



*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 September Board Meeting Minutes**

September 11, 2025

Pedora Park, Export PA

### **Meeting Attendees:**

- Board (16): Mike Banda, Michael Bertonaschi, Karen Rose Cercone, Rob Cronauer, Wendy Davis, Chad Emahizer, Liz Ferri, Rick Fisher, Geri Lombardo, Tom Marcin, Darrin Miller, Pat Norton, Stan Rudge, Vicki Rudge, Malcolm Sias, Ann Wade
- Absent Board (5): Jerry Detar, Kerry Jobe, Monica Meehan, Chris Panichella, AnnaMarie Stackiewicz
- Guests and Members (12): Gail Carns, Barb Coulter, Jim Coulter, Ron Hoffman, Steve Ising, Chris Leo, Tim Leriottis, Dave McCarty, David Nigro, Jeff Richards, John Ruccio, Larry Smith

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

- 1. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS** – Stan Rudge shared that the WHT chapter will celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2026.
- 2. PUBLIC INPUT/INTRODUCTIONS** – none
- 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
  - a. The minutes from the August 14, 2025 meeting were approved on a motion by Rob Cronauer, seconded by Malcolm Sias, which passed unanimously.
- 4. TREASURER'S REPORTS** – Chris Panichella was absent; reports were tabled to the October meeting
- 5. ITEMS FOR ACTION AND/OR INFORMATION**
  - a. Karen Rose Cercone made a motion, seconded by Pat Norton to approve the following trail events for the two upcoming months. The motion passed.
    - YoungLife 5K Run Fundraiser (Nov 1, 7 AM – 1 PM, Zone 4, 200 participants)
    - Export 100 Trail Run (Oct 4-5 all day, Zones 1-5, 10 participants)
      - Race organizer Darren Miller explained the 100 mile route for this event and requested anyone available to volunteer to help the runners at road crossings and rest sites.
    - Export Witches' Ride (Oct 12, 1 – 5 PM, Zone 4, 200 participants) pending insurance

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- a) Stan Rudge reported that four memorial benches have been requested since the chapter re-opened our procedure for installation. A quote of \$2650 has been received for purchase of 20 bench frames (enough for 10 benches). Mike Banda made a motion, seconded by Tom Marcin, to proceed with purchase of the bench frames. The motion passed. Stan noted that purchasers of old benches in need of repair will be sent a request for a donation to renew and refresh their memorial bench. This donation will be optional.

- b) The engineering firm GAI has been asked to prepare a preliminary site plan proposal for the Delmont maintenance building and trailhead site. The engineering firm was asked to include several of the options discussed at the site meeting. This plan should be forthcoming soon.
- c) Stan Rudge has volunteered to co-chair the Maintenance Committee with Rick Fisher as Chad Emahizer moves on to work on other chapter projects such as the Volunteer Committee.
- d) The Volunteer Coordination Committee reported that their second meeting was productive. They plan to add a form to the website that will allow potential volunteers to submit their interests and contact information, which will then be shared via a Google Drive spreadsheet.
- e) Plans for the December volunteer dinner are set. WHT volunteers are asked to bring some cookies to share on the cookie table. An appreciation gift of a WHT logo windbreaker in hunter green will be offered to those who want or need it. Any volunteers who choose not to get a windbreaker will instead receive an official WHT thank-you letter noting that they have donated that amount back to the trail.
- f) The Gateway Arch in Saltsburg will be installed on Tuesday, September 16. Look for pictures on Facebook.

## 6. NEW BUSINESS

- a) Karen Primm of Joyriders has offered to donate their extra wheelchair-equipped E-bike to the trail. Stan Rudge reminded the board that we had previously approved a committee and some funding to investigate the possibility of getting such a bike, which would allow people with limited mobility to enjoy the trail. The board agreed that we should accept this donation, which will occur in the spring of 2026. A committee will be needed to organize Joyrider events.
- b) The Pennsylvania Environmental Council has reached out to the WHT with a new initiative called TRAILS (Training Regional Advocates, Investing in Long-term Sustainability) designed to help trail organizations with proactive trail maintenance. This will include a mix of virtual sessions, a classroom day, and field training along with a stipend and guidance from PEC. Anyone interested should contact Stan to get a detailed email with information about the kickoff Zoom session to be held on Thursday September 18 at 1 PM.
- c) Karen Rose reported that GO Laurel Highlands will sponsor an unveiling event for the America's 250<sup>th</sup> Westmoreland Bell at the Roberts Parcel on November 3 at 4 PM. WHT social media should notify trail users to be aware of some possible congestion at the site and time.

## 7. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. **Real Estate, Planning, Engineering and Construction** – Jeff Richards
  - The Westmoreland County Commissioners approved award of a \$773,000 contract to GAI Engineering for design of the Rangos to Morosini trail segment, including the future tunnel under Route 66. These funds will be reimbursed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania using 2022 federal infrastructure funding. Actual construction will probably not begin until sometime in 2028.
  - Friends of the Riverfront and PEC reported in their recent meetings that progress is being made on the Turtle Creek Connector Trail. Norfolk Southern has finally made selling their old rail line a high priority and PEC / FOTR hope to close on the old Westinghouse railroad line in early 2026. Norfolk Southern will also remove rails to enable easier trail construction.
- b. **Public Relations** – Vicki Rudge
  - Facebook followers stand at 3924, Instagram at 187 and X at 164.
  - \$535 worth of WHT merchandise was sold at WHT Tabling events in August and September

- c. **Membership** – Wendy Davis
    - Membership at the end of August stood at 559.
  - d. **Website and Merchandise** - Chad Emahizer
    - Views of the website increased to 2581 in August with visitor numbers also up at 937.
    - Chad will add a 'Tree Down' notification form to the website for folks who would prefer to use an electronic form over a phone call.
  - e. **Maintenance** – Rick Fisher
    - With the recent dry weather, Rick reports that fewer issues have come up along the trail.
    - All zones reported that less work has been needed to keep the trail in good shape.
  - e. **Fundraising** – Rob Cronauer, no report
  - f. **Trail Ambassadors** – Stan commended the ambassadors for their work this past month. He also requested a volunteer to take over the supervision and tracking of trail ambassador hours.
  - g. **Regional Trail Corporation / Trans-Allegheny Trails** – Stan Rudge reported that the RTC has set a date of January 24, 2026 for their RTC Retreat. He asked all board members to reserve that date on their calendars. A WHT volunteer is needed to help coordinate the retreat program. Ann Wade offered to assist the RTC with retreat planning.
  - h. **Municipal Representatives** –
    - In Trafford, Stan has been asked by the new borough manager to visit an upcoming Council meeting to update them on the status of the trail and other developments.
    - In Monroeville, Tom Marcin reported that the most recent municipal budget once again includes significant funding for trailhead improvements at Saunders Station, including raising the site up, installing all-year restrooms, and adding much more parking
    - In Murrysville, Ann Wade offered to staff a Halloween booth at Murrysville Community Park. A motion was made by Malcolm Sias, seconded by Liz Ferri, to approve up to \$150 for the purchase of candy for the booth. The motion passed.
    - In Delmont, the Visionary Committee announced that they will be sponsoring a holiday craft and vendors fair fundraiser at the Delmont Fire Department on November 22.
8. Next month's WHT Meeting will be held on October 9, 2025 from 7:00 to 8:00 PM at the Lamplighter Restaurant in Delmont.
9. On a motion by Wendy Davis, seconded by Chad Emahizer, the meeting adjourned at 7:53 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	WHT Table at Trafford FlavorFest	B-Y Park
	29	12 PM-4 PM	WHT Table at Ginni’s CarnivAlz Fundraiser	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
	16	All day	WHT Table at Export Heritage Festival	
SEP	7	All day	WHT Table at Trafford Octoberfest	
	11	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
	13	All day	WHT Table at Murrysville Community Day	
OCT	4 & 5	All Day	Export 100 Trail Run	Zones 1-5
	9	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
	12	1 PM - 5 PM	Export Witches Ride	Zone 4
	25	8 AM – 11 AM	GCXC Trick or Treat 5 K Race	Zone 4
NOV	1	7 AM – 1 PM	YoungLife 5K Run Fundraiser	Zone 4
	13	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
DEC	11	6 – 8 PM	WHT Volunteer Appreciation Night	WCD Barn