



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 February Board Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2024

Zoom

Meeting Attendees:

- Board (15): Mike Banda, Karen Rose Cercone, Rob Cronauer, Wendy Davis, Jerry Detar, Chad Emahizer, Elizabeth Ferri, Rick Fisher, Geri Lombardo, Tom Marcin, Chris Panichella, Stan Rudge, Malcolm Sias, AnnaMarie Stackiewicz, Ann Wade
- Absent Board (6): Michael Bertonaschi, Kerry Jobe, Monica Meehan, Darrin Miller, Pat Norton, Vicki Rudge
- Guests and Members: Amy Imblum, Ron Markos, Jeff Richards, Bob Stackiewicz

1. The Zoom meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.
2. President's Comments – Stan took a few minutes to remember Noel Grimm, one of the founding members of the trail.
3. Public Input/Introductions – none
4. Approval of Minutes
 - a. A motion to approve the January 11, 2024, minutes was made by Jerry Detar and seconded Ann Wade. The motion carried and the minutes were approved.
5. Treasurer's Report – Chris Panichella
 - a. As of January 31, 2024, we have \$54,128.66 in our Money Market accounts (S&T Bank), \$83,066.19 in our checking account (S&T Bank) and \$53,586.48 invested (Wealth Enhancement Advisors) for a total of \$191,355.66 in current assets. We have \$49,782.28 in capital equipment and \$18,971.02 in fixed assets, making our total assets \$210,326.68.
 - b. The treasurer will be looking around to see if we can find a banking institution that gives us a better return on our money. More information will be presented to the board by May.
 - c. A motion to approve the January 2024 Treasurer's Reports was made by Annemarie Stackiewicz and seconded by Karen Rose Cercone. The motion carried, and the Treasurer's Report was approved.

6. ITEMS FOR ACTION AND/OR INFORMATION

- a. Official Correspondence – Marye Phillips, who was working on a new effort to install pet waste stations along the trail, sent an email to let us know that she was not able to find sufficient support for maintenance and waste disposal. A thank you letter will be sent from the trail.
- b. Upcoming Events – A motion was made by Jerry Detar, seconded by Mike Banda to approve the application for the Norwin AFJROTC Bataan Memorial Charity Walk on April 27, 2024 in Zones 4 and 5. The AFJROTC will be reminded to pick up their signs following the event.

7. OLD BUSINESS

- a. February 10, 2024, Comedy Night Update – Rob Cronauer reported that the event is sold out. Set up is Friday Feb 9 at 2 PM at Colton Hall. People will start arriving at 5:30 on Saturday. Cleanup after the event would be appreciated by any board members who can stay.
- b. Tractor Delivery Update – Rick Fisher reported that the new tractor should arrive around the end of March.
- c. Future WHT Maintenance Facility – Stan Rudge asked the committee that is exploring a future facility to continue their work in the coming year.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- a. New Volunteer Agreement and Liability Waiver from the RTC – Stan Rudge will clarify with the RTC what Item 3 means in respect to property damage.
- b. Spring Membership Drive – Wendy Davis reported that we have gotten 3 new members and 37 renewing members in the eight days that the spring membership drive has been running.
- c. Corporate Sponsorship Program – Stan Rudge thanked the municipal representatives for suggesting potential corporate sponsors in their areas. Ten initial letters will be sent out this month, with future companies solicited as Trailside Sponsors.
- d. Website Redesign – Stan and Vicki Rudge will take over maintenance of the WHT website in the short term, while Karen Rose Cercone revives the trail's quarterly newsletter. A website redesign committee will be formed to help direct an overhaul of the website format.
- e. Soliciting ideas for improvements and future projects for the WHT – Stan Rudge requested input from the board on possible future projects to improve the trail. Suggestions made so far include painting benches, doing an entrance in Saltsburg, renovating mile markers in Zone 1 and 2, and doing some kind of memorial for Noel Grimm. Other ideas should be directed to Stan.

9. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. **Real Estate, Planning, Engineering and Construction** – Jeff Richards & Malcolm Sias
 - The Kacin land donation agreement is with Richard Kacin's solicitor at this time. The White Valley Social Club easement agreement is still with the county solicitor.
 - Malcom Sias reported that the Zone 1 and 2 resurfacing project is mostly complete. There are still some small final improvements that need to be made.
 - Malcolm Sias also reported that the RTC finalized a sales agreement for the five acres of parcel 10 around Sara Steele railhead that was formerly on a long-term lease. The sale will close once the subdivision plan has been completed. An agreement has also been made to acquire a parcel across the road to protect the viewshed around Sara Steele from development. The former owners have historical photos to share and Karen Rose Cercone will work to develop a new historical plaque for the Sara Steele trailhead.
- b. **Public Relations** – Vicki Rudge (report by Wendy Davis)
 - The WHT's Facebook followers now stand at 3586 with our Twitter followers at 169 and Instagram at 73. The WHT website got 309 unique visitors and 799 views in December.
 - Plans for the Trail Town Festival are coming along, with food trucks identified and some issues are still being worked out at the site.
 - Malcolm Sias will again organize an 'All-Trails Team' at the March for Parks, which will be held on March 23 at Twin Lakes Park.
- c. **Membership** – Wendy Davis
 - As of today, we have 469 active members. Wendy suggested that a list of 2023 trail accomplishments be drawn up so she can send it out to new and renewing members.

d. **Maintenance** – Rick Fisher and Chad Emahizer

- A tree was cut up recently and the trail seems to be in good shape and open throughout its length. At mile 5.5, there are some stones that came down near the trail.
- A list of WHT equipment and structures was submitted to the RTC so they can negotiate a new insurance policy.
- The repaired Ventrac is running well. Tom Marcin will install vents in that unit to reduce condensation.
- The gravel lot opposite Saunders Station is not really able to be enlarged due to swampy ground behind it.

e. **Fundraising** – Rob Cronauer

- See report under Old Business above.

f. **Trail Ambassadors** – Stan Rudge

- The ambassadors have been monitoring the trail throughout the past month. They report some maintenance issues with Portajohns. Chris Panichella will notify the vendor.

g. **Regional Trail Corporation / Trans-Allegheny Trails** – Stan Rudge

- The RTC has moved forward with the purchase of the parcels around Sara Steele Trail Head

h. **Municipal Representatives** – no reports

10. Next month's WHT Meeting will be held over Zoom on March 14. The Zoom link will be sent out to trail members and board members along with the agenda in early March.

11. On a motion by Malcolm Sias, seconded by Chad Emahizer, the meeting was adjourned at 7:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Rose Cercone, Secretary

2024 WHT Board Meeting Dates and Locations

January 11 (Remote meeting on Zoom)
 February 8 (Remote meeting on Zoom)
 March 14 (Remote meeting on Zoom)
 April 11 (Lamplighter, Delmont)
 May 9 (Pedora Park, Export)
 June 13 (Pedora Park, Export)

July 11 (Pedora Park, Export)
 August 8 (Pedora Park, Export)
 September 12 (Member Night TBA)
 October 10 (Lamplighter, Delmont)
 November 14 (Lamplighter, Delmont)
 December 12 (Lamplighter, Delmont)

Westmoreland Heritage Trail 2024 Event Calendar

FEBRUARY

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
Sat, Feb 10	6 PM	10 th Annual WHT Comedy Night	Colton Hall, Claridge

APRIL

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
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MAY

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
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JUNE

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
Sat June 1	9 AM – 2 PM	WHT Festival and Poker Run	Murrysville Community Center and Zone 4

JULY

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
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AUGUST

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
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SEPTEMBER

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
Thur Sept 12	6 PM	WHT Volunteer Dinner	TBA
Sat Sept 14	9 AM - 2 PM	Wealth Management Trail Walk	Export to Carson Braun

OCTOBER

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
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NOVEMBER

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
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DECEMBER

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
Thur Dec 12	7 PM	WHT Christmas Gathering	Lamplighter