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Meeting Minutes March 11, 2021
Online via Zoom

Meeting Attendees:

- a. Board: (13) Gordon Conn, Rob Cronauer, Alyssa Davis, Tom Dittman, Rick Fisher, Brandon Lacina, Jack Maher, Bill O'Hara, Chris Panichella, Vicki Rudge, Stan Rudge, Malcolm Sias, AnnaMarie Stackiewicz
 - b. Absent Board: (5) Eileen Elicker, Kerry Jobe, Monica Meehan, Mary Grace Muster, John Nagoda, Pat Norton, and Ann Wade
 - c. Guests: Steve Ising, Heather Shearer, Brian Fritz, Vincent Fioravanti, David Nigro, Jeff Richards, 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 7:01pm.
 2. Presidents' Comment –
 - a. President Rudge recognized board member and membership chairman volunteer, Gordon Conn, for all of his hard work with the WHT.
 - b. All WHT Board Members should think about how they will support the trail this year. Please consider volunteering for a committee if you haven't done so already. In addition, someone is needed to keep all of our trail kiosks updated.
 3. Public Input/Introductions –
 - a. Vincent Fioravanti introduced himself as a frequent user of the trail who wants to get more involved with maintenance.
 4. Approval of Minutes –
 - a. A motion was made to approve the February minutes by O' Hara, 2nd by Sias, motion carried, minutes approved.
 5. Treasurer's Report – Stan Rudge reported on behalf of Jack Maher
 - a. For the month of February , WHT had \$65,000 in the Capital Reserve for the storage building, \$28,000 in the general Money Market account, and \$15,000 in the checking account. Total assets are at \$130,000. Our net profit is down by \$4,000 compared to last year, primarily due to no Comedy Night income.
 - b. A motion was made to approve the February treasurer's report by Conn, 2nd by Lacina, motion carried, report approved.
 6. RTC Report – Rob Cronauer
 - a. The two benches to be installed on Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County property along the trail have been approved. These are two of the 11 benches to be installed this spring.
 7. TAT Report – Stan Rudge
 - a. The group is moving forward with the new brochures. Drafts will be sent to WHT officers for review and approval of WHT info to be included in the pamphlet.
 - i. The plan is for printings costs to be covered 50% (hopefully) by the Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape Minigrant and 50% by splitting the cost between all the trail groups.
 8. Committee Reports -
 - a. Real Estate and Acquisitions – Malcolm Sias
 - i. No report.
 - b. Engineering and Construction – Jeff Richards

- i. The feasibility study has been sent out to all steering committee members and is awaiting comments from all members.
- ii. Thanks go out to Vicki Rudge, Lauren Jones, and Alyssa Davis for updating all pertinent social media on the sewer work being done along the trail. The final completion date is estimated to be by April 1.
 - A. If anyone is interested in attending the final site inspection walkthrough, Richards will be sending out an email with information once dates and times have been selected.
- iii. The steering committee will be walking another section soon on the Middle Gap.
- iv. A possible DCNR grant application is in the works.
- v. A website link on the feasibility study about extending the WHT down through Trafford to connect to the Great Allegheny Passage trail will be added to the website links section.
- c. Fundraising –Rob Cronauer
 - i. Post plaque renewal emails have now been sent to all existing plaques along the Export to Trafford section. There are a few existing plaques that have no contact info listed or have not responded yet.
 - ii. 11 benches are to be installed in the spring.
- d. Public Relations – Vicki Rudge
 - i. WHT now has 2,434 Facebook followers and 106 Twitter followers.
 - ii. The PR committee is working on the next newsletter. If anyone has anything to include, please reach out at whmpr2017@gmail.com.
 - iii. WHT merchandise is still being sold.
 - iv. More info will be provided soon on the lottery calendars.
 - v. Davis reported that the website continues to function wonderfully.
- e. Membership –Gordon Conn
 - i. The trail now has 205 members.
 - ii. The first membership drive of 2021 was sent out by Davis to the master email list. We have already received 20+ renewals/new members from the drive.
- f. Trail Ambassadors – Stan Rudge
 - i. Zero hours were reported for February.
 - ii. A new trail ambassador training course is scheduled for April. Any interested parties can contact President Rudge to get signed up.
- g. Trail Maintenance – Zone Leaders
 - i. Bill O’ Hara, Pat Norton, and Tom Dittman were re-certified for their herbicide training.
 - ii. Any long term maintenance issues should be brought to the attention of Dittman.
 - iii. Some trees along the trail were cut up and removed.
 - iv. The chain on Athena Dr. was cut to access the trail by a truck; the trail has been restored.
 - v. Murrysville has given their okay to the gravel path from the WHT to the pedestrian crossing of Route 22 near Cleveland Bros. Waiting on PennDOT to respond, and then a PA One Call will be done if approved.
 - vi. **Zone 1:** No issues.
Zone 2: Fisher reported some holes were fixed along the trail. Thanks go out to Fisher for the work to install the new sickle bar!
Zone 3: No issues.
Zone 4: No issues.
Zone 5: Ruccio reported that Monroeville will be taking care of the clogged pipes near the Turtle Creek Watershed kiosk. Questions on who is to restore the trail from sewer work arose. The sewer company will be required to restore the trail before they leave the site. There is also a hole behind Penn Murry that needs filled.
- h. Delmont Visionary Committee – Anna Marie Stackiewicz
 - i. A litter pickup in Delmont is scheduled for April 24, and another one will hopefully be scheduled soon near the pig farm.
 - ii. If anyone wants to help out, reach out to Anna Marie.

- iii. The group is looking to get bike racks to install throughout Delmont. President Rudge will pass along the information the WHT found while researching bike racks for our new fundraiser.
 - i. Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation – Chris Panichella
 - i. Pesticide certification class was a success and cards have been sent out. A makeup class will be scheduled soon.
 - ii. March for Parks is on March 27. Please sign up, fundraise, spread the word, and/or volunteer if you can!
 - j. Municipal Representatives
 - i. Conn (Monroeville): The trail’s goals and objectives were presented to the Monroeville council and thanks were passed along from the trail to Monroeville for all their maintenance help.
 - ii. Lacina (Trafford): The tax on special events and non-profits was tabled. The WHT was not in favor of this tax, and a letter stating the trail’s stance on the tax was sent to Trafford. Lacina will keep an ear out for the future in case the tax is brought back up. He has also been handing out maps and brochures at his business and is in need of more. President Rudge will deliver more to him for distribution.
 - k. Historical and Turtle Creek Railroad – Ann Wade
 - i. No report.
- 9. Old Business
 - a. Trail of the Year Future Recommendations
 - i. Davis received the following response from Olivia Braun at DCNR: “It’s important to note that this trail did make it to the Top 3 nominations which were voted on by the Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee so the application was quite good. However, the feedback that I received was the suggestion of getting more letters of support from volunteers, trail users and local businesses who benefit from the trail. While letters of support included in the nomination were helpful, they were primarily from organizations, state and local governments, etc. Again, overall the application was complete and well done and you’re certainly encouraged to consider nominating again next year”.
 - b. Historical Plaques Round 2 Update – No report.
- 10. New Business
 - a. Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape Minigrant
 - i. An application, due April 2, has been starting to apply for safety initiative along the trail. The grant proposes to purchase more A-frames with interchangeable signs, as well as creating an educational stand with wrecked bikes to show trail users what the outcome of a car collision could do.
 - ii. The grant ask is for \$1,700, the trail will need to provide 50% match, and we have received Senator Brooks’ support.
 - iii. A motion to move forward with submitting the grant application was made by Davis, 2nd by Sias, motion carried, grant application will be submitted.
 - b. Reschedule Delmont Rotary Trail Event
 - i. The 5k event is to be rescheduled for May 22.
 - A. A motion to approve the rescheduled trail event was made by Maher, 2nd by Dittman, motion carried, event approved.
 - c. Ted Hayes Memorial Ride
 - i. The event will be organized by Ted’s daughter, Heather Shearer, and will be a bike/walk/run fundraiser on June 5 from Slickville to Saltsburg and back.
 - ii. There will be lunch, auctions, and other activities.
 - iii. The Slickville VFD will be used for the pavilion and parking during the event.
 - iv. All proceeds will go towards the building fund.
 - v. The trail will offer any support needed.
 - vi. A motion to accept the bike ride event for Ted Hayes on June 5 was made by O’ Hara, 2nd by Vicki Rudge, motion carried, event approved.
 - d. Nominations for Open Board Position
 - i. Nominations were opened for Ted Hayes’ vacated board position.

- ii. Vicki Rudge nominated Wendy Davis, 2nd by Sias.
 - iii. Nominations were then closed. They will be opened again at April's meeting and then voted on.
 - e. Showcase 2020 Accomplishments
 - i. The 2020 Accomplishments were shared via screen share to all the meeting attendees. A huge thanks goes out to President Rudge and John Sopko for compiling all of our trail's many accomplishments!
 - f. Fishing Season
 - i. Fishing season starts soon, so prepare for busier parking lots at high traffic areas.
11. The next meeting will be on April 8, 2021 online via Zoom.
On a motion by Conn, 2nd by Lacina, the meeting was adjourned at 8:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Alyssa Davis, Secretary