OUTDOOR RECREATION COUNCIL OF APPALACHIA

Board Meeting Minutes

October 6, 2026 | Prepared by: Sadie McClinchie info@orcaohio.com
296 S Harper St, Nelsonville, OH 45764

ORCA Board Members Present

- Tim Warren, York Township Trustee President, Board President
- Frank Campbell, Chauncey Mayor
- Jay Kline, Village of Buchtel Council Member, Board Vice President

Others Present

- Jessie Powers, ORCA Executive Director
- Kincaid Rood, ORCA Trail Maintenance Manager
- Sarah Ciciora, ORCA Finance Administrator
- Delia Palmisano, ORCA Deputy Director
- Rachael Fisher, ORCA Operations Manager
- Sky Pettey, Legal Counsel

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:00 PM by Tim Warren.

AGENDA REVIEW & APPROVAL

The Board reviewed the agenda. A motion was made by Jay Kline to approve the agenda. Second by Frank Campbell. **Motion passed unanimously.**

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The Board reviewed the August 26, 2026 meeting minutes. A motion was made by Frank Campbell to approve the August 26, 2026 meeting minutes. Second by Jay Kline. **Motion passed unanimously.**

PARTNER UPDATES

No partner updates were provided.

BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Board members discussed:

- Planning a brush-clearing project at the Buchtel-Snow Fork Trailhead before winter, including options for burning brush, chipping, and using larger logs for firewood. Kincaid Rood will look into a November date, potentially coordinating with the monthly maintenance day.
- Grading and leveling the area near the Route 685 side of the trailhead to improve maintenance and address ongoing drainage and reseeding issues. The Board discussed obtaining fill material and coordinating grading and fill work.
- Buckeye Hills providing two 4-by-8-foot road signs through its streetscape project, which may be used for event traffic direction.
- Fence repairs at the trailhead. Jessie Powers will coordinate with Tim Warren once materials are received.

- Interpretive signage and butterfly-wing-style photo installations planned for the trailheads through Community Food Initiatives and the Pedals and Pollinators project.
- Potential pollinator habitat improvements near the Route 685 side of the trailhead following grading work.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Sarah Ciciora provided the August Financial Report. September reconciliations and reports were still being completed and were expected to be provided to the Board by the end of the week. Discussion included:

- August expenses totaling $83,843.29, primarily for payroll, staff benefits, and what was believed to be the final Tap Realty construction payment.
- Approved reimbursements totaling $274,716.75 through AMLER and the state budget, expected to be deposited the following week.
- A current balance of $206,578.75, with approximately $30,000 in additional state budget requests expected to be submitted.
- Anticipated funding to support construction expenses and reduce the line of credit balance. Sarah Ciciora and Jessie Powers will discuss how much to apply toward the line of credit after reimbursements are received.
- The likelihood of another single audit in 2026 due to spending exceeding $2 million.
- Hiring an internal controls consultant who is reviewing processes, meeting weekly, and assisting with AWOADC and ACGP closing documentation.

A motion was made by Jay Kline to accept the financial report pending the September report. Second by Tim Warren. **Motion passed unanimously.**

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Delia Palmisano provided communications updates, including:

- Successful completion of Pedals and Pollinators on August 16, with at least 160 attendees, approximately 10 tabling participants, free food and drinks, pollinator plants, pump track activities, and a mural project at the bike rental shed. Media coverage included the Logan Daily News and Athens Independent.
- Regional advertising for the Baileys Dirt Fondo in the Marietta Times and an advertisement in the Morgan County visitor guide.
- An upcoming Ohio Riverway feature story about the Baileys Trail System, with regional reach across Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky.
- Continued promotion of Ohio's Rolling Hills through the Ohio Riverway publication and Visit Athens Visitor Guide, including discussions about co-branding opportunities.
- Expanded website content for Ohio's Rolling Hills, including stories highlighting the region's 18 counties, a feature on Monroe County Parks District, and development of a regional video series and the Bikes and Brews pocket map.
- The August 28 Baileys Trail Talk newsletter reaching 809 recipients, with a nearly 37% open rate and 2% click rate. The 2027 Ohio Outdoor Recreation Economy Conference save-the-date email had a nearly 55% open rate and 7% click rate. A venue has been secured for the conference in June 2027.
- Potential earned media opportunities through the Columbus Dispatch, Columbus Out and About, and Wild Ohio magazine.

- Plans to provide Board members with updated 88-mile Baileys Trail System map posters and explore the potential use of Wayne National Forest maps for emergency services.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Kincaid Rood provided maintenance updates, including:

- August volunteer engagement totaling 117 hours with 10 volunteers, including two new volunteers and eight returning volunteers.
- Hiring a new full-term AmeriCorps member in September following the end of Quynh's term.
- Successful completion of an Eagle Scout project at the Buchtel Trailhead.
- Athens Bicycle Club's down-tree crew removed 86 downed trees in August
- September volunteer engagement totaling 300 hours with 49 volunteers, including 29 new volunteers and 20 returning volunteers.
- Increased September trail work in preparation for NICA, Pelotonia, Hootenanny, and the Baileys Dirt Fondo.
- Athens Bicycle Club's down-tree crew removed 118 trees from the Baileys Trail System in September.
- The September 13 NICA race hosted approximately 150 youth riders.
- Pelotonia on September 3 bringing nearly 700 riders to the area. Rachael Fisher noted that this was the largest gravel challenge the organization had hosted to date. An invoice remains to be sent, with a proposed fee of $5 per rider.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Rachael Fisher provided updates, including:

- Attendance of at least 160 people at Pedals and Pollinators.
- The September interpretive hike, "Capturing the Waning Light," led by Josh Rudick. Three participants attended, along with Rachael Fisher. The photography from the hike was used for marketing, and the leader expressed interest in returning for seasonal hikes.
- Successful events with Pelotonia on September 3 and the NICA race on September 13.
- ORCA's participation at the Ohio Riverway Summit, where staff spoke with several interested individuals and received two newsletter signups.
- Discussion of posting Baileys Trail System updates and flyers at local schools to reach students interested in photography and outdoor recreation programming. Jay Kline will help facilitate school outreach, and ORCA can provide flyers.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Jessie Powers provided updates, including:

- ORCA officially joining the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and preparing to participate in upcoming networking and tourism events.
- Continued discussions with the Just Transition Fund regarding potential funding of approximately $150,000 for Ohio's Rolling Hills. The proposed funding would support regional business collaboration, local product purchasing, and staff capacity.
- Submission of a revised scope of work for Phase 1 of the AMLER visitor center project. ORCA is awaiting approval before rebidding the project for the third time.

- Continued development of the ORCA strategic plan, including organizational history, criteria for evaluating new ideas, and the relationship between ORCA and AWOADC. Board members agreed to review the draft and bring questions and comments to the next meeting.
- Discussion of the $200,000 impact investment agreement with the Athens County Foundation, including the need to clarify revenue-sharing arrangements and reimbursement for staff and organizational resources used for nonprofit activities. Sky Pettey noted that legal counsel cannot represent both ORCA and AWOADC in an agreement between the two organizations. Sky will continue reviewing the agreement and expects to provide further guidance by the next Board meeting.
- Continued coordination with the Ohio Rural Development Alliance and Ohio Trails Partnership regarding a potential Ohio Office of Outdoor Recreation. Jessie Powers and Buckeye Hills Executive Director Chastity plan to meet with regional partners to develop recommendations for the incoming governor.
- Continued work on two pending ARISE grant applications. ORCA has responded to reviewer comments and expects decisions in the fall. The funding would support existing staff and organizational capacity.
- Planning for the October 24 Baileys Dirt Fondo and the Ohio Mountain Biking Championship Race. Discussion included the increasing maintenance and staffing demands associated with larger events and the possibility of adjusting the event schedule in the future to better match available capacity.
- Discussion of upcoming fundraising needs and the limited revenue generated by some events, particularly when revenue supports local communities and other partners.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board entered executive session to discuss a public employee. Following the session, a motion was made by Frank Campbell to exit executive session. Second by Jay Kline. The motion passed by roll call vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No additional public comments were received.

OTHER

Jessie Powers requested authorization to sponsor the Morrison-Gordon Land Lab Halloween celebration and to send a letter to Athens City Council.
A motion was made by Jay Kline to authorize Jessie Powers to sponsor the Land Lab Halloween celebration. Second by Frank Campbell. **Motion passed unanimously.**
A motion was made by Frank Campbell to authorize sending the letter to Athens City Council. Second by Jay Kline. **Motion passed unanimously.**

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Jay Kline made a motion to adjourn. Frank Campbell seconded.