



Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia Meeting Minutes
December 20th, 2024, 2PM

Prepared by Haleigh Jankowski, info@orcaohio.com

ORCA Board Members Present: ORCA Chair City of Athens Mayor Steve Patterson, York Township Trustee Tim Warren, Buchtel Council Member Jay Kline, Interim City of Nelsonville Manager Devon Tolliver)

Others Present: Jessie Powers, Reid Courtney

Meeting Agenda

- Approve Agenda
- ORCA Finances
- Trust for Public Land ARC
- ARISE Grant
- RFP
- Other
- Adjourn

Meeting Call to Order, 2:01 pm, Steve Patterson

(Motion to approve agenda: Tim Warren; Second: Jay Kline; In Favor: Steve Patterson, Tim Warren, Jay Kline,)

Jessie Powers: Essentially we need to renew our line of credit, which we've done several times in the past because of our reimbursement grants. I don't know if you want me to talk through more than that.

Steve Patterson: It's renewable?

Jessie Powers: Yes, I would like to request an authorization to renew the line of credit and sign associated paperwork.

Steve Patterson: Just remind us, how much is that line of credit?

Jessie Powers: It's for \$400,000.

Tim Warren: How much have we spent out of it?

Jessie Powers: We don't have one active right now. We are going to get to a point where it's going to be needed to balance out.

(Motion to renew line of credit: Tim Warren; Second: Steve Patterson; In Favor: Tim Warren, Steve Patterson, Jay Kline)

Jessie Powers: I sent some details over email, but essentially the trust for Public Land is this large national organization. They have several offices statewide in many states. They have a presence in Ohio, but they've been working primarily in urban communities. They would like to secure some grant funds, essentially to cover their own staff costs, and to work more strategically within the Appalachian region. They have reached out to us as an Ohio representative that works with rural communities. They have proposed that we be their partner and help them make community connections, through the advisory committee. They propose to give us \$50,000, which is \$10,000 a year for this five year grant.

All we need to do right now is provide a letter of support, and I'm working through the details with these folks to tweak the scope a little bit. In comparison to the other states, Ohio is farther ahead and has a better state of readiness because of the Appalachian Community Grant program. I'm going to ask them to tweak the language a little bit to allow for more room to advance projects that are further along in this process that they outline here, which really starts at step one with community engagement.

I think the scope of services ORCA will perform will cost more than \$50,000 in staff time. However, this group has a national level advocacy as well as state advocacy and power in that regard. They also have a large portfolio of work and range of technical services, which can assist our region to elevate awareness and combat the huge lack of human capacity to meet all the natural or public land benefits within the region. They would like some of our grant matches as well, but I think we need to save that to support ORCA's work and staff costs not covered by membership dues.

(Motion to provide letter of support for the trust for Public Land: Jay Kline; Second: Tim Warren; In Favor: Jay Kline, Tim Warren, Steve Patterson)

Steve Patterson: I would like to put a timeframe on you to get this RFP pulled together quickly. It's not rocket science. Get something out there if you want to use the advisory council, you know, give them a day or two to give comments and that's it. When I look at something in the City of Athens, such as the Athens Community Arts and Music Festival, the planning for that to be successful started September of this year to give us the runway needed to bring in musical performances that we wanted to showcase the event. We're looking at six months if this is going to be summer.

Steve Patterson: I recognize that we're now rolling into the holiday season. I would like to see this RFP go out really no later than January 3rd or 4th. It's got to get out there on the ground. That way it's out. What I would like to see is for it to have a timestamp of 2024 on it, but that isn't possible now.

Jessie Powers: My plan was already to finish this RFP the first week I was back in the office following the holiday. ORCA outlined in our invitation to become an ORCA Partner that Partner counties and their appointed advisory committee would participate in the transparent planning and decision making regarding: the Outdoor Recreation Economy Conference, Regional Brand, and ARISE planning grant. Just like we sent out the RFP for the regional brand for their review, that's what I proposed to do here. This does not take an extra month, but I do think it's important that we follow what we outlined in our original invitation to partners, and follow the same procurement process for administering the same federal funds used for the regional brand.

Since Reid is here today, I don't think we ever got clarification on the amount of funds that Sunday Creek Horizons thinks that we'll be able to obtain in the state budget this year for operating, because that is something I'm looking at as we work on our budget for next year. We are still uncertain about Ross county membership.

Reid Courtney: The state is not always the quickest to cut checks, especially given our more conservative leadership now as well as, our last four of the last five monthly tax receipts have been lower than what was anticipated. Revenues are still up, investments are doing well on the state side, realistically I'm planning on going and asking for \$250,000 per fiscal year, but for budgeting purposes I would anticipate that request to be unfunded.

Steve Patterson: I can share with you, NLC is already setting up meetings for me with Congressman Balderson, as well as Senator Bernie Moreno and the Vice President. I am going to keep pushing for Appalachian recreational assets and it doesn't hurt to sit there and talk to Vice President Vance, you know because he claims to be an Appalachian.

Reid Courtney: I was with Moreno about a month ago, he did say that if money's out there, he wants it coming into Ohio. He is not having offices in Columbus or Cincinnati because he says there needs to be senate offices in rural Ohio. His first two Senate offices are going to be I think in Westlake and also in Marietta.

(Motion to adjourn: Jay Kline; Second: Tim Warren; In Favor: Steve Patterson, Jay Kline, Tim Warren)