



*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 July Board Meeting Minutes**

July 10, 2025

Pedora Park, Export PA

### **Meeting Attendees:**

- Board (15): Michael Bertonaschi, Karen Rose Cercone, Wendy Davis, Jerry Detar, Chad Emahizer, Liz Ferri, Rick Fisher, Geri Lombardo, Tom Marcin, Pat Norton, Chris Panichella, Stan Rudge, Vicki Rudge, Malcolm Sias, Ann Wade
- Absent Board (6): Mike Banda, Rob Cronauer, Kerry Jobe, Monica Meehan, Darrin Miller, AnnaMarie Stackiewicz,
- Guests and Members (12): Gail Carns, Barb Coulter, Jim Coulter, Mike Grimaldi, Steve Ising, Jim Klueber, Tim Leriots, Hal Lester, Paul Lieneman, Jeff Richards, Larry Smith, Mike Urban

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

**1. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS** – Stan Rudge added two items of business to the agenda.

**2. PUBLIC INPUT/INTRODUCTIONS** – none.

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. The minutes from the June 12, 2025 meeting were approved on a motion by Jerry Detar, seconded by Chad Emahizer.

### **4. TREASURER'S REPORTS** – Chris Panichella

- a. New and renewed memberships for June 2025 amounted to \$180. Donations came in at \$4102 as people responded to the flood emergency. Grant income was \$372. Expenses for June included \$302 for maintenance, \$21 for equipment and \$135 for visitor amenities plus miscellaneous expenses of \$2702. On a motion by Michael Bertonaschi, seconded by Malcolm Sias, the June 2025 Treasurer's reports were approved.
- b. As of June 31, 2025, we had \$14,852 in our Money Market accounts (S&T Bank), \$14,767 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 \$71,046 invested with Fidelity (Wealth Enhancement Advisors). Our building fund stands at \$29,776, making our total funds \$223,690.

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

#### **a. Upcoming Events:**

- On a motion by Jerry Detar, seconded by Karen Rose Cercone, the GCXC Racing events for July 13 and October 25 (Zone 4) were approved.
- On a motion by Karen Rose Cercone, seconded by Jerry Detar, conditional approval was granted for the CancerBridges event on July 19, pending proof of insurance for the RTC.
- On a motion by Ann Wade, seconded by Michael Bertonaschi, conditional approval was also granted for the Slickville Festival on August 9, pending proof of insurance for the RTC.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Update on electronic dirt bike rider – Michael Bertonaschi met with the Trafford Police and identified one of the dirt bike riders whose parents were warned about possible citations if he was seen on the trail again. Michael asked all community liaisons to alert their local police.
- b. Stan Rudge requested one or more board members to form a Volunteer Coordination Committee to help organize the influx of new volunteers.
- c. The metal parts of the Gateway Arch are complete and Mastro Signs is adding the wording now. Installation is expected in the next few months with a dedication ceremony to follow.
- d. The RTC has agreed to cover the cost of repairing the Trafford Kiosk. Some lumber for the fence may be able to be replaced with stored materials at the Murrysville storage shed.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Flood repair updates – Malcolm Sias reports that the trail was made usable 19 days after the flood through the combined efforts of Eveready Contracting cleaning up landslides in Zone 5, Monroeville Public Works clearing the log jam on Simpson Run, and the County Road Crew replacing the washed-out culvert near Ginny's with a new 6' pipe. The County has covered the costs so far as part of their insurance deductible, with assistance from the RTC who transferred some remaining RK Mellon grant funds to the county. About two miles of trail still needs to be resurfaced, which will cost about \$70,000. This work will need to wait until insurance payments have been received, and will probably be done in conjunction with the Franklin Municipal Authority replacing their septic line along part of the trail in Zone 5.
- b. Volunteer Appreciation Dinner – the Westmoreland Conservation District barn has been reserved for the meeting date in December. Stan Rudge requested board members to serve on the appreciation event committee.
- c. Changes to memorial benches:
  - On a motion by Jerry Detar, seconded by Ann Wade, the board approved lifting the moratorium on memorial benches in Zones 4 and 5
  - On a motion by Malcolm Sias, seconded by Chad Emahizer, the board approved adding a 10-year time limit to future memorial bench purchases. Prior purchasers will be grandfathered in, but asked to contribute toward maintenance of benches.
  - Stan Rudge requested board members to serve on a committee to determine the best way to price benches and request funds for maintenance for existing benches.
- d. Trailer purchase – on a motion by Michael Bertonaschi, seconded by Karen Rose Cercone, the board approved using up to \$2500 of our funds to purchase a used 2-axle trailer from Bill O'Hara to replace our existing 1-axle trailer. Note – the price of the trailer (\$3750) is less than half of what a new one would cost and it will be partially made up by selling our existing trailer. Tom Marcin recommended also purchasing a winch in case the trailer needs to haul a broken tractor.
- e. As plans move forward for the tunnel under Route 66, a committee will be needed to plan our trailhead parking and maintenance facility there. Stan Rudge requested board members notify him if they are interested in serving on this committee.
- f. Stan Rudge reported that our old limit on discretionary spending by officers (\$400) has become onerous due to inflation. On a motion by Michael Bertonaschi, seconded by Pat Norton, the board approved raising the limit on discretionary spending by officers (without needing board approval in advance) from \$400 to \$1000.

## 7. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

### a. **Real Estate, Planning, Engineering and Construction** – Jeff Richards

- Our sign for the Kacin Parcel (Industrial Drive and Route 66) has been made and will be placed on the property soon to announce the new trail head is coming.
- Our engineering firm (GAI) has been negotiating with PennDOT over the scope of their design work for the tunnel and trail to Rangos, using the Kacin parcel as the lay-down and construction site. The goal is to produce biddable construction plans, for which funding will be sought in a future phase of the project. Technical proposals are expected next, followed by price proposals over the next few months. Jeff offered to work with the new WHT maintenance facility committee to integrate tunnel planning with trailhead design.

### b. **Public Relations** – Vicki Rudge

- Facebook followers stand at 3892, Instagram at 171 and X at 163.
- The bike raffle was won by Paul Lieneman.
- Extra Poker Run shirts will be sold on our website for \$10 each
- Over \$1000 of our initial clothing order has now been sold, and purchases continue to come in through the website
- The B-Y FlavorFest event was well-attended and we sold both clothing and raffle tickets.
- The Ginni's CarnivAlz was not as well-attended as last year. Considering it costs \$250 to attend, we may want to reconsider our participation.
- Trafford is planning to hold an Octoberfest this fall, which could be another good venue.

### c. **Membership** – Wendy Davis

- Membership at the end of June stood at 548 with 26 new memberships received.

### d. **Website and Merchandise** - Chad Emahizer

- June's total web views were 2692, with an increase to 1479 web visitors. Membership income made through the website increased to \$3360 with donations of \$780 and merchandise sales of \$420.

### e. **Maintenance** – Rick Fisher

- The Westmoreland County Road Crew has agreed to cut back knotweed along Zones 4 and 5 with their large flail / boom tractor. Geri Lombardo reports that Loyalhanna Township will work on Zone 1. Stan will reach out to our Salem Township liaison to see if they can help with mowing of knotweed in Zone 2.
- Bridge inspections were conducted from June 28 to July 1 on the large bridges near Saltsburg. A report from the consultant is expected by the end of this month.

### e. **Fundraising** – the Westmoreland Heritage Trail came in second for the Twin Lakes RTC Parking Fundraiser, contributing 100 hours and earning \$4527. Attendance was down slightly this year.

### f. **Trail Ambassadors** – Stan commended the ambassadors for their work this past month

### g. **Regional Trail Corporation / Trans-Allegheny Trails** – no report

### h. **Municipal Representatives** – no report

8. Next month's WHT Meeting will be held on August 14, 2025 from 7:00 to 8:00 PM at Pedora Park.

9. On a motion by Jerry Detar, seconded by Chad Emahizer, the meeting adjourned at 8:31 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
	13	7 AM–12 PM	GCXC Murrysville Monster 5K	Zone 4
	19	8 AM – 11 AM	CancerBridges Race (tentative)	
AUG	9	All day	Slickville Community Festival	Zone 2
	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
	25	8 AM – 11 AM	GCXC Trick or Treat 5 K Race	Zone 4
NOV				
	13	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
DEC	11	6 PM	WHT Volunteer Appreciation Night	WCD Barn