

Minutes of the Meeting: January 2, 2025

Board members present: Brian Wetcher, JoAnn York-Gilmore, Tabb Stringer, Nathan Schwarck, Kit Gerwels

Staff present: Bob Vaux, Jamie Burroughs, Darby Jordan*

Meeting held in person and called to order at 6:01PM

Minutes: December minutes were unanimously approved.

2025 Board Chair Election: Kit was unanimously supported to hold the position for another year.

Public Comments:

None

Heart Lake Master Plan / Grant Review: Bob presented the PowerPoint that Darby and Director Lunsford put together for the ALEA grant presentation. This Recreation and Conservation Office program scored the HL grant 8th out of 15. We will find out if we get funded some time after the current legislative session, and the State budget is approved. A good discussion was had by the Board and the public in attendance.

Friends of the Forest Update:

Ellie was in attendance and reported that the Forest Discovery Center is closed to the public now and will be for some time as staff is fully occupied with programs. She also announced the resignation of Executive Director Katie Early, who left her position with the FoF as of the end of December. We would like to thank Katie for being a great partner and we wish her all the best.

Ellie briefed the FAB on the FoF's new home school program. Because group sizes could be up to 30, permission from the Board and the Parks Director required. Both gave their full support.

Staff Reports:

Bob is hopeful there will be some Whistle Lake dam study data available in the next month or so. Nothing new on the Old Dump MTCA protocol.

Staff is hoping to have a draft of the 2026 Forest Plan update available for the Board and public by January 23. It will then be presented to the FAB for discussion at the Feb. 6 meeting.

Thank you Jamie for a great first year! Jamie reports that he is looking forward to year 2.

Parks Commission Report:

JoAnn reported that the Commission continues to work with staff and the public on the pickle ball front.

Other Business:

None.

Adjourn at 6:59pm

Respectfully Submitted by Bob Vaux

**(Darby was gracious enough to come in and get the meeting rolling despite being on sick leave. THANK YOU!) Also, thanks to Ellie from the Friends for running the PowerPoint presentation.*