

Mine Falls Park Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes – April 6, 2026

Attendees: Steve Kenney, Justin Hoprich, Dave Silva, Laura Santer, Mike Sliwa, Sherry Dutzy (Conservation Commission Member), Walter (Ben) Davis, Kim Gryglik, Lon Hohberger, Natlalie Iucci, Andrew Iucci, Bryan Conant, Paula Lochhead, Kamal Masand

Guests: Chris Bennett, Shelby Walker-Adams

Call to Order – 7:00 PM

Approval of February Meeting Minutes:

Lon motioned to approve the February Meeting Minutes. Kamal seconded this motion. The minutes were unanimously approved without revisions.

Wood Duck Houses

Chris Bennett will move forward with organizing the construction and installation of three wood duck houses within the park. It was suggested that Chris join the committee on April's trail day for a walkthrough of proposed installation locations. The duck houses should be installed at waist-shoulder height, and it's unclear if we could easily access the proposed trees to install (3 total near oxbow, across water from Spine Rd.).

A Thank You to Natalie

Thanks to Natalie for not only maintaining the Facebook page, which has enjoyed increased engagement recently, but also for thoughtfully highlighting the crucial efforts of DPW.

Beaver Brook to Access MFP

A group of hikers led by Beaver Brook staff will utilize the park for an accessible hike and bird watching on April 14th from 10am-11am. They will access the park through the Spine Rd. entrance.

Gate City Striders to Fundraise for MFP

GCS will host a fundraiser run on August 10, 2026. They would like to have the funds benefit MFP. Several ideas were raised including a bench near the incoming dogpark, but no decision was made. Shelby will advertise upcoming trail days to GCS members.

Misc. DPW Topics

- The lock/key that secures the shed at the Lincoln Park entrance has gone missing. It will be replaced with a simple combination lock (supplied by Bryan/DPW).
- 7th St. bridge repairs will begin.
- The new tablecloth with QR code was completed and displayed for the MFPAC. Members verified that the QR code works correctly. The tablecloth will be put to use at our upcoming Trail Day.

April Trail Day Planning

It was agreed that the priority for April's Trail Day would be the Cove Trail encampment clean-up. However, Dave raised safety concerns following the discovery of several needles at that site. The group will move forward with its original intentions to clean this space on April's Trail Day, but will proceed with extreme caution. Volunteers will be asked to wear closed-toed shoes and will be informed of the possible risks associated with finding needles. Volunteers will not attempt any remove needles during the trail day, but will indicate their location, if found. DPW will be present with individuals who have been trained to remove needles safely.

In addition, a flat-bottomed boat and kayaks will be useful (if available) to clean trash and debris from the canal.

Additional projects (weather permitting and volunteer permitting) include trash pick-up in other areas of the park and painting of the graffiti present at the gazebo, the underpass, and 7th St. bridge railings.

Natalie will make a post on Facebook inviting volunteers to arrive at the opposite end of the park (Spine Rd. entrance). This will allow volunteers to begin cleaning the cove trail area immediately, rather than walk across the park, wasting precious time and energy. Dave and Lon will arrive at Spine Rd. entrance and organize volunteers as they arrive. Meanwhile, Laura, Steve, and DPW will arrive at the Lincoln Park entrance to organize supplies and the remaining volunteers.

Projects for Future 2026 Trail Days

Natalie compiled an excel sheet listing all possible future trail projects for 2026. This can be updated continually with input from all MFPAC members.

Adjournment – 8:18 PM