



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 April Board Meeting Minutes

April 10, 2025

Lamplighter Restaurant, Delmont PA

Meeting Attendees:

- Board (16): Mike Banda, Karen Rose Cercone, Rob Cronauer, Wendy Davis, Jerry Detar, Chad Emahizer, Liz Ferri, Rick Fisher, Geri Lombardo, Darrin Miller, Chris Panichella, Stan Rudge, Vicki Rudge, Malcolm Sias, AnnaMarie Stackiewicz, Ann Wade
- Absent Board (5): Michael Bertonaschi, Kerry Jobe, Monica Meehan, Tom Marcin, Pat Norton
- Guests and Members (16): Gael Carns, Barb Coulter, Jim Coulter, Sarah Colligan, Tim Dunn, Mike Grimaldi, Elizabeth Healy, Chris Leo, Tim Leriots, Alexandra Long (PEC), Courtney Mahronich Vita (FOTR), Patrick O'Toole, Jeff Richards, John Ruccio, Bob Stackiewicz, Lois Weaver

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM.

1. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS – none

2. PUBLIC INPUT/INTRODUCTIONS – Courtney Mahronich Vita from Friends of the Riverfront, and Alexandria Long from the Pennsylvania Environmental Council introduced themselves.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. The minutes from the March 13, 2025 meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Jerry Detar, seconded by Chad Emahizer.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT – Chris Panichella

- a. New and renewed memberships in March 2025 amounted to \$170. Donations came in at \$405 for the month. Additional Comedy Night income of \$6,145 plus miscellaneous income of \$100 added up to a total revenue of \$6820. Expenses for March included \$19,407 for Comedy Night (merchandise, tickets, desserts and comedians) and \$744 for technology (QBO renewals) for a total of \$20,151 in expenses.
- b. As of March 31, 2025, we had \$14,724 in our Money Market accounts (S&T Bank), \$70,790 in our checking account (S&T Bank), \$40,990 in one Certificate of Deposit (S&T Bank), \$52,258 in a second Certificate of Deposit (S&T Bank) and \$67,007 invested with Fidelity (Wealth Enhancement Advisors). Our building fund stands at \$29,776, making our total funds \$275,544.
- c. On a motion by Karen Rose Cercone, seconded by AnnaMarie Stackiewicz, the March 2025 Treasurer's reports were approved.

5. ITEMS FOR ACTION AND/OR INFORMATION

- a. Official Correspondence – five thank you letters were sent in early March. For any recent donors who didn't receive one, a second batch will be sent out soon.

- b. Upcoming trail events include the Poker Run on June 7 in Export. We will also have a table at the Trafford B-Y Park FlavorFest on June 22 from noon to 5 and at the CarnivAlz Fundraiser for Alzheimers Research at Ginny's on June 29 from noon to 4 PM. A motion was made by Vicki Rudge, seconded by Ann Wade, to contribute a \$200 sponsorship to the CarnivAlz organizers to support this fundraising event. The motion passed.

6. OLD BUSINESS

- Purchase and signage for Route 66 Kacin Property – Stan Rudge
 - The 2.66 acre property on Route 66 and Industrial Drive was acquired by the RTC in March with contributions from the RTC, the Westmoreland Land Trust, the Westmoreland Heritage Trail and an anonymous donor from Westmoreland County.
 - A DCNR grant has been submitted by Jeff Richards and Lauren Titterington, requesting funds to help reimburse the purchase price of the property.
 - A large billboard will be designed to announce the trail's acquisition of the Kacin property and the future trail head that will be there. A motion was made by Malcolm Sias, seconded by Geri Lombardo to allocate up to \$2500 in funding for this property sign. The motion passed
- Update on Gateway Arch in Saltsburg – Stan Rudge
 - MultiMetals is currently constructing the arch itself, and then Mastro Signs will design the 'Welcome to' signs on each side.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- Annual accomplishment report – Stan Rudge
 - The annual accomplishment report reflects the amazing work of our volunteers.
- Trail counters and first quarter trail use report – Stan Rudge
 - Trail usage diminished in the first three months of 2025 from the previous year, most likely due to the more severe winter.
- Bench maintenance – Stan Rudge
 - A bench donor has requested additional maintenance on a bench near the 17-mile marker on the trail.
- Volunteer Coordination – Stan Rudge
 - It would be appreciated if a trail chapter member could coordinate the volunteers so we can better connect new volunteers to appropriate needs of the trail.
- A presentation on the Turtle Creek Connector Trail was made by Courtney Mahronich Vita from Friends of the Riverfront (FotR), and Alexandria Long from the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) Pittsburgh office. A feasibility study has been done on the connector and a preferred alignment has been selected. Funds have been secured for the design of the entire corridor from Carrie Furnace to Trafford and an offer has been made to Norfolk-Southern for the unused tracks between Pitcairn and Trafford. Norfolk-Southern is working now on final selection of property they would like to sell to Friends of the Riverfront.

8. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. **Real Estate, Planning, Engineering and Construction** – Jeff Richards
 - Jeff thanked everyone who submitted support letters for the recent grant.
- b. **Public Relations** – Vicki Rudge
 - Facebook followers stand at 3792, Instagram at 133 and X /Twitter at 162.

- WHT – Vicki Rudge brought several different kinds of WHT merchandise to the meeting.
 - The Poker Run and Trail Town Festival (Ann Wade) - forms are now available for people to solicit sponsors for the event. Volunteers are needed for road crossings that morning, and donations of raffle baskets or gift certificates are welcome.
 - A motion was made by Ann Wade, seconded by AnneMarie Stackiewicz, to give a \$100 deposit to hold the Poker Run date for the Export Fireman’s Pavillion. The motion passed.
- c. **Membership** – Wendy Davis
- Membership at the end of March stood at 510 active members.
- d. **Website** - Chad Emahizer
- The WHT website had 1541 visitors in March, an increase from February.
- e. **Maintenance** – Rick Fisher and Chad Emahizer
- Rick Fisher reported that several large maintenance tasks are coming up, including bench maintenance and clearing fallen trees and branches out of the ditches along the trail.
 - New Stihl equipment funded by the Pittsburgh Foundation has now been distributed to the maintenance sheds. A thank-you letter will be sent to the donors.
 - John Ruccio (Zone 5) reported that the neighbors near the Trafford kiosk were helpful in cleaning up the large tree that came down across the trail.
- e. **Fundraising** – Rob Cronauer & Malcolm Sias
- Comedy Night financials are not yet finalized; early indications are that WHT made at least \$5000 on baskets and 50/50 raffle, with the give-back box still to be counted.
 - The March for Parks was successful, with representatives from many of the trail chapters and also 20 participants on the All-Trails Team.
- f. **Trail Ambassadors** – Stan Rudge
- A successful trail ambassador training was held on Tuesday, March 11, for 19 trainees from several trail chapters.
- g. **Regional Trail Corporation / Trans-Allegheny Trails** – Stan Rudge
- The GAP Trail has been closed near Kennywood while they worked to remediate the large slide by taking out several loads of debris. It should be re-opened on Saturday April 12.
- h. **Municipal Representatives**
- AnnaMarie Stackiewicz (Delmont) noted that tickets are available for a fundraising murder mystery event at Lamplighter. The RFP for trail connection planning for the Delmont spur has gone to DCNR for review.
 - Karen Rose Cercone for Michael Bertonaschi (Trafford) reported that the Christian Alliance church in Trafford does not want trail users parking at the far end of their lot. Trail ambassadors should advise users to park in the upper gravel lot of B-Y Park instead.
 - Stan Rudge for Tom Marcin (Monroeville) reported that construction is proceeding on the Valley Park and bridge access to the Westmoreland Heritage Trail.
9. Next month’s WHT Meeting will be held on May 8, 2025 from 7:00 to 8:00 PM at the Lamplighter.
10. On a motion by Chad Emahizer, seconded by Jerry Detar, the meeting adjourned at 8:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
 Karen Rose Cercone, Secretary

Westmoreland Heritage Trail 2025 Event Calendar

Month	Date	Time	Event	Location
JAN	9	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Zoom
FEB	13	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Zoom
MAR	7 & 8	6 PM	Comedy Night at LIVE Casino	Greensburg
	11	6:30 PM	Trail Ambassador New / Recertifying Training	WCD Barn
	13	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Zoom
APR				
	10	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting (with FOTR/PEC reps)	Lamplighter
	22	5 PM – 7 PM	TCWA & WBNC Earth Day Watershed Walk	Zone 5
	26	8 AM - 2PM	Norwin AF-JR-ROTC Bataan March	Zones 4 & 5
MAY	8	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
JUN	7	9 AM – 2 PM	Community Festival / Poker Run	Export
	12	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
	22	12 PM–5 PM	Trafford FlavorFest (WHT Table)	B-Y Park
	29	12 PM-4 PM	Ginni’s CarnivAlz Fundraiser for Alzheimers	Ginni’s, Export
JUL				
	10	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
AUG				
	14	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
SEP				
	11	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
OCT				
	9	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
NOV				
	13	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
DEC				
	11	6 PM	WHT Volunteer Appreciation Night	TBA