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Meeting Minutes May 13, 2021
Pedora Pavilion – White Valley, PA

Meeting Attendees:

- a. Board: (13) Gordon Conn, Rob Cronauer, Wendy Davis, Rick Fisher, Kerry Jobe, Brandon Lacina, Jack Maher, Pat Norton, Bill O’Hara, Stan Rudge, Vicki Rudge, Malcolm Sias, and Ann Wade
 - b. Absent Board: (8) Alyssa Davis, Tom Dittman, Eileen Elicker, Monica Meehan, Mary Grace Muster, John Nagoda, Chris Panichella and AnnaMarie Stackiewicz
 - c. Guests: (16) Bob Stackiewicz, Lois Weaver, David Mack, Don Baker, Jeff Richards, Joe Hlista, Alice Grasso, Chad Emahizer, Tim Leriotes, Ron Hoffman, Chris Leo, Patrick O’Toole, Matt Kundrat, Ginny Hayes, Heather Shearer, 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 thank you to Karen Cercone who continues to work on the second set of historical plaques. There are an additional 18 to be installed. Also Wendy Davis was introduced as our newest board member.
 3. Public Input/Introductions – Visitor David Mack introduced himself attending a meeting for the first time and thanked all for the WHT. He also is retiring the end of the month and will have some time in his future and was thinking of WHT volunteering. Group asked if he was a member yet, advised no and he received a membership form! Also introduced is a new volunteer Patrick O’Toole who just recently took over the responsibilities of keeping kiosks updated at Roberts Parcel, Carson & Braun and Saunders Station. Patrick is already a member. Thank you for stepping up and helping at the kiosks.
 4. Approval of Minutes –
 - a. A motion was made to approve the April minutes by Sias, 2nd by Wade, motion carried, minutes approved.
 5. Treasurer’s Report – Jack Maher
 - a. For the month of April, \$115,557.72 is in the checking and savings accounts, \$65,522 of it is in capital reserve for the storage building and \$28,050.45 in money market and \$21,985.27 in checking. \$114,517.72 in net cash and capital equipment netting out at \$39,864.28. This is up \$51,944.23 from last year which is great considering the year we have had. \$15,280.53 total revenue down \$4,604.16 due to no Comedy Night. But good with milemarker posts advertising, memorial benches and membership. Expenditures were \$1,314.80, previous year was \$9,376.28 so we are down by \$8,061.48 Our net revenue is \$14,004.01.
 - b. Jack also noted our new Assistant Treasurer, Chris Panichella, ran the reports distributed this month, learning very quickly and will be added to check writing procedures and paypal.
 - c. A motion was made to approve the April treasurer’s report by O’Hara, 2nd by Norton, motion carried, reports approved.
 6. RTC Report – Rob Cronauer no report
 7. TAT Report – Stan Rudge
 - a. Grant was applied for new brochures but have not heard anything as of yet.
 8. Committee Reports -
 - a. Real Estate and Acquisitions – Malcolm Sias passed off to Jeff Richards
 - i. Jeff reported on the progress of the 10 acres from Richard Kacin on the East side of Route 66. Negotiations are going well working with him as a cooperative seller. Currently working under a

letter of intent and the county solicitor will initiate the title work. Once completed ownership is ours from the piece of property (Rt 66) to Rangos Park. Expecting a draft agreement by late May or early June. Also a thank you to Stan Rudge and Alyssa Davis for a letter written asking the DCNR for a grant of \$90,000.

- b. Engineering and Construction – Jeff Richards
 - i. Laurel Highlands has completed a survey working with White Valley Social Club near the RTC acquired land.
 - ii. Middle Gap final report is expected soon from Mackin Engineering
 - iii. With left over monies from Export they are looking for approval to expand the scope from Lincoln Avenue 750 feet. The WHT will go past the train station, which the JR Hall trust is handling. It will go 200 feet past the new veterans memorial. Export downtown merchants are finding it difficult for customers to park due to the heavy traffic of trail users and are requesting designated parking area for those users.
 - iv. Trafford – There is still no progress with the Norfolk Southern Railroad. We may have to wait for the GAP's extension.
 - v. SW PA Commission called asking do we currently have a job moving along where we could use a million dollars and if it meets the standards, they want to hear about it. So an idea was pulled together since Penn Dot will not build a tunnel under Rt 66 until we expand both directions. So in two years we will expand to the east side, develop the west side and then approach the SW PA Commission for further consideration.
 - vi. Rick Fisher asked if there are repairs forthcoming along the trail near Hoss's since the completion of the Franklin Township Sanitary Authorize (FTMSA). He advised there are no guarantees to get this section smoothed out since the project is now completed.
- c. Fundraising –Rob Cronauer
 - i. The current main event is the Ted Hayes Memorial Bike/Walk Run on June 5th with all proceeds going to the Building Fund thanks to the Hayes/Shearer Family. Heather Shearer (Ted's daughter and event coordinator) was in attendance and reported registration is progressing slowly. A donation for the event was presented to the Treasurer on behalf of her 12 year daughter's school TC Taekwondo in the amount of \$3,318.00. Way to go Addyson and classmates.
- d. Public Relations – Vicki Rudge
 - Facebook has grown to 2,540 followers.
Twitter account now 111 followers.
 - i. A welcome again to our new volunteer, Patrick O'Toole, for taking ownership of updating the kiosks at Roberts Parcel, Carson & Braun and Saunders Station. Also a big thank you to Eileen Elicker who continues to take care of the kiosks at Rangos, Slickville, Sara Steele, and Saltsburg.
 - ii. We have replenished the WHT "business cards" adding Twitter. These are available by asking for a supply to keep with you as you volunteer on the trail or when out and about promoting the WHT. It advertises our website, FB, Twitter and a line is available to add your name/number if you so desire.
 - iii. The Welcome Packet for new members and those renewing their membership is now just one click away attached to Gordon Conn's thank you letter which includes WHT map, trail rules, 2020 accomplishments and current newsletter. Thank you Alyssa for getting this accomplished and she will update the current newsletter each quarter.
 - iv. Trail Towns Festival – The PR Committee advised we would give an update in May after meeting in April regarding having this event. The majority felt the event would be best if delayed until Saturday, June 4th, 2022, which is National Trails Day and keeps with the date in June when we held the first festival in 2019. Committee members felt it's a great way to start the season off, bringing the communities together, gain new members and wanted to make certain many businesses are back on their feet to support us in 2022. Trying to get one organized for this fall and still in Covid stages helped to make the decision.

- v. We have been approached by the Levelgreen Women's Club to hold another Amazing Race in the fall. Again, we would do as we did last year, work alongside the LWC and share in the profits. We will also have more time to work on the event, more so than we had last year. They are considering September 25th, October 9th or October 23rd. As soon as confirmation is received on the actual date, we will get it on our calendar. Those that helped last year all agreed it was a fun event.
- vi. Ted Hayes Memorial Bike/Walk/Run event sponsored by the Hayes/Shearer Families will be held on June 5th in Slickville. Registration and waiver forms were distributed to those attending and also information is available on our website. Let's all participate, honor Ted and support his family as well as the WHT. They are donating the proceeds to the WHT "Building Fund."
- e. Membership –Gordon Conn
 - i. There are a total of 270 members, down 65 from last year. A second notice was sent to renew membership. We currently have 74 lifetime members, 36 ten year members and 160 renewals this year. In the two previous years over 200 members did not re-up. We need new members every year. Word of mouth is one of the best ways to get members to join. There will be one more "renewal ask up" forthcoming. As you talk to individuals on the trail, please remind them to become members or renew their memberships and what their membership does to support the maintenance of the trail.
 - ii. Kerry Jobe suggested a website to assist known as Patreon which offers tier memberships. U-Tubers use it and suggested we check into it.
 - iii. President Rudge also noted the four computers purchased from the Cares Grant are being distributed tonight to the President, Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Chair in order to store all their documentations on WHT owned equipment.
- f. Trail Ambassadors – Stan Rudge
 - i. April hours total 11 hours and 92 miles. Remember to turn in all volunteer hours.
 - ii. A training course was held on April 20th with four new ambassadors: Diane Altier-Hand, Marilyn Howard, Sandy Reed and Tim Leriotis. Ambassadors will need to become more active if we receive the grant for the safety signs. All trails nationwide have safety challenges. If we get this grant, good findings are coming. Retraining occurs every two years. A big thank you to all current Ambassadors!
- g. Trail Maintenance – Zone Leaders
 - i. Zone 1 – (Bill O'Hara) Grass cut, all trimmed and looking good.
 - ii. Zone 2 - (Rick Fisher) grass cut, need dust around benches and looking good.
 - iii. Zone 3 - forthcoming (Great job Rob!)
 - iv. Zone 4 – (Pat Norton & Malcom Sias) cutting grass, herbicides signage are out, bridge will need replaced. It's only six years old, but discussion regarding how wood has changed over the years. President Rudge suggested when the time comes to apply for a grant to replace the bridge and Malcolm indicated Westmoreland County Parks will possibly kick in to help too.
 - v. Zone 5 – (John Ruccio) Cleared trees out of the way but weather and fewer volunteers to help slowed work down. The spray did help with maintenance and President Rudge reported the next two weeks Penn Township will be out to help with cutting down as well as Monroeville who also are great helping and cutting as well.
 - vi. Rob reported the Turtle Creek Bridge embankment between Monroeville and Penn Township will need some work. WP Conservancy needs to stabilize the stream which is planned in August at a cost of \$25,000. They will need to shut down the trail periodically when the project starts.
- h. Delmont Visionary Committee – Bob Stackiewicz on behalf of AnnaMarie
 - i. Working on a grant to obtain money for active transportation. Thank you to Stan Rudge for sending letter of support.
 - ii. Trash pickup was completed from Rangos to Slickville and thank you Rick Fisher for hauling out all the trash.

- iii. Ordering bike racks for Delmont.
 - iv. Anyone interested in joining the committee look us up on FB
 - i. Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation – no report
 - i. President Rudge thanked Chris Panichella for becoming assistant treasurer and being our communicator with the Westmoreland County Parks.
 - j. Municipal Representatives
 - i. Trafford - Brandon Lacina reported Trafford Road officially opened on this date. Down on Cavitt Avenue the business association is working with rebranding Trafford with Rails to Trails signage planned for July.
 - ii. Monroeville – Gordon Conn was asked if the new Valley Park and bridge will take three years to complete. Time it takes to apply for permits, etc probably will.
 - iii. Penn Township – Stan Rudge reports mowing will help push down the knotweed by township workers
 - iv. Salem Township – Kerry Jobe says talks for the Rangos expansion continues and the Ted Hayes Memorial forthcoming in the community on June 5th.
 - k. Historical and Turtle Creek Railroad – Ann Wade
 - i. Organizing dates of phases, events and documenting minutes of all meetings between 2014 and 2018. Unfortunately all minutes prior to 2014 crashed on a computer stored by Dittman. Malcolm suggested reaching out to County Parks for past minutes stored.
 - ii. Eighteen new historical plaques are ready. Three are for section of trail not built as yet. On a motion to have 15 of the 18 plaques placed made by Conn, 2nd by Norton, motion carried.
 - ii. Mounting of the plaques will be a challenge. Currently they are on 6 x 6 posts with a cost of \$47.10 today as opposed to \$27.00 in the past or do we mount them on existing 4 x 4 fence posts stored from the old fence in Zone 1? On a motion made by Wade, 2nd by Sias, motion carried to use 4 x 4 posts.
9. Old Business
- i. Laurel Highlands mini-grant responded with three requests to President Rudge. They requested a letter of support from the RTC (completed), will the sandwich boards be movable or portable (movable) and what will be on the boards (a committee to be formed for signage).
 - ii. Eco Counter Update – WHT officers made the decision not to pay the \$500 lease but instead purchased three counters in a package for \$2,080. We then physically go to device and download their software.
 - iii. Reminder for all to attend the Ted Hayes Memorial Bike/Walk/Run on June 5th.
10. New Business
- a. Miles for Smiles asked to use the WHT; however, they expect 250-400 people to attend. Murrysville did not give them permission to use the senior citizen building. WHT cannot handle that amount of people/cars. This group will utilize Boyce Park for their event. Because of this request we need to develop a policy and set a limit to the number of people and cars we can handle.
 - b. Jack Maher reminded all of the West Penn Trail Triathlon (2nd weekend in October). He is looking forward to competition with WHT team members.
11. The next meeting will be on June 10th, 2021 at Pedora Pavilion, White Valley, PA at 7pm.
On a motion by O’Hara, 2nd by V. Rudge, the meeting was adjourned at 8:19pm.

.....SEE YOU ALL ON JUNE 5TH TO HONOR TED HAYES.....

Respectfully submitted,
Vicki Rudge