



**Friends of SMARTrails
Board Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2026
Benzie Manistee Snowbirds Club
6:00 PM**

Board Members Present: Zachary Pawlowski, Vice Chair; Linda Cudney, Secretary; Jacque Erdman, Treasurer, Claire Richard, Mark Coe, Dave Myers, Bonnie Brown. Rob Carson by phone.

Board Members Absent: None.

Guests: Sara Herberger, (MCCF); Dean Grossnickle, (Benzie, Manistee Snowbirds).

- I. **Call to Order** Meeting called to order by Jacque Erdman for Zachary Pawlowski, Vice-President at 6:01 PM. Zach Pawlowski arrived late, and chaired the rest of the meeting.
- II. **Consent Agenda** It was motioned and supported to accept the consent agenda. AIF. Motion carried.
 1. **February 9, 2026 Board Minutes: (No March meeting due to lack of quorum)**
Motioned by Claire, supported by Bonnie to accept the minutes from the February 9, 2026 meeting. AIF. Motion Carried.
 2. **Treasurers Report and Payment of Bills:**
Jacque furnished Treasurers report. MCCF account shows total balance of \$4,409.43, Filer Credit Union Account shows \$4,267.67 and FCU share account balance is \$23.80. Total balance is \$8,700.90. The hosting charge automatically comes out monthly for \$20.00. Motioned by Linda, supported by Mark to accept the Treasurers report. AIF. Motion carried.
- III. **New Business :**
 1. **Letter Of Support for a Snowbirds grant application to MCCF and a match to help purchase a 3 point arm mower attachment for the Snowbirds tractor:**
The Snowbirds asked for a "Letter of Support" from SMART to the MCCF for purchasing the 3 point arm mower. Linda motioned, Jacque supported the motion for the "Letter of Support". AIF Motion carried. Claire will revamp the letter on SMART letterhead. Discussion on donating \$1,000.00 to the Snowbirds, along with donations from Dirtbirds, Snowbirds, Betsie Valley Trails, and LRBOI. Motioned by Claire, supported by Bonnie to donate \$1,000.00 to the Snowbirds for match money for the equipment. It was suggested to wait until after May 5, 2026 to see if the grant will be awarded. Jacque stated the money

could come out of the maintenance part of the budget but will let us know by next meeting. Roll Call vote showed all ayes. Mark stated that different entities could contract with the Snowbirds to use this equipment.

2. Trail Development Plan "Chief Road to Manistee"

Mark showed us some County maps that the Board looked over and created a list of steps that were discussed. I.E.: Landowner lists and landowner contacts, defining the routes, time frames, who does what, what information to collect, etc. This will be a work in progress.

3. Trail Counters

Trail Counters were discussed and the Snowbirds would support SMART on applying for the counters. The brand discussed was the TrafX brand. For 3 counters with 3 year Tech Support cost would be approximately \$2,490.00.

4. Onekama Area Community Activities Open House

Many local social, community service groups, non-profits, etc. are invited to participate in the Onekama Area Community Activities Open House. It will be Saturday, May 30, 2026, from 2:30-4:30 PM at the Onekama School Cafeteria. A list of things was suggested to have at your table. It was decided that SMARTrails should attend. At the May meeting we will decide who will be able to attend this event.

IV. Old Business

1. Scott Slavin Questions

It was discussed to invite Scott to a SMARTrails meeting. Linda will send him an email to invite him to our May meeting. A list of questions will be sent to members to add to or delete from, if Scott is able to attend the May meeting. Linda will resend the list and we can see if we need to add or subtract from the list.

2. Little River Golf Outing

Rob filled out the "Charity/Sponsorship Application" and sent it on. The deadline for applications is April 30, 2026. The outing will be Friday, July 10, 2026 at Manistee National.

3. Ribbon Cutting for trail from Thompsonville to Copemish, Trailhead in Copemish and bridge over Bear Creek.

Discussions on the Ribbon Cutting which should have been Friday, April 17, 2026 but with the weather, it was a good thing we did not pursue it for this date. It was motioned to do the Ribbon Cutting on "National Trails Day", Saturday, June 6, 2026 at 2:00 PM. Linda will forward the original list and we can add to it and decide at the May meeting.

4. Trail Flip Chart of Manistee County Trails

Work in progress. Possibly done in June.

5. Reports from other Trail Entities

Mark reported that the Snowbirds groomed 5,690 miles this winter; they are busy closing gates, the end of the season party will be April 25, with brats and burgers. Dirtbirds are having a Blessing of the O.R.V's on June 6 at Ellens Corners in Mesick. Manistee County Board of Commissioners have adopted the Countywide ORV Ordinance. Claire reported that Shoreline Cycling and Manistee Cross County Ski Council will meet on April 29, 2026 to discuss forming one group from the 2 groups.

6. Tribal Discussion

Tabled but not forgotten.

V. Other Business

1. Recreation Commission Update

Rob Carson talked to the County Recreation Commission giving some guidance and direction to help the Recreation Commission to move forward. He suggested to get priorities in order and identify the trail segments that are a priority (which is Thompsonville to Kaleva). Katie Gruenberg is presenting the Manistee ORV Ordinance for final review at the Board of Commissioners. The 11 mile road property will not be pursued at this time, per Manistee County Commissioners. Meg Batzer asked about the ARPA money that was

allocated. Ric Alameddine also spoke on the Onekama progress to the Recreation Commission.

2. **Report on the MDNR/MCCR Recreation Grant Workshop 2/26/26.**
Mark, Linda and Bonnie attended from SMARTrails. It was very well attended.

VI. Board Members Comments/Correspondence

1. **Rack Cards**

We will need new "Rack Cards" or brochures. Linda gave most of the last of what she had to County Planning. They had requested some to put in their rack. Plus we have new additions to put on. Zach will look into this.

2. **Trail Clean Up Day was discussed.**

3. Mark reported NCTA was seeking trail support for trail cleanup on the North Country Trail (High Bridge, Tippy Dam, Coates Highway area). To help, call Loren Bach at 231 510-1983.

VII. Adjourn. Motioned and supported to adjourn at 7:57 PM.

Next meeting on Monday, May 11, 2026 in Kaleva at the Benzie Manistee Snowbirds Club at 14121 Industrial Drive, Kaleva.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by:

Linda Cudney, Secretary