



**Friends of SMARTrails
Board Meeting Minutes
January 12, 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.

Board Members Absent: Rob Carson, Bonnie Brown.

Guests: Sara Herberger, MCCF, Katie Gruenberg, Manistee County Planning Department.

- I. **Call to Order** Meeting called to order by Zach Pawlowski, vice-president at 6:02 PM.
- II. **Consent Agenda** It was motioned and supported to accept the consent agenda. AIF. Motion carried.
 1. **December 8, 2025 Board Minutes**
Motioned by Jacque, supported by Claire to accept the minutes from the December 8, 2025 meeting. AIF. Motion Carried.
 2. **Treasurers Report and Payment of Bills:**
Jacque furnished Treasurers reports through December 31, 2025, plus YTD. MCCF account shows \$4,408.54, Filer Credit Union Account shows \$5,836.23 and FCU share account balance is \$22.60. Total balance is \$10,267.37. No bills, but the hosting charge which automatically comes out monthly for \$20.00. Total deposits for 2025 were \$932.00. Motioned by Linda, supported by Claire to accept the Treasurers report. AIF. Motion carried. Also, Manistee County Planning has approximately \$1,300.00 in an account for SMART for map printing, etc.
- III. **New Business : 1-7 Annual Meeting**
 1. **Current Membership.**
Current membership is 8 members with Elaine gone. We will possibly look for another member who may in interested in joining, to have an odd number of members.
 2. **Reappoint officers Rob Carson and Jacque Erdman.**
Jacque nominated Rob Carson as chair of SMART, Linda seconded. No other nominations, AIF. Motion carried. Linda nominated Jacque Erdman as Treasurer, Claire seconded the motion. No other nominations. AIF. Motion carried.
 3. **Location of meetings and meeting dates for 2026**
It was decided to hold the SMART meetings at the Benzie Manistee Snowbirds Club for

2026, with meetings at 6:00 PM. SMART can also store any equipment for trail maintenance and supplies at the club. Going over the 2026 dates, it was decided to meet the second Monday of January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September and December. In October, the meeting will be the 4th Monday, with no meeting in November. Designated "Clean up Trails Day's are Saturday, May 16, 2026 and Saturday, September 12, 2026. Tentative Ribbon Cutting will be Friday, April 17, 2026, from 10:00 AM-3:00 PM, subject to change. Motioned by Claire, supported by Zach to set the 2026 location and meeting dates for 2026. AIF. Motion Carried.

4. Budget for 2026

Since 2025 did not have much activity, Jacque will work on a budget for 2026 and we will discuss at the February meeting.

5. Fundraising for 2026

Mark passed out a 2027 Recreation Trails Program Project list for the state of Michigan for hiking, biking, snowmobiles, and equestrian for all to look over.

6. Goals for 2026

Two Trail Clean Up days, Ribbon Cutting for Thompsonville to Copemish Trail and bridge over Bear Creek, plus looking at some "Trail counters" and possibly apply for a grant to purchase them to see how many people use the trail. June 6, 2026 is National Trails Day. Some of our goals will have to be discussed with Scott Slavin with the DNR, so a list will be comprised for questions to ask him and see if he is able to attend one of our SMART meetings.

7. Strategic Plan Changes

We may need to add to our Strategic Plans for some easy trail segments to add to our map. Our Park to Park map needs to be revisited, since the Copemish to Thompsonville trail is finished and the bridge over Bear Creek. This will be a work in progress.

IV. 1. Ribbon Cutting for trail from Thompsonville to Copemish, trailhead in Copemish and bridge over Bear Creek.

Discussions on the Ribbon Cutting and Summit. More to discuss at the February meeting. Needs to be put on social media and also in the newspaper to advertise it.

V. Branded Promotional Items

Zach is working on and will bring to the February meeting.

VI. Old Business

1. EDA Update

The trail is finished from Thompsonville to Copemish, trailhead is done in Copemish and the bridge over Bear Creek is in and snowmobiles are using, with lots of good comments on the bridge. Rob will give us a final report on it, when he returns.

2. Trail Flip Chart of Manistee County Trails

Work in progress. Looking at adding Equestrian trails. Need to see if we can get some digital copies made for the chart.

3. Reports from other Trail Entities

Claire stated she is on the board for Shoreline Cycling. Big M non motorized trail is groomed regularly for cross country skiing, and grooming many trail loops. Mark is sending out snowmobile reports weekly to all.

5. Tribal Discussion

Tabled but not forgotten.

VII. Other Business

1. Recreation Commission Update

The County Recreation Plan is comping along with a timeline listed. Goals and Objectives being worked on, with a draft possibly in June, then to the DNR and then to the Townships and Villages. The meeting schedule was presented for the 2026 year for County Recreation

Meetings. All meetings will be held at the planning office at 6:15 PM. Discussion on the timber harvest on the County 11 mile road property, Linda Cudney, Wayne Beldo and Robert Schulke were reappointed to the Recreation Commission. ORV Ordinance is submitted for 45 day review, and update will be at the January meeting. Katie had informed SMART that we have \$1,300.00 in our account at the County for map printing, etc. Next week, Katie Gruenberg will be meeting with the Kaleva Group regarding the trailhead.

VIII. Board Members Comments/Correspondence

1.

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

Next meeting on Monday, February 9, 2026 in Kaleva at the Benzie Manistee Snowbirds Club at 14121 Industrial Drive, Kaleva.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by:

Linda Cudney, Secretary