



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 June Board Meeting Minutes

June 12, 2025

Pedora Park, Export PA

Meeting Attendees:

- Board (12): Mike Banda, Michael Bertonaschi, Karen Rose Cercone, Rob Cronauer, Jerry Detar, Rick Fisher, Geri Lombardo, Tom Marcin, Pat Norton, Chris Panichella, AnnaMarie Stackiewicz, Ann Wade
- Absent Board (9): Wendy Davis, Chad Emahizer, Liz Ferri, Kerry Jobe, Monica Meehan, Darrin Miller, Stan Rudge, Vicki Rudge, Malcolm Sias,
- Guests and Members (11): Gail Carns, Barb Coulter, Jim Coulter, Mike Grimaldi, Ron Hoffman, Steve Ising, Dawn Lamuth, Tim Leriotis, Hal Lester, Ron Markos, John Ruccio

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM.

- 1. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS** – Rob Cronauer relayed Stan Rudge's thanks to trail maintenance crews for the work they did to keep the trail safe after the recent floods.
- 2. PUBLIC INPUT/INTRODUCTIONS** – Dawn Lamuth from Go Laurel Highlands introduced herself.
- 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. The minutes from the May 8, 2025 meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Pat Norton, seconded by Jerry Detar.
- 4. TREASURER'S REPORTS** – Chris Panichella
 - a. New and renewed memberships in April 2025 amounted to \$70. Donations came in at \$2030 for the month. Comedy Night income of \$2050 plus miscellaneous income of \$280 added up to a total revenue of \$4430. Expenses for April included \$136 for equipment, \$210 for porta johns and other visitor amenities and \$135 for technology plus \$65,000 for closing on the Kacin Parcel purchase for a total of \$67,236 in expenses. On a motion by Karen Rose Cercone, seconded by AnnaMarie Stackiewicz, the April 2025 Treasurer's reports were approved.
 - b. No membership income was received in May 2025. Donations came in at \$930 for the month with grants contributing another \$2081. Comedy Night give-back box income came in at \$5534 although we still owe Five Star Trail their half of all Comedy Night proceeds. Total revenue came to \$8545. Expenses for May included \$110 for maintenance, \$25 for visitor amenities, and \$830 for the removal of a very large tree from Zone 5 for a total of \$965 in expenses. On a motion by Ann Wade, seconded by Rick Fisher, the May 2025 Treasurer's reports were approved.
 - c. As of May 31, 2025, we had \$14,810 in our Money Market accounts (S&T Bank), \$13,857 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 \$69,099 invested with Fidelity (Wealth Enhancement Advisors). Our building fund stands at \$29,776, making our total funds \$220,790.

5. ITEMS FOR ACTION AND/OR INFORMATION

- a. Official Correspondence – a letter of support was sent to the Municipality of Monroeville for a grant application that they hope will result in improvements such as restrooms and additional parking at the Saunders Station trailhead. Tom Marcin reported that the plans for a bridge and trailhead at Valley Park have been shelved by Council due to increased cost.
- b. Twenty-three formal thank-you letters were sent to the sponsors and prize-donors of the Poker Run. Additional thanks for gift baskets will be emailed to those donors.

6. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Bike raffle – Malcolm Sias (via Rob Cronauer) distributed the remaining packs of tickets to board members to sell.
- b. RTC Parking Fundraiser at the Westmoreland Arts & Heritage Festival – many slots remain to be filled on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Karen Rose Cercone will send the latest schedule to board members for consideration. Each shift covered results in a donation to our trail.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. America's 250th Bell Sculpture – Dawn Lamoth distributed literature about the commemorative bell program celebrating America's 250th anniversary next year. A second bell has been donated to Westmoreland County by First Energy and will be placed at the Roberts Parcel subject to approval by the Municipality of Murrysville. This site had the advantage of sufficient parking and accessibility, although it is not directly adjacent to the trail. The theme of the bell will be energy (past, future, and people) with some elements honoring the trail as well. A motion was made by Rick Fisher, seconded by Pat Norton, to express the Westmoreland Heritage Trail board's support for placement of the bell at the Roberts Parcel.
- b. Electric dirt bike issue – Michael Bertonaschi reported that electric dirt bikes, which are not allowed on the trail, have been seen in increasing numbers with some riders stating that the police told them to ride there. Local police are not permitted to enforce trail rules (although they can police misbehavior) but may not know that the trail does not allow these types of bikes. All municipal liaisons are asked to speak to their local police about the issue. Rob Cronauer recommended that large signs about dirt bikes be made for our sandwich board so that the rules are known to all trail users.

8. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. **Real Estate, Planning, Engineering and Construction** – Jeff Richards (report by Rob Cronauer)
 - Westmoreland County continues to work with PennDOT to finalize the hiring of an engineering firm to design the next phase of trail construction (tunnel and Kacin Parcel)
 - A permit has been received from Murrysville for a temporary sign at the Kacin Parcel (Industrial Drive and Route 66) announcing that a new trail head will be constructed there.
- b. **Public Relations** – Vicki Rudge (report by Ann Wade)
 - Facebook followers stand at 3849, Instagram at 154 and X at 163.
 - The Poker Run and Trail Town Festival (Ann Wade) – despite the previous day's floods and some drizzly weather, the fundraiser was able to be held with the help of many WHT volunteers. With a low overhead cost of just \$1123, the event was a fundraising success, raising \$2422 with the funds from the bike raffle still to come.
- c. **Membership** – Wendy Davis (report by Karen Rose Cercone)
 - Membership at the end of May stood at 522 active members.

- d. **Website and Merchandise** - Chad Emahizer (report by Karen Rose Cercone)
- May web views total was 2692 (up 45% from April). May web visitors total was 985 (up 44% from April). There were 37 Poker Run registrations through the website. The website's seasonal pictures will be updated this coming weekend for summer.
 - \$270 worth of trail merchandise was sold at the Poker Run. Chad will also be selling trail merchandise at the Trafford FlavorFest (June 22) and Ginny's CarnivAlz (June 29).
- e. **Maintenance** – (report by Rob Cronauer)
- An extremely large tree fell in Zone 5, and a contractor (Nick Eremic of Eveready Contracting) had to be called to deal with it. The cost of \$630 was reasonable considering the size of the tree.
 - Flooding of the trail on June 6 caused the worst damage that has occurred since the trail was first built, resulting in over 8 miles of washout in Zones 4 and 5. The immediate goal is to bring the trail back to safe conditions for users by filling in ruts with 2B gravel, clearing culverts and repairing other damage. After a week of surveying and planning, the work to reconstruct the trail will be broken down into four segments:
 - i. Nick Eremic of Eveready Contracting has been commissioned to start at the Trafford trailhead and work upstream toward Saunders Station until he meets another contractor. This work has already begun. Michael Bertonaschi suggested cordoning off this section of trail so that users are kept away as much as possible.
 - ii. Monroeville Public Works will clear out the bridge over Simpson Run, where an enormous amount of debris has piled up and conditions are most dangerous.
 - iii. Westmoreland County will replace the culvert pipe that washed out near Ginny's in Export and restore the trail in that area. A new pipe has been ordered.
 - iv. Adam Eidemiller Inc will work downstream from Export to Saunders Station. Malcolm Sias is coordinating with this contractor.
 - v. Top dressing of the washed out limestone throughout Zones 4 and 5 will most likely need to wait until after insurance payment has been received.
 - Westmoreland County will cover the costs of repair up to \$25,000. Hopefully, some or all of this cost will be covered by insurance. On a motion by Mike Banda, seconded by Pat Norton, the board approved up to \$30,000 in additional funds to be spent on immediate emergency repair of the trail if needed.
- e. **Fundraising** – no report
- f. **Trail Ambassadors** – no report
- g. **Regional Trail Corporation / Trans-Allegheny Trails** – no report
- h. **Municipal Representatives**
- Delmont – AnnaMarie Stackiewicz noted that Delmont Visionary has received bids for their grant-funded project and will be selecting a firm to commission soon.
 - Saltsburg –A fraction of Saltsburg Council wants to change the alignment of the West Penn Trail near the Gateway Arch. This would be both confusing and historically inaccurate, but since Saltsburg owns the land that both trails use there, our ability to prevent this change depends on the terms of our trail easement agreement. A meeting with the Conemaugh Valley Conservancy will be held in July to discuss this further.

9. Next month's WHT Meeting will be held on July 10, 2025 from 7:00 to 8:00 PM at Pedora Park.

10. On a motion by Jerry Detar, seconded by Chris Panichella, the meeting adjourned at 7:57 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