporting based on receipts. Also, can we make room reservations an eligible upfront cost instead of a reimbursable item?

(Motion to update the ORCA policy and procedures for reimbursements to the Government Service Agency Rates and make room reservations an allowable advance expense: Lenny Eliason, Second: Steve Patterson, *Approved*)

Motion to Adjourn: Lenny Eliason, Second: Scott Frank.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:11pm.