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**Meeting Minutes December 12, 2019 (Draft V2)
Lamplighter Restaurant, Export, PA**

1. Meeting Attendees:
 - a. Board: (17) Rob Cronauer, Gordon Conn, Tom Dittman, Eileen Elicker, Rick Fisher, Alyssa Harden, Ted Hayes, Monica Meehan, Mary Grace Muster, Dorothea Motto, John Nagoda, Bill O'Hara, Rey Peduzzi, Jeff Richards, Stan Rudge, Vicki Rudge, Anna Marie Stackiewicz
 - b. Malcolm Sias, Director, Westmoreland County Parke and Recreation
 - c. Guests: Michael Bertonaschi, Matt Cmar, Wendy Davis, Nick DeFelice, Chad Emahiser, Ed Gerstenhaber, Ginny Hayes, Neal and Erica Hart, Pat and Ron Hoffman, Matt Kundrat, Ron Markos, David Nigro, Pat Norton, Chris Panichella, John Ruccio, Crystal Szogi, Bob Stakiewicz, Dee O'Hara, Ann Wade, Cindy Wittman Lois Weaver, and others
2. President Rudge led the recitation of "The Pledge of Allegiance", and then called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.
3. President's Comments
 - a. President Rudge distributed copies of the "WHT 2019 Accomplishments" to all attendees. The list required three pages of text and did not include everything. 2019 was a very busy year. (List Attached).
 - b. A Huge WHT Thank You to all who contributed Volunteer Hours to make the above accomplishments a reality.
 - c. President Rudge, with heavy heart, read Rey Peduzzi's December 4, 2019 Resignation Letter effective December 12, 2019. Rey, a WHT Founding Father, was immeasurably thanked for his 20+ year's service as Trafford Borough Representative and Fund Raising Chairman. Rey was presented with a Plaque expressing the WHT's appreciation and received a "Standing Ovation" from all the meeting attendees. Rey humbly thanked everyone, was grateful for all the new friends he made, and thanked his family "Non-Volunteer Volunteers" and everyone who helped make his 20 year dream of extending the trail from Saltsburg to Trafford a come true.
 - d. President Rudge then reported that on December 5th, 2019, a group of eight volunteer Trail Ambassadors were certified and thanked them for their service.
4. Introductions – Two guest presenters were introduced who would be talking about The Westinghouse Valley Connector, Linking the WHT with the Great Allegheny Passage.
 - a. Courtney Mahronich Vita, Friends of the Riverfront, Director of Trail Development
 - b. Jessica Mooney, County of Allegheny, Manager of Special Projects.
5. Public Input - None

6. Approval of Minutes - A motion was made to approve the November 14th meeting minutes as published, by O'Hara, 2nd by Conn, Motion carried, minutes approved.
7. Treasurer's Report – Jack Maher
 - a. Treasurer Jack Maher and Assistant Treasurer Todd Tansimore were absent; consequently, no official Treasurer's Report was presented.
 - b. Todd Tansimore, reported by email \$72,528.52 in total assets.
 - c. Todd Tansimore reported by email that the S&T Checking Account has \$13,802.06, The Money Market Certificate \$40,256.72 and Capital Equipment \$27,124.64.
 - d. The Treasurer's Report awaits approval pending official presentation.
8. RTC Report _ Rob Cronauer
 - a. The RTC is asking for an update of our Articles of Association, essentially the WHT operating By-Laws, under the auspices of the RTC last renewed in 2017.
 - b. The Update will be discussed in the spring of 2020.
9. TAT Report – No Report.
10. Committee Reports
 - a. Real Estate and Acquisitions – Malcolm Sias
 - i. The Trail is has signed agreement with First Oak Energies for land that will, in part, connect Delmont (West of Rt.66) with Export. The Phase One Environmental study is complete and Title Search and Surveying has begun.
 - ii. No progress on the Norfolk Southern land acquisition to complete the Trail for B-Y Park to downtown Trafford.
 - b. Engineering and Construction – Jeff Richards
 - i. DCNR Grants have been approved for monies to purchase both of the above parcels when they become available.
 - ii. The “Middle Gap” (Four miles between Delmont and Export) Feasibility Study will be started January 2020.
 - c. Funding Raising – Rob Cronauer
 - i. Our 2020 Comedy Night February 15th will again be at Colton Hall, Claridge, PA.
 - ii. Rob asked for volunteers to sell tickets, post flyers, solicit donations and canvass businesses for sponsorships.
 - iii. Advertising Flyers will be available soon
 - d. Public Relations – Vicki Rudge
 - i. Facebook followers now number 1855.
 - ii. Alyssa Harden and Vicki Rudge have collaborated on the development of a “widget” that feeds news from Facebook to the WHT website and eliminates the need to cut and paste and email info.
 - iii. Tom Dittman was thanked for manning a WHT booth at a Sardis Event.
 - iv. A quarterly WHT Newsletter is being planned and will be distributed electronically.
 - v. All are reminded that WHT Logo Apparel makes a Great Christmas Gift.
 - e. Membership – Gordon Conn
 - i. The WHT has a 2019 record of 286 members. Thanks to all those who have joined in support of the trail.

- ii. With the “Early Bird” membership drive ongoing, membership for 2020 is already at 110. Please keep your membership subscriptions coming.
 - f. Trail Ambassadors (Monitors) – President Rudge
 - i. President Rudge reported 40 volunteer hours of trail service in November.
 - ii. The December 5, 2019 Training class certified and recertified eight Trail Ambassadors for 2020.
 - g. Trail Maintenance – Tom Dittman reported that all the trees along the trail are cooperating as none have fallen this month. The Trail is in GREAT shape!
 - h. Delmont Visionary Committee – No Report.
11. Old Business – Stan Rudge
- a. Any outstanding “Board Member Expectations” documents need to be signed and returned to President Rudge.
 - b. Norwin Air Force JROTC, requested March 21st to hold their annual Bataan March on the trail. There will be a 5K, 10K, half marathon, and a 14 mile run, walk, or bike ride. March for Parks is March 21st, so they rescheduled to April 11th. All Donations will benefit The Michael J Novosel Foundation. A motion to approve the April 11th Trail use by Peduzzi, 2nd by Hayes, Motion carried, Trail use approved.
 - c. The Trail Use Request by the State Farm agent in Export, PA. to hold a 5K Charity Walk/Run for May 16th, 2020 was approved by Board Email Voting December 3rd, 2019
 - d. The At Large Board member 3-year terms of Jack Maher and Rick Fisher are expiring and they are seeking reelection. At present, they are running unopposed in the January election.
 - e. An “At Large” Board position is vacant with the resignation of Megan Nelson. The term expires after 2021. Nominees to fill the position are Pat Norton and Ann Wade for the January election.
 - f. All Board Officer Positions are up for reelection and the current officers are running unopposed for the January elections.
 - g. Additional nominations can still be submitted.
 - h. Trafford Borough will be contacted by President Rudge seeking a replacement for retiring Representative Rey Peduzzi.
12. New Business
- a. Malcolm Sias reported Olgeby Park “gently used” Toro Workman MDs with electric dump are available for purchase at greatly discounted pricing. Stan Rudge and Ted Hays and others will inspect them at E.H. Griffith Co. and decide if the WHT should acquire one or two.
 - b. The Annual March for Parks will be March 21st at the SportZone in Murrysville. Please plan your Team Participation.
 - c. The Tom Washburn Calendar Slide Show highlighting the Flora and Fauna of the Trail was presented during the meeting on a display TV. Sadly, timing and logistics did not work out for a 2020 printing. The Calendar will be revisited for 2021.
 - d. The WHT gave a Huge Thank You to Ann Wade and Monica Meehan for arranging the post meeting Trail Christmas Party.
 - e. Westinghouse Valley Connector Presentation
 - i. Courtney Mahronich Vita and Jessica Mooney were then given the “Floor” for their Presentation.

- ii. Matthew Kundrat was thanked for all his work and input to the project.
- iii. A consulting firm, WSP is under contract to collect all information and organize it into a feasible plan describing the “right-of-ways” needed, environmental impact, and probable cost.
- iv. Allegheny County already owns some of the needed property, but the railroads CSX and Norfolk Southern may be significant hurdles.
- v. The Municipality of Monroeville is a huge supporter of the Trail.
- vi. A Municipality Kick-off meeting and Public meetings are planned for 2020.
- vii. Please contact Jessica or Courtney if you can help. (Contact Info Attached)



viii.

- f. A door prize provided by Panera Bread for 9 months of complimentary bread was won by Anna Marie Stackewicz.

On a motion by Elicker, 2nd Meehan, the meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.
The next meeting will be on January 9th at a location to be determined.

All then enjoyed camaraderie, Holiday Festivities, crudités, hors d'oeuvres, stuffed peppers, Swedish meatballs and spinach dip catered by The Lamplighter Restaurant and scrumptious homemade cookies baked by WHT members. A Huge WHT Thank You to all who brought the cookies.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Sopko,
Provisional Secretary

Attachments:



Westmoreland Heritage Trail Chapter of the Regional Trail Corporation

The Officers and Board Members would like to say "Thank You" to all our Chapter Members and Trail Enthusiasts. Without your continued support, volunteer time, membership subscriptions, and donations, the accomplishments listed below would not have been possible.

2019 Major Accomplishments

- The completion and Grand Opening of an additional 3.4 Miles of trail from Roberts Trail Access, Murrysville to Lincoln Avenue, Export on August 17th.
- A huge successful Trail Towns Festival Event was held in June. So successful, it has been scheduled as an annual event.
- The Installation of seventeen informational Historical Markers from Saltsburg to B-Y Park, Trafford. A Huge Thank You to Karen Rose Cercone for leading the project and the Pittsburgh Foundation for a funding Grant that made the endeavor possible.



Phase IV Grand Opening Murrysville to Export



Trail Towns Festival



One of Seventeen Historical Markers

- The membership drive during the Trail Towns Festival Event subscribed over 50 new WHT members.
- Trail Mile Posts added every quarter mile on the newly open section from Lincoln Avenue, Export (Mile 12 3/4) to Roberts Trail Access, Murrysville (Mile 16).
- Six stream bank stabilization sites along the new section (Phase IV) of the trail and planted of 21 trees.
- Established five "Maintenance Zones" with maintenance supervisors to better allocate maintenance resources and volunteers to keep the trail in pristine condition.
- Had a record number of volunteers who freely contributed to trail improvement totaling over 2,372 hours in 2019.
- The "WHT Awesome Volunteers" Annual Volunteer Recognition dinner was held in September.
- A remarkable number of patrons stepped forward and have gone above and beyond donating to Westmoreland Heritage Trail. Thank You!

- The WHT's most successful ever "Comedy Night" with record breaking attendance and fund raising was held in February at Colton Hall in Claridge, Pennsylvania.
- Another successful 2019 "March for Parks".
- The expedient repair of the trail during two events of unprecedented rainfall and flooding of the Turtle Creek Valley.
- Many thanks to Urban Brothers Construction for their expert help restoring the trail after the first event.
- Many Thanks to Westmoreland Parks and Recreation for assisting in the clean-up and restoring the trail base after both events.
- Westmoreland Conservation District contracted to have the log jam removed from the creek in the area of flooding.
- The Delmont Visionary Committee was added to our trail planning and vision for a future trail spur into Delmont.
- A record number of Membership subscribers. Thanks to all that joined and helped to achieve a record number of members increasing our ranks from 140 in 2018 to 281 in 2019.
- Ongoing discussions continue with Norfolk Southern Railroad to purchase the "right-of-way" to extend the Trail into downtown Trafford.
- WHT informational booths were staffed by our Public Relations Committee and Community Representatives, at the community festivals in Monroeville, Slickville, Export, Penn Township and Delmont. WHT volunteers also attended the Murrysville Halloween walk on the trail and attended Forbes Regional first Employee Safety Fair.



Volunteers

Trail Enthusiasts

- Once again, WHT volunteers "Placed First" in fundraising parking cars at the Westmoreland County Arts and Heritage Festival.
- Achieved the milestone of over "1,800 followers" on the "Westmoreland Heritage Trail" Facebook page. Followers continue to increase each month.
- The continued increase of "views" on the <https://WestmorelandHeritageTrail.com> website and the added ability on the website to subscribe to membership, purchase Memorial Benches, Mile Post Sponsorships, and Trail Logo Clothing.
- A new format for Milepost Sponsorship has been implemented.
- Thirteen Memorial Benches were installed this year.
- Eagle Scout project planted fourteen trees along the trail near Trafford.

- Finished the last of four bridges on Phase IV in February in anticipation of the completion of the new section of trail in late summer.



Before



After

- The Initiation of a Phase One environmental study to ascertain the impact of the "Middle Gap" four miles of Trail between Export and Delmont.
- The RTC has signed an agreement with Great Oak Energy to purchase property as a start for The WHT "Middle Gap" trail from Export to Delmont.
- Additional Stihl Power equipment was purchased to help keep the knotweed "at bay" along the trail.
- The WHT is assisting Monroeville to complete a study to build parking access and a pedestrian bridge from Valley Park on Abers Creek road to the WHT Trail.
- Thanks to all communities and Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation for their unwavering support along the trail.
- Other accomplishments too numerous to itemize, but silently completed!