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**Meeting Minutes June 11, 2020
Pedora Park Pavilion, White Valley, PA**

Meeting Attendees:

- a. Board: (17) Gordon Conn, Rob Cronauer, Eileen Elicker, Rick Fisher, Alyssa Harden, Ted Hayes, Brandon Lacina, Jack Maher, Monica Meehan, Mary Grace Muster, Pat Norton, Bill O' Hara, Chris Panichella, Stan Rudge, Vicki Rudge, Anna Marie Stackiewicz, Ann Wade
- b. Guests: Jeff Richards, Malcolm Sias, Michael Bertonaschi, John Ruccio, Greg Verderber
1. President Stan Rudge led the recitation of "The Pledge of Allegiance" and then called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.
2. Presidents' Comments – Rudge noted that it was good to see everyone again and hoped everyone was staying healthy. It was noted that this was a closed meeting to board members and any committee members representing their respective committees. This was to limit the amount of people due to COVID-19 precautions.
3. Public Input/Introductions – No report.
4. Approval of Minutes
 - a. The March meeting minutes were reviewed and approved at this meeting. There were no minutes from April or May to approve due to those meetings being canceled because of COVID-19 precautions.
 - b. A motion was made to approve the March minutes by Norton, 2nd by Wade, motion carried, minutes approved.
5. Treasurer's Report – Jack Maher
 - a. For the month of May, WHT had \$88,000 in total assets. There is \$15,500 in the Capital Reserve account and \$25,000 in the Money Market account. The trail's net income is \$14,500 as of the end of May. Money has still been coming in from memberships, benches, and donations, even with everything going on due to COVID-19.
 - b. A big thank you goes out to Ann Wade's late father, Richard A. Sunder, who donated \$3,000 to the Westmoreland Heritage Trail from his estate. He cared greatly about the trail and its community, and his contribution will make a big difference in the future of the trail.
 - c. A thank you also goes out to the Regional Trail Corporation, who received money from the Colcolm Foundation and donated it to the various trail groups within their region.

This money was divided based on mileage of trail, and the WHT received over \$4,000. A thank you letter will be sent on behalf of the trail to Colcolm Foundation for their generous donation.

- d. A motion was made to approve May's treasurer's report, which cumulatively reflected March & April as well, by Cronauer, 2nd by Conn. Motion carried, treasurer's report approved.
6. RTC Report – Rob Cronauer
 - a. There is a meeting next week at Cedar Creek Park.
 - b. The Articles of Association from RTC have been revised and will be reviewed by the executive board at their next meeting in July. The articles should be ready to approve and submit by the August monthly board meeting.
 - c. The parking meter fundraiser that was discussed at previous meetings is on hold due to COVID-19. Sias reported that there is a new plan that is being worked on by RTC. It will be announced soon.
 - d. The traveling sandwich board that the WHT had made to encourage trail users to become members is to be presented to other trail groups by RTC. They are working on creating universal signage that trail groups could use to promote membership along their trails.
 7. TAT Report – Stan Rudge
 - a. A new map is being developed, and additional information will be added to the Westmoreland Heritage Trail for the Export to Trafford sections.
 8. Committee Reports – Committee chairmen are needed for the following existing/new committees: Fundraising, Grants, and Historical Record Keeping (one for the Turtle Creek Railroad & one for the WHT's more recent history). The Cercones' have been approached for the railroad history and the Grimms' for the WHT history. Please consider volunteering if you are interested, as it is not required to be a board member to be a committee chair.
 - a. Real Estate and Acquisitions – Malcolm Sias
 - i. A few new parcels have been acquired along the Middle Gap section, and surveyors are ready to start.
 - ii. There is nothing to report on the Trafford end. Efforts are still being made for discussions with Norfolk Southern.
 - b. Engineering and Construction – Jeff Richards
 - i. The feasibility study, led by Mackin Engineering, for the Middle Gap section has begun. A meeting was held in late May. Maps were present at the WHT meeting to view possible options for the trail corridor. The next meeting will be held mid-July.
 - c. Fund Raising
 - i. A chairman is needed for the fundraising committee. If you are interested, please volunteer. It is not required to be a board member to be a committee chairman. The trail's main fundraising events throughout the year are Comedy Night, Trail Town, parking at Twin Lakes Arts & Heritage Festival, and parking at Export's Ethnic Food & Music Festival.

1. Export is still going forward with their festival on August 15, so volunteers are needed to help with parking. If you can spare a few hours, please consider volunteering!
 - ii. Sias reported that the Five Star Trail is still hosting a virtual Poker Run this year. Participants register and participate on their own time. The WHT is still included on the donation form when asked who the participants would like their money to go to, so please participate and check off the WHT!
 - iii. Cronauer reported the mile post sponsor plaques have all been catalogued with help by Harden and their Westmoreland Conservation District watershed coworker Chelsea Walker. Notices will be sent out soon to all existing plaque owners to renew their sponsorship with either a one year or ten year option. Without any solicitation, the trail has already received approx. \$2,000 from the post plaques.
 - iv. Rudge reported that another fundraising opportunity in the works is a 2021 WHT calendar with photos taken along the trail by Tom Washburn. 500 copies would be printed and sold at the cost of \$25-\$30. A lottery system of some kind would be within the calendars to raffle off money to those who purchase a calendar. After printing and other associated costs, it is anticipated that the trail would make approx. \$4,300 profit off the calendar sales. A chairman is needed to organize and take charge of this opportunity. If you are interested, please reach out!
- d. Public Relations – Vicki Rudge
 - i. The Facebook page is currently at 2,120 followers.
 - ii. A Twitter account has been created (@TrailHeritage) and will be managed by Doug Webster. If anyone is interested in assisting with the social media page, please reach out to Vicki Rudge.
 - iii. The 2nd newsletter was sent out, and the 3rd one is in the works.
 - iv. Greeting cards continue to be sent out for any illnesses/deaths within the WHT board/volunteer community.
 - v. A new bike rental shop in Trafford (Lisa's Bike Shop) is interested in selling WHT merch. They have also had a lot of traffic in the past couple weeks since opening and are very excited about being involved with the trail.
 - vi. New WHT cycling shirts are in the works to be added to the available merch options.
 - vii. Doug Webster has graciously offered to donate his time to create a series of informational videos on various aspects of the WHT. He was in charge of the highlight video about the recent maintenance done on the trail narrated by Malcolm Sias ([click here to view the video on Doug's YouTube channel](#)). Future video topics include trail safety, maintenance, testimonials, community members, local businesses, trail management, etc. The hope is these videos will be a good informational source for those with questions about getting involved with the trail and simply encourage community members to join as members of the trail. Be on the lookout for new videos in the coming months!

- viii. Trail Town has been canceled for this year due to COVID-19. An alternate event that may be possible this fall is a scavenger hunt. Wendy Davis is working with the Level Green Women's Club to scout out any ideas and help organize if the event goes forward. It was noted that a possible small grant opportunity could be applied for to help fund the event if it occurs in September 2020. Further updates will be provided at future meetings.
- e. Membership – Gordon Conn
 - i. The second push of the Annual Membership Drive was sent out by email, and the results have been surprisingly good. As of this meeting, we currently have 196 members, which includes the lifetime and 10-year members. At this time last year, the trail was at 295 members, in part due to the large influx from Trail Town. A lot of the members are new. 125 members from last year have not re-upped.
 - ii. Membership cards were brought up by Norton, and discussion was mixed. The idea will be kept in mind for the future.
- f. Trail Ambassadors – Stan Rudge
 - i. 54 hours have been reported so far for this year. Please turn in your hours for this year to secretary Harden if you haven't already. Hours will now be documented as a separate line on the cumulative volunteer hours sheet that Harden manages going forward. Please separate these hours out from other volunteer hours when reporting to Harden at the end of every month.
- g. Trail Maintenance – Zone Leaders
 - i. O' Hara reported that Zone 1 is good.
 - ii. Fisher reported that Zone 2 is good. He sold one of the trail's old mowers for \$100 and will get the money to Maher.
 - iii. Cronauer reported that Zone 3 is good.
 - iv. Norton reported that Zone 4 is good. Stan Rudge's received a request from a girl scout troop to volunteer on the trail.
 - v. Ruccio reported that Zone 5 is good.
 - vi. T-shirts for trail maintenance volunteers were brought up. This idea was tabled for a future meeting, as verbiage from RTC on acknowledging trail volunteers will be coming out soon.
- h. Delmont Visionary Committee – Anna Marie Stackiewicz
 - i. All of the events that were planned were canceled due to COVID-19. They will be focusing on the Middle Gap feasibility study.
- i. Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation – No report.
- j. Municipal Representatives
 - i. Brandon Lacina (Trafford rep.)
 - 1. Trafford Borough has developed a new business directory (growtrafford.com) and the WHT is listed with information about the trailhead/parking and a trail description. Businesses are being encouraged to engage with the trail.

2. Lacina's business, Digital Trafford, runs a photo gallery outside with local historical photos displayed. He would like to have a new show with photos taken along the trail.
 - ii. Gordon Conn (Monroeville rep.)
 1. Contact has been lost with the ladies who presented at the end of 2019 to the WHT about a feasibility study through the Turtle Creek Valley to connect the WHT with the GAP trail.
9. Old Business
 - a. The new budget for 2020 was approved via an email vote, however a motion was again made at June's meeting to have record of this in the official minutes.
 - i. A motion to approve the 2020 WHT budget was made by Conn, 2nd by Norton. Motion carried, budget approved.
 - b. The trail received a nice letter from Ms. Fry who we rented a garage from before the trail received their new trailer.
 - c. A big thanks to West. Co. Parks for the new trailer in Slickville, which was purchased using funds from March for Parks.
 - d. New Stihl equipment has been purchased to stock the new trailer, along with the two new Toro Workmans (one at each trailer).
10. New Business
 - a. A committee has been created to apply to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) 2021 Trail of the Year program. Harden has volunteered to organize the efforts with help from Norton, Panichella, and Lauren Jones from West. Co. Parks and Rec. The application period will open this fall. Once we are closer to the application period, committee members will start reaching out to the municipal representatives for help acquiring support letters from municipalities, local businesses, and trail users.
 - b. Megan Nelson has requested permission to use to trail for a race fundraiser for the East Suburban Trailblazers on Oct. 17 from 8-11 am.
 - i. A motion to approve the event was made by Maher, 2nd by Meehan. Motion carried, event approved.
 - c. Ann Wade requested that the money her late father donated to the trail be put into the maintenance building fund.
 - i. A motion to deposit the \$3,025 from Ann Wade's late father into the maintenance building fund was made by Wade, 2nd by Stan Rudge. Motion carried, money to be deposited.
 - d. A grant for the second round of historical plaques has been applied for by Karen Cercone. It was suggested that this round include a few signs on the history of the WHT itself to be installed along each section of the trail. These will be incorporated into the next round of signs to be drafted.
11. The next meeting will be on July 9, 2020 at the Lamplighter Restaurant in Delmont at 7 pm.

On a motion by Maher, 2nd Hayes, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alyssa Harden, Secretary