



*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](http://www.westmorelandheritagetrail.com))*

## **WHT March Board Meeting Minutes**

March 12, 2026 via Zoom

### **Meeting Attendees:**

- Board (17): Mike Banda, Michael Bertonaschi, Karen Rose Cercone, Rob Cronauer, Wendy Davis, Jerry Detar, Chad Emahizer, Rick Fisher, Steve Ising, Pat Norton, Chris Panichella, Stan Rudge, Vicki Rudge, Brooke Russick, Malcolm Sias, Annamarie Stackiewicz, Ann Wade
- Absent Board (4): Liz Ferri, Tom Marcin, Monica Meehan, Darren Miller
- Guests and Members (9): Jeff Richards, Barb Coulter, Greg Imblum, Becky Maners, Robyn and Terry Martin, Bob Stackiewicz, Emily Vogt, Dale West.

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

### **1. READING OF WHT MISSION STATEMENT**

**2. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS** – Stan thanked Rob Cronauer for his great work on Comedy Night.

**3. PUBLIC INPUT/INTRODUCTIONS** – Robyn and Terry Martin introduced themselves as new members and volunteers.

### **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the February 12, 2026 meeting were approved on a motion by Jerry Detar, seconded by Chad Emahizer. The motion passed.

### **5. TREASURER'S REPORT**

As of February 28, 2026, we have \$15,145 in our Money Market account (S&T Bank), \$58,782 in our checking account (S&T Bank), \$14,228 in one Certificate of Deposit (S&T Bank), \$50,000 in a second Certificate of Deposit (S&T Bank) and \$77,538 invested with Fidelity (Wealth Enhancement Advisors), making our total assets \$215,692. We received \$11,198 in revenue in February and had expenses of \$504. A motion was made by Karen Rose Cercone, seconded by Jerry Detar, to approve the February treasurer's report. The motion passed. Ann Wade made an additional motion, seconded by Michael Bertonaschi, to reserve \$30,000 of trail funds without donor restriction for trail maintenance opportunities and emergencies. This motion also passed.

### **6. ITEMS FOR ACTION AND/OR INFORMATION**

a) The following events were approved on a motion by Michael Bertonaschi, seconded by Jerry Detar. The motion passed.

- Pure Grace Fitness / Burn Boot Camp 5K Race (Sun April 19, 8-11 AM, Zone 4)
- Norwin AF-JR ROTC Boosters Annual Bataan March (Sat April 25, 8 AM - 4 PM, Zones 4 & 5)

### **7. OLD BUSINESS**

a) 2025 Major WHT Accomplishments – Stan Rudge presented an illustrated summary of the accomplishments the trail completed in 2025

b) T.R.A.I.L.S. project update –Rick Fisher noted that he has received information from PEC for the project and is getting ready to use it. Michael Bertonaschi thanked the members of the Maintenance committee who viewed the chain saw safety video and offered to send it to

anyone else who is interested. Michael would also like to create an emergency contact list for all the volunteers who participate in trail maintenance.

- c) Maintenance Equipment Purchase and Preparation for Spring – Rick Fisher reported that so far, the grant funds have been used to purchase a larger chain saw and an inverter. Power-washing equipment has not yet been purchased, but will be soon.
- d) Joyriders Update – Stan Rudge will be picking up the trail’s new Joyrider Assisted Riding Bike. It will be stored in the Murrysville trail building, in the space where the Murrysville Police used to store their equipment. Stan has asked Murrysville if the bike can be stored and charged in the Visitor Center during the summer months, to make it easily accessible for use. We should hear from them in the next few months. WHT now needs a Chair and a committee to schedule, train and use the bike to help make our trail more accessible to all.

## **8. NEW BUSINESS**

- a) 2026 March for Parks – Malcolm Sias noted that this fundraising event will be held on March 28 at Twin Lakes Park and will benefit all of the parks and trails in Westmoreland County. WHT has received significant donations in the past which have been used as matching funds for grants. Malcolm encouraged everyone to sign up online as part of the All-Trails team and meet folks from other trails at the events. Registration starts at 10 AM and the March is followed by lunch.
- b) CNX Day of Service for Zones 1 and 2 – Rob Cronauer inspected the trail from Route 819 to Saltsburg to locate the best projects for CNX to assist the trail with a Day of Caring. Rob is choosing a date in cooperation with CNX and will create a list of possible projects. He asked folks who are interested to help organize that day, especially with painting and fixing fences.
- c) Trail improvements for Zones 4 and 5 – Malcolm Sias reported that County Public Works has been waiting for better weather and also for the FTMSA sewer line project. The sewer line project has now been delayed until November of 2026, when the trail from MSA to the sewage plant will be closed for the winter. In the intervening time, the county commissioners permitted Public Works to use an emergency procedure to gather quotes from three contractors for repairing the bad trail sections from Export to MSA, and also from the Sewage Plant to Trafford. This would include resurfacing the worse sections plus installing asphalt at the Big Bend where the trail floods constantly. A contractor should be selected by April, and the work should take about a week once it finally gets approved. In addition, the County would like WHT to clear out any culverts and gutters in those sections. Nick at EverReady Contracting has agreed to do the work, but will need some help from trail volunteers to identify the areas of focus. Michael Bertonaschi made a motion, seconded by Chad Emahizer, to approve up to \$10,000 to cover the cost of the culvert repair. The motion passed.

## **9. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- a) Real Estate / Acquisitions & Engineering/Construction – Jeff Richards shared the land development plan proposed for the parcel adjacent to the Veterans Memorial Bridge which has been purchased by the All-American Baseball Center and they are planning to do a major development there of baseball fields plus parking. Trafford Borough’s Planning Commission will meet on March 19 at 7 PM at Trafford Borough Building to consider approval of this plan. Jeff suggested that the Westmoreland Heritage Trail submit a letter asking for consideration of the future connection between the WHT and the proposed Turtle Creek Connector Trail. A motion was made by Michael Bertonaschi, seconded by Ann Wade, to send a letter to Trafford Borough asking them to take the future connection with the Turtle Creek Connector Trail into consideration when reviewing the proposed development plan. The motion passed.

In February, the Steering Committee for the future Route 66 Trailhead and connection met with representatives from the Municipality of Murrysville and shared some of the concepts that GAI has prepared for the development of the site. The Committee is now organizing a similar

meeting with Salem Township Planning Commission tentatively scheduled for Wednesday March 25 at 10 AM.

- b) Public Relations – Vicki Rudge reported that WHT now has 4021 Facebook followers, 211 on Instagram and 162 on X. Planning continues for the Poker Run Festival on June 6, 2026. Merchandise sales at Comedy Night came to \$720 including some sales via the new credit card device. Vicki thanked Chad for his new volunteer recruitment application which is working well.
  - c) Website – Chad Emahizer noted that views are up to 1745 this month, with 692 unique visitors thanks to the Membership Drive.
  - d) Membership – Wendy Davis reports that we had 31 new and renewing memberships as a result of our membership drive so that we now have 580 active members. The winners of the Membership Raffle were contacted and prizes are being delivered.
  - e) Maintenance – Rick Fisher reported that he and Malcolm Sias cut up a large tree this morning that came down due to the strong winds yesterday. Rick has prepared quotes for contractors to prepare and install new gates. He and Stan Rudge will be working on that project in the near future. Rick also noted that the volunteers who have been trained on weed spraying application might incur personal fines if there were to be an accident, although there is a low risk of anything major. A motion was made by Rick Fisher, seconded by Mike Banda, for the trail to cover any fines that might be incurred. The motion passed.
  - f) Fundraising – Rob said that Comedy Night was a success and thanked everyone who helped out, especially Chris Panichella who did a lot of work behind the scenes. Rob gave some preliminary estimates of the funds raised but will have a more complete estimate at the April meeting once the charity bingo numbers come in after the event. This was Rob’s final time chairing the event, but he is willing to mentor anyone who wants to take over chairing it in the future.
  - g) Trail Ambassadors – Steve Ising reported that a total of 42 hours of trail ambassador service were contributed in the month of February. Trail Ambassador Training and Refresher Course will be held at the WCD Barn on Monday March 16. Twenty people have offered to become Trail Ambassadors, thanks to Chad’s website application and Vicki’s Facebook promotion. Steve is hopeful that most of them will attend the training along with volunteers from Five Star Trail.
  - h) Regional Trail Corporation / Trans-Allegheny Trail – Stan Rudge reported that thanks to the RTC and the Schwab Charitable fund, WHT may receive an AED which can be installed at Roberts Parcel. Trans-Allegheny Trails met yesterday and discussed the gaps that limit regional connectivity between trails. The Roaring Run Trail noted that the third week of April will be a great time to view trilliums along the trail, and they are sponsoring an evening 5K run/walk. The Pennsylvania Greenways Conference will be held in Indiana County on August 6 and 7.
  - i) Municipal Representatives: Annamarie Stackiewicz reported that Delmont is working on their feasibility study and is requesting public input via an online survey that can be accessed on the Delmont Borough website.
- 10.** Next month’s WHT Board Meeting will be held in person at the Lamplighter Restaurant in Delmont on April 9, 2026 at 7 PM.
- 11.** On a motion by Rick Fisher, seconded by Chad Emahizer, the meeting was adjourned at 8:22 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
	19	8 -11 AM	Burn Boot Camp 5K Race & MDA Fundraiser	Zone 4
	25	8 AM – 4 PM	Norwin AF-JROTC Boosters Annual Bataan March	Zones 4 and 5
MAY	14	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
JUN	6	9 AM – 2 PM	Poker Run Festival	Trafford B-Y
	11	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
JUL	9	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
	12	7 AM–12 PM	GCGX Murrysville Monster Race	Zone 4
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
	31	8AM-11AM	GCXC Racing Trick or Trot 5K	Zone 4
NOV	12	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
DEC	10	6 PM	WHT Volunteer Appreciation Night	WCD