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Meeting Minutes February 11, 2021
Online via Zoom

Meeting Attendees:

- a. Board: (15) Gordon Conn, Rob Cronauer, Alyssa Davis, Tom Dittman, Rick Fisher, Kerry Jobe, Brandon Lacina, Jack Maher, Mary Grace Muster, Bill O'Hara, Chris Panichella, Vicki Rudge, Stan Rudge, Malcolm Sias, Ann Wade
 - b. Absent Board: (5) Eileen Elicker, Monica Meehan, John Nagoda, Pat Norton, and AnnaMarie Stackiewicz
 - c. Guests: Karen Cercone, Ron Markos, Michael Bertonaschi, Steve Ising, Paul Estok, Ginny Hayes, and John Ruccio
1. President Stan Rudge led the recitation of "The Pledge of Allegiance" and then called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.
 2. Presidents' Comment –
 - a. Quoted from Facebook, "We are saddened by the loss of one of our own, Ted Hayes. As a volunteer he served on the Board, was the official trail counter, and maintained Zone 1 (Saltsburg to Slickville). He would help wherever it was needed. Always active, attended meetings, helped at events and in between all the tasks enjoyed biking too. Our thoughts and prayers are with Ginny, Jason, Heather, and their families. May you rest in peace Ted. You will be so missed. Everyone please watch over yourselves, family and friends during COVID".
 - b. Condolences also go out to Karen Cercone for the death of her mother, who was a volunteer on the trail.
 - c. Well wishes are sent to Bill O'Hara for a quick recovery from his knee surgery.
 3. Public Input/Introductions – No report.
 4. Approval of Minutes –
 - a. A few corrections were noted:
 - i. The next meeting date should say "February 11, 2021" not March.
 - ii. The number of Facebook and Twitter followers will be added to the PR update.
 - a. Cronauer requested that "and a portion of funds into the general fund" be struck from the minutes (8.c.iii.a.).
 - b. A motion was made to approve the January minutes with corrections noted above by Maher, 2nd by Lacina, motion carried, minutes approved.
 - c. Davis provided her yearly tracking sheets for board attendance and in-kind hours for review (see attached to Feb. minutes). She reminded all board members of their duties according to the guidelines in the Board Member Expectations and encouraged everyone to attend meetings due to the convenience and safety of holding them via Zoom.
 5. Treasurer's Report – Jack Maher
 - a. Despite COVID, the trail had a successful year financially in 2020, with a net profit of \$48,000.
 - i. A motion to approve the December 2020 treasurer's report was made by Muster, 2nd by Dittman, motion carried, report approved.
 - b. Panichella will begin training as assistant treasurer under Maher to prepare him for replacing Maher in the future.
 - c. For the month of January, WHT had \$49,000 in the Capital Reserve for the storage building, \$24,000 in the general Money Market account, and \$32,000 in the checking account. Total assets are at

- \$127,000. Huge increases from last year, so fantastic job everyone! Our net profit is up by \$2,500 compared to last year.
- d. The treasurer report formatting is different due to switching over to Quickbooks Online.
 - e. Maher needs the paperwork for the Slickville trailer and Toros to add them to our fixed assets. Once the paperwork is received, he will add them into to treasurer's report.
 - f. A motion was made to approve the January treasurer's report with the two additions of the Slickville trailer and Toro to fixed assets by O'Hara, 2nd by Lacina, motion carried, report approved with additions.
 - g. A motion to designate \$16,000 from the general Money Market account to the storage building fund was made by O'Hara, 2nd by Wade, motion carried, money to be designated.
6. RTC Report – No report
 7. TAT Report – Stan Rudge
 - a. The group is out of TAT brochures, so they will be submitting a Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape Minigrant application for printing of new brochures.
 8. Committee Reports -
 - a. Real Estate and Acquisitions – Malcolm Sias
 - i. Work and progress continue, with more updates to come soon.
 - b. Engineering and Construction – Jeff Richards
 - i. Cronauer reported that the Lauffer Mine Road grant application to the Westmoreland Conservation District's Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Program was funded. Construction should hopefully happen in the fall.
 - c. Fundraising –Rob Cronauer
 - ii. Post plaque renewal emails have now been sent to all existing plaques along the Export to Trafford section.
 - iii. A sponsorship campaign to push the plaques will hopefully happen in the near future once existing records are all up to date.
 - iv. The trail needs a replacement fundraiser for our memorial benches, as we are essentially at capacity along all existing trail segments.
 - a. A motion to suspend memorial benches from Export to Trafford was made by Sias, 2nd by Cronauer, motion carried, benches suspended on the noted section.
 - v. Stan Rudge proposed bike racks as a replacement to the memorial benches fundraiser at a donation cost of \$1,000. Benches will still be available for the time being on the Slickville to Saltsburg section.
 - a. A motion to approve the replacement of the memorial bench fundraiser with bike racks was made by Sias, 2nd by Maher, motion carried, fundraiser approved.
 - b. This update will be added to the website and the existing bench application will be edited to reflect the limitations.
 - d. Public Relations – Vicki Rudge
 - i. WHT now has 2,417 Facebook followers and 104 Twitter followers.
 - ii. Cards continue to be sent out by the PR committee.
 - iii. The trail purchased a Peace Lily w/ a bike clock for Ted Hayes' funeral.
 - iv. At the most recent PR committee meeting, a welcome packet for new members was discussed that would be sent out by membership chairman, Gordon Conn, via email. The PDF packet would include a welcome letter, copy of the trail brochure and map, most recent newsletter & yearly accomplishments, and trail rules. Conn agreed to send this out as an attachment via email to all new members.
 - v. Discussion on whether a Trail Town festival is feasible this year was also had at the PR meeting. Options for a fall event were brought up, and plans will be held off until closer to the fall to evaluate COVID safety and vaccine progress.
 - vi. A 2022 calendar to be used as a fundraiser is in the works with more info to follow.
 - vii. A bike jersey as an additional merch item is still in the works (artwork is being finalized).
 - viii. There was a discussion of interested PR committee member involvement with the trail website. Davis reported that while she greatly appreciates the interest and offer of help with website

maintenance, there really isn't any work to split between multiple people. The creation of the website as a static resource (to prevent outdated information) means there's only an hour or two of work per month that has to go into updating/editing the website. The PR committee does a fantastic job of keeping our social media active and up to date with ongoing changes on a daily basis.

- ix. Davis shared the statistics from 2020 of the trail website, reporting that it is amazing the increase and consistency of usage from when it launched in 2018 to now. Since its launch, the website has had over 21,000 visitors!
 - e. Membership –Gordon Conn
 - i. The trail now has 196 members, which includes our 103 lifetime and 10-year members. We ended 2020 with 323 members!
 - ii. Our first membership email drive of 2021 will be sent out by the end of February to our email list.
 - f. Trail Ambassadors – Stan Rudge
 - i. Zero hours were reported for January due to snow.
 - ii. Muster reported that she skied on the trail recently.
 - g. Trail Maintenance – Zone Leaders
 - i. Everything is going good! Pesticide certification training is being organized by Panichella.
 - ii. Zone 1: No issues.
 - iii. Zone 2: No issues.
 - iv. Zone 3: No issues.
 - v. Zone 4: No issues.
 - vi. Zone 5: No issues.
 - h. Delmont Visionary Committee – Anna Marie Stackiewicz
 - i. No report
 - i. Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation – Chris Panichella
 - i. Pesticide certification class will be in two weeks, and a few trail volunteers are registered.
 - ii. The 2021 March for Parks flyer and brochure were distributed via email to the board and the trail's email list. This year the event will take place at 9 locations, and volunteers are needed at Export and Northmoreland Park (4-5 hour shifts). Panichella will be organizing a WHT team, so if you are interested in joining or volunteering to help the day of the event, please reach out.
 - iii. Paul Estok, Monroeville Parks and Rec. Director, reported that they received a DCNR grant to improve Valley Park and build a bridge over Turtle Creek connecting the WHT with the park. The project will cost approx. \$490,000, with half of the cost being covered with grant funds and the other half being provided by Monroeville. A general plan of the improvements was reviewed during the board meeting, which will include additional parking, bathroom facilities, pavilions, bike racks, and a bridge over Turtle Creek (see attachment to Feb. minutes). The grant has a 4-year window for completion, and Monroeville would like the WHT to be involved with input on the improvements. A HUGE WHT thank you and congratulations goes out to everyone who worked so hard on this grant, which will be a wonderful addition to the WHT corridor!!!
 - iv. Estok also reported that Monroeville would be cleaning out a pipe blockage near the Turtle Creek Watershed Association kiosk.
 - j. Municipal Representatives
 - i. No report.
 - k. Historical and Turtle Creek Railroad – Ann Wade
 - i. Wade drafted up historical signs for the WHT bridges and the Slickville Fire Department, which were passed onto Cercone.
 - A. Cercone is working on drafting up the rest of the plaques for round two of our historical plaques. Research is being done in February, printing will hopefully happen in March, and installation this summer.
 - ii. Any historical documents and materials can be passed onto Wade at whthistory2020@gmail.com.
9. Old Business

- a. Restitution from 2020 vandalism along the trail
 - i. Stan Rudge reported that an order of court was received for the case. The defendant is responsible for paying the cost of damages to the trail. It remains to be seen when the trail will receive the money.
- 10. New Business
 - a. Trail events
 - i. The Norwin JROTC would like to host their Bantam March starting at BY Park and looping back after seven miles on Apr. 17. There would be approx. 100 participants and occur from 8am to 4pm.
 - A. A motion to approve the trail event was made by Jobe, 2nd by Lacina, motion carried, event approved.
 - b. Path to cross Route 22
 - i. Wade brought up inquiry from D's Six Pack and Dogs business if there were any plans to put in a path off of the WHT to the Route 22 pedestrian crossing near Tarr Hollow Rd. This idea will be looked into to find out the feasibility of the idea.
 - c. Sewer construction along trail
 - i. Jeff Richards continues to send updates on the sewer construction occurring along the WHT. Vicki Rudge, Doug Webster, and Alyssa Davis continue to update social media and the website accordingly.
 - d. The meeting concluded with a group viewing of the video "Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure" to honor Ted Hayes.
- 11. The next meeting will be on March 11, 2021 online via Zoom.
 - On a motion by Maher, 2nd by Vicki Rudge, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Alyssa Davis, Secretary