



*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))*

## **Meeting Minutes April 13, 2023**

Lamplighter Restaurant, Delmont

### **Meeting Attendees:**

- Board (12): Karen Rose Cercone, Wendy Davis, Chad Emahizer, Rick Fisher, Dale Hollabaugh, Geri Lombardo, Pat Norton, William O’Hara, Chris Panichella, Stan and Vicki Rudge, Malcolm Sias
- Absent Board (9): Rob Cronauer, Alyssa Davis, Paul Estok, Elizabeth Ferri, Mike Ley, Monica Meehan, Kerry Jobe, AnnaMarie Stackiewicz, Ann Wade,
- Guests (14): Mike Banda, Barbara Coulter, Jim Coulter, Jerry Detar, Ginny Hayes, Jimmy Helfer, Steve Ising, Tom Marcin, Dee O’Hara, Tom Petrus, Jeff Richards, Dan Sigg, Jack Serra, John Zarod

1. President Stan Rudge led the recitation of “The Pledge of Allegiance” and then called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.
2. President’s Comments – no report
3. Public Input/Introductions – John Zarella from Boy Scout Troop 201 in Level Green introduced himself to the board. John will be working with John Ruccio to add benches to the kiosk near Parkside Creamery in Trafford, as well as some other amenities.
4. Approval of Minutes
  - a. A motion to approve the March minutes was made by Sias, seconded by O’Hara. The motion carried and the minutes were approved.
5. Treasurer’s Report – Chris Panichella
  - a. Memberships are up 496% over last year thanks to our spring membership drive. In addition, donations to the trail are up 40%. WHT received a \$10,000 Laurel Foundation Grant in March.
  - b. As of March 30, 2023, we have \$53,859.14 in the Money Market account, \$77,394.20 in the checking account, and \$53,586.48 invested for a total of \$183,639.48 in current assets. We have \$18,971.02 in fixed assets, making our total assets \$202,610.84.
  - c. A motion to approve the March 2023 Treasurer’s Report was made by Emahizer and seconded by Norton. The motion carried, and the Treasurer’s Report was approved.

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

- a. Official Correspondence
  - An official letter of support highlighting our 2022 accomplishments was transmitted to Jeff Richards for an upcoming DCNR Grant submission (to be discussed later).
- b. Upcoming Events – see attached Trail Calendar

### **7. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. March for Parks Report – Volunteers from the Westmoreland Heritage Trail, 5 Star Trail, and the Coal and Coke Trail participated in an all-trails team and helped with the event which raised over \$75,000 for the county. Donations are still coming in from the event, some of which are earmarked for the WHT’s ‘middle gap’.

- b. LSA Grant from Westmoreland County / RTC – see Standing Committee reports

## 8. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Any Board members interested in the PA Greenways and Trails Summit Sept. 15-19, 2023 Scranton, PA should contact Stan Rudge. WHT will pay registration costs for the summit.
- b. United Site Services (Port-A-Johns) Bills has billed us for the 2023 season (7 months at \$493.91 per month for a total of \$3457.37). Four of the WHT units are in the correct places, and one more needs to be relocated near Sara Steele Trail Access. If anyone has complaints or questions about the Port-A-John locations or services, let Chris Panichella know. A motion to pay for Port-a-John services for 2023 made by Norton and seconded by Sias. The motion carried.
- c. Frye garage rental (equipment and consumables) will again cost \$600.00 for 2023. A motion by O’Hara, seconded by Fisher, was made to approve this rental cost. The motion carried.
- d. A motion to approve the April 30 Burn Boot Camp 5K event on Zone 4 (approximately 50 people) was made by Emahizer and seconded by Norton. The motion carried.
- e. Heather Shearer has offered to hold a Third Annual Ted Hayes Run / Walk / Bike in the Slickville area. She is proposing to hold the fundraiser on Saturday August 26, 2023. A motion was made by Vicki Rudge and seconded by O’Hara to approve this event. The motion carried.
- f. Volunteers are needed to staff a committee for a cost estimate for the future WHT Maintenance Building which would be located in either the Murrysville or Salem Township area. Board members Panichella, Sias, Fisher, and O’Hara volunteered to serve.

## 9. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. **Real Estate, Planning, Engineering and Construction** – Jeff Richards
  - A grant proposal was submitted to DCNR to assist with the development of our trail through the Middle Gap (Zone 3). If funded, this grant would cover trail construction east and west of Route 66, so that when PennDoT eventually constructs a tunnel below Route 66, it will have trail there to connect to. Additional PennDoT funds would help cover the pre-construction survey and engineering costs, while the requested DCNR funds would underwrite the actual trail construction. The Kacin agreement east of Route 66 has been extended to September because of the delays in adjacent Dollar General construction.
  - Resurfacing of Zones 1 and 2 – Malcolm Sias reports that DCNR and the County have combined to contribute \$600,000 to fund the resurfacing the trail from Saltsburg to Rangos Trailhead. During resurfacing, improvements will be made to pipes, fences, and trail shoulders. Once the plans have been finalized, the project will be carried out in Fall 2023.
- b. **Public Relations** – Vicki Rudge
  - The WHT’s Facebook Followers now stand at 3287 with our Twitter followers at 160 and Instagram has 39 followers. The WHT website received 603 unique visitors in March with 1212 page views.
  - The 2023 Trail Town Festival will be held at Trafford B.Y. Park with the addition of a new Poker Run, a D.J., furry friend activities, fishing for the kids, food vendors, auction baskets, and community merchant/organization tables. Registration forms for the Poker Run and for sponsors and merchants can be downloaded from our website now.

c. **Membership** – Wendy Davis

- As of today, we have 410 active members. The third prize winner from our spring membership drive donated her prize to the trail. An official letter of thanks will be sent.
- A volunteer Interest Survey will be sent out to all active members to update what trail activities they would like to assist with, including the June 3 Community Festival.
- Volunteer Hours Reporting Update – Karen Rose Cercone thanked all committee chairs and officers for submitting their volunteer hours for January, February, and March. She will request hours on a monthly basis from now on. She is also exploring the possible use of a free mobile app to record volunteer hours and may need a few beta testers for that.

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

- A lot of trees came down over the past two weeks due to the recent high wind events that have impacted our region. Additional trash clean-up will occur on Saturday April 15.
- Fisher, seconded by Emahizer, made a motion to use the WHT share of the LSA Grant (amounting to \$13,250) as matching funds toward the purchase of a new John Deere 2032R Tractor with an additional \$17,218 match coming from trail funds. The motion carried.
- A motion by Fisher, seconded by Sias, would submit a grant proposal to the Pittsburgh Foundation for a front-end loader and backhoe for the 2032R Tractor. The motion carried.
- A motion by Fisher, seconded by Sias, would include the purchase of a finish mower for the existing Ventrac in the Pittsburgh Foundation request. This would require a matching donation of \$2563 from WHT funds. The motion carried.

e. **Fundraising** – Rob Cronauer

- No report.

f. **Trail Ambassadors** – Stan Rudge

- Our current trail ambassadors traveled 79.5 hours / 491 miles in the month of March.
- A training for new trail ambassadors will be held on Tuesday, April 25 at 6 PM at the Westmoreland Conservation District Building. Contact Stan Rudge if interested.

g. **Municipal Representatives** – various

- No report

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

- The RTC met last month. Repaving will be done on the GAP trail near the Waterfront in conjunction with the WHT trail resurfacing. Some pipeline construction is also planned for the GAP trail in the fall when the river levels are low.
- The RTC will be developing an e-Bike policy at an upcoming meeting, and our trail will follow their lead on publicizing the new regulations.
- The TransAllegheny Trails are expanding with some new additions to the Ghost Town Trail. At this time, the TAT includes 154.1 miles with all trails added together.

10. Next month's WHT Board meeting will take place on May 11 at 7 PM at Pedora Park, Wilson Road at Old William Penn Hwy, Export (rain or shine).

11. On a motion by Emahizer, seconded by Fisher, the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Rose Cercone, Secretary

## 2023 Calendar of Events on the Westmoreland Heritage Trail

### APRIL

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
Sat April 22	8 AM - Noon	Dustin Norris Memorial Race	Zone 4
Tues April 25	6 PM	WHT Trail Ambassador Training	Westmoreland Conservation District
Sat April 29	8 AM – 3 PM	Norwin Air Force Junior ROTC	Zones 4 and 5
Sun April 30	7:30–11:30 AM	Burn Boot Camp MDA 5K Race	Zone 4

### MAY

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
Thur May 4	All Day	Trail Life Troop 2717 Export National Day of Prayer	Zone 4

### JUNE

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
Sat June 3	9 AM – 2 PM	WHT Festival and Poker Run	B-Y Park and Zone 5
Fri June 16	10 AM	Joy Rider Bike Ride	Roberts Trail Access / Zone 4

**JULY** - *Nothing at this time.*

### AUGUST

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
Sat Aug 12	TBD	Slickville Centennial Challenge	Zone 1
Sat Aug 19	All Day	Export Ethnic Festival	Zone 4
Sat Aug 26	All Day	Ted Hayes Memorial	Zone 1

**SEPTEMBER** - *Nothing at this time.*

### OCTOBER

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
Sat Oct 14	7– 11 AM	Halloween Hot Foot Race	Zone 4
Sun Oct 15	TBD	Witches' Ride	Zone 4

**NOVEMBER & DECEMBER** - *Nothing at this time.*