



The mission of the Westmoreland Heritage Trail is to manage and maintain the trail from Saltsburg to Trafford, in partnership with like-minded groups, Westmoreland County Parks, and the associated municipalities the trail passes through. The trail will be promoted for walking and biking activities and to provide for recreation, education, volunteerism, tourism, and historic and environmental conservation. (www.westmorelandheritagetrail.com)

WHT January Board Meeting Minutes

January 8, 2026 via Zoom

Meeting Attendees:

- Board (16): Michael Bertonaschi, Karen Rose Cercone, Rob Cronauer, Wendy Davis, Jerry Detar, Chad Emahizer, Rick Fisher, Steve Ising, Darren Miller, Chris Panichella, Stan Rudge, Vicki Rudge, Brooke Russick, Malcolm Sias, AnnaMarie Stackiewicz, Ann Wade,
- Absent Board (5): Mike Banda, Liz Ferri, Tom Marcin, Monica Meehan, Pat Norton
- Guests and Members (4): Jeff Richards, Barb Coulter, Greg Imblum, John Ruccio, Bob Stackiewicz

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

1. READING OF WHT MISSION STATEMENT

- 2. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS** – The President thanked the former Treasurer and the board members whose terms ended in 2025. He also welcomed new board members Steve Ising and Brooke Russick to the board.

3. PUBLIC INPUT/INTRODUCTIONS – none.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the November 13, 2025 meeting were approved with one correction on a motion by Malcolm Sias, seconded by AnneMarie Stackiewicz. The motion passed.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

As of December 30, 2025, we have \$15,103 in our Money Market accounts (S&T Bank), \$27,767 in our checking account (S&T Bank), \$11,970 in one Certificate of Deposit (S&T Bank), \$52,258 in a second Certificate of Deposit (S&T Bank) and \$75,815 invested with Fidelity (Wealth Enhancement Advisors), making our total funds \$212,690. We received \$4940 in revenue in December and had expenses of \$5646. A motion was made by Ann Wade, seconded by Wendy Davis, to approve the December treasurer's report. The motion passed.

6. ITEMS FOR ACTION AND/OR INFORMATION

- We received a notification from Laura Hawkins of the Pennsylvania Greenway that Roy Weil and Mary Shaw have donated \$1000 to the Westmoreland Heritage Trail. Vicki Rudge suggested that we send them WHT t-shirts as a thank-you and the board agreed.

7. OLD BUSINESS

- Stan reminded anyone who wants to attend the RTC retreat this month to notify him by tomorrow (Jan 9). Twelve chapter members are signed up to attend at this time.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- a) Stan announced that a new WHT Strategic Plan is in the planning stage for the next five years. Anyone interested in assisting with this should get in touch with him.

- b) Chad Emahizer presented a draft 2026 budget to the board, with estimates for various categories of income and expenses. The board is encouraged to give feedback on the draft to Chad or Stan, and then a revised version will be presented at the February meeting for adoption.
- c) Sign-up for pesticide training is being offered by the RTC. Interested volunteers should contact Rick Fisher or Michael Bertonaschi.
- d) Stan plans to submit a \$3200 grant request to the Pittsburgh Foundation for a pressure washer to assist with bench and kiosk maintenance.
- e) Stan, Rob and Malcolm met with Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation to strategize ways to move forward on the 'Middle Gap', particularly in regard to land acquisition and projects.

9. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a) Real Estate / Acquisitions & Engineering/Construction –PennDOT requested some additional changes to the reimbursement agreement for GAI Consultants, so that will need to be re-approved by the Westmoreland County Commissioners before the design work can start.
- b) Public Relations – Vicki Rudge reports that WHT now has 4004 Facebook followers, 203 on Instagram and 164 on X. The kiosks at Carson Braun and Roberts Parcel will need a new kiosk maintainer – please contact Vicki if interested. Planning is under way for the 2026 Poker Run Festival which will be held on June 6 in Trafford B-Y Park. Please plan to join us that day!
- c) Our current membership is up to 572 active members. Our annual February membership drive will kick off soon with the Grand Prize being two tickets to Comedy Night.
- d) Maintenance – Rick Fisher and Michael Bertonaschi report that not much activity has occurred on the trail. Rick reminded all volunteers to turn in their donated hours to the secretary.
- e) Fundraising – Rob Cronauer reminded everyone that Comedy Night will be held on March 7 at the Casino at Westmoreland Mall. Please donate auction baskets and encourage any businesses you know to become sponsors. Tickets can be purchased at County Parks and at the Lamplighter Restaurant in Delmont. Trail members who want tickets to sell should contact Rob.
- f) Trail Ambassadors – Steve Ising will be the new Trail Ambassador Chair for 2026. He is planning to offer a training session for new and old volunteers at the WCD Barn on Monday March 16. Penn Township Ambulance will also offer a first aid / CPR training session for trail ambassadors as well as for maintenance volunteers. This may be combined with chain-saw safety training.
- g) Regional Trail Corporation – no report
- h) Municipal Representatives:
 - Michael Bertonaschi reported that no final agreement has yet been made between Friends of the Riverfront and Norfolk Southern Railroad due to the upcoming merger.
 - Stan Rudge thanked the Penn Township Commissioners for their support of the trail.
 - Darren Miller reported that as a new Murrysville Council member, he will now be serving as a liaison between Murrysville Council and Murrysville Parks Department.

10. Next month's WHT Meeting will be held remotely via a Zoom link on February 12, 2026 at 7 PM.

11. On a motion by Rob Cronauer, seconded by Chad Emahizer, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Rose Cercone, Secretary

Westmoreland Heritage Trail 2026 Event Calendar

Month	Date	Time	Event	Location
JAN	8	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Zoom
FEB	12	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Zoom
MAR	7	6 - 9 PM	WHT Comedy Night at LIVE Casino	Greensburg
	12	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Zoom
APR	9	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
MAY	14	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
JUN	6	9 AM – 2 PM	Community Festival / Poker Run	Trafford B-Y
	11	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
JUL	9	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
AUG	13	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
SEP	10	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
OCT	8	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
NOV	12	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
DEC	10	6 PM	WHT Volunteer Appreciation Night	WCD