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THE ROANOKE TIMES

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CRAIG-BOTETOURT SCENIC TRAIL



HEATHER ROUSSEAU, THE ROANOKE TIMES

A 'DeRail the Trail' sign is seen on a homeowner's property Friday facing a section of what will be part of the Craig-Botetourt Scenic Trail on Old Rail Road in Eagle Rock. Some property owners along the trail have raised concerns about the 26-mile project.

Project moves forward with public hearings

Trail will run between Eagle Rock and New Castle

LILY KINCAID
The Roanoke Times
The Virginia Department of Transportation is holding two public hearings this week to provide information to the pub-

lic and gather feedback regarding the Craig-Botetourt Scenic Trail. VDOT will hold one meeting from 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday at Eagle Rock Elementary School in Botetourt County, and another from 4 to 6 p.m. Wednesday at Craig County High School. The 26-mile trail will run between Last Lock Park near Eagle Rock and Craig County High School in New Castle. It will

follow the former Chesapeake and Ohio Craig Valley Branch railbed and right of way, which was donated to Virginia in 1961 for "for such public use as Commonwealth may determine," according to VDOT. In September 2023, the General Assembly put funds toward five multi-use trail projects across Virginia, one of which being the Craig-Botetourt trail.

That same month, VDOT held informational meetings about the trail in both counties. The Commonwealth Transportation Board has allocated \$19.5 million for the trail, which VDOT anticipates will be enough to construct around 20 miles, from Craig County High School to the end of state maintenance

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FERRUM COLLEGE

Faculty at odds with current president

Calling on board of trustees to remove Mirta Martin

JASON DUNOVANT
The Roanoke Times
FERRUM — Ferrum College faculty members took a vote of no confidence in President Mirta Martin's leadership as the academic year concluded and have urged the college's board to remove her from the position.

A May 6 letter obtained by The Roanoke Times shows a clear division between faculty and Martin, who became Ferrum College's 13th president in 2023 after serving in an interim role. In the letter, Martin is said to foster a "toxic work environment and culture of fear" among staff at the college.

The letter states that faculty held a May 2 vote of no confidence in Martin's leadership. Of the 44 faculty members present for the vote, 87% voted no confidence.



Jamison

Abigail Jamison, chair of the faculty council, sent the letter on behalf of the faculty to W. Jeffrey Booker, first chair of the college's

Please see FERRUM, Page A6

VIEW: To read the faculty's letter, point your smartphone camera at the QR code and click to connect. NEWSVU

Patient's bill slashed

Remember Ricky Rucker, the Southeast Roanoke resident who got charged nearly \$5,000 for a routine ambulance ride in September? The distance was 7 miles. At the time, Rucker was not on life-support, or oxygen, or hooked up to an EKG, or a blood pressure cuff. He didn't even have an oxygen sensor on his finger. The ambulance provider



DAN CASEY

was Colorado-based American Medical Response. In January, AMR sent Rucker a bill for \$4,942, which worked out to more than \$700 per mile for that ride. The transport took 15 minutes, Rucker said. He contacted yours truly in March. By then, AMR was dunning him by text for \$4,070.68, claiming that was Rucker's out-of-pocket cost, after his out-of-network insurer

(Anthem) paid \$871. To put it mildly, that bill seemed bizarrely excessive. In part, it's because AMR is not in Anthem's provider network. (In Virginia, AMR's sole "in-network" insurer is Aetna.) So that



Rucker



DAN CASEY, THE ROANOKE TIMES

An American Medical Response ambulance, spotted outside a convenience store on Starkey Road in the Tanglewood area.

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