



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)

Minutes of the WHT Board Meeting

July 9, 2026, 7:00-8:00 PM

Pedora Park, White Valley, PA

Meeting Attendees:

- Present Board (17): Mike Banda, Michael Bertonaschi, Karen Rose Cercone, Wendy Davis, Jerry Detar, Chad Emahizer, Liz Ferri, Rick Fisher, Steve Ising, Tom Marcin, Pat Norton, Chris Panichella, Stan Rudge, Vicki Rudge, Brooke Russick, Malcolm Sias, Ann Wade
- Absent Board (4): Rob Cronauer, Monica Meehan, Darren Miller, Annamarie Stackiewicz
- Guests and Members (11): Peter Allen, Barb Coulter, Jim Coulter, Brian Dougherty, Tim Dunn, Julie Gulick, Tim Leriots, Alaina Pobok, Jeff Richards, Lisa Sabol, Gene Smeltzer, Dale West

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

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. President's Comments - None.

3. Public Input / Introductions

- Alaina Pobok introduced herself as a consultant with Point Design Group who is working with the Delmont visionary committee on their current trail alignment project.

4. Approval of Minutes

Jerry Detar made a motion, seconded by Ann Wade to approve both the May 14 and June 11, 2026 minutes. The motion passed.

5. Approval of Treasurer's Reports

A motion was made by Michael Bertonaschi, seconded by Pat Norton, to approve the May treasurer's reports which were presented to the board last month. The motion passed.

At the end of June, our checking balance was \$4,735.66, our Money Market balance was \$114,298.31, our Fidelity Investments were being phased out and our existing CD balance is \$64,227.69. (We also have a new \$100,000.00 CD that just started with funds transferred from Fidelity and checking, but it isn't showing up in the financials yet.) WHT's current assets total \$341,988.35 including fixed assets of \$60,403.43. A motion was made by Karen Rose Cercone, seconded by Malcolm Sias, to approve the June treasurer's reports. The motion passed.

6. Items for Action and/or Information

- a. A card expressing support was sent to the victim of the recent incident on the trail.

- b. An event request was received from the Westmoreland Land Trust (both the COI & trail use application have been received by the RTC). The event will be a ribbon-cutting for conservation of Turtle Creek Gorge (protecting the wooded slopes along the trail) on Thursday August 6, from 9 AM-2 PM in Zone 5. EverReady Construction will allow participants to park on their property and walk to the trail. Chad Emahizer made a motion, seconded by Michael Bertonaschi to approve the event. The motion passed.
- c. Upcoming Joyrider Events – Jerry Detar and Steve Ising
 - July 10 – Train the Trainer meeting to show how to use the Joyrider equipment at Five Star Trail – other volunteers are welcome to attend.
 - ~~July 16, 10 AM – first WHT Joyride will occur at Carson & Braun Trailhead, with two passengers scheduled at this time.~~ This event was postponed due to weather.

7. Old Business

- a. (Continued from June) Annual payment for porta-johns along trail – Chad Emahizer noted that a new contract has been finalized by the county which includes the trail's summer and winter porta-johns. The total cost for the year will be less than \$6000 (paid monthly). Jerry Detar made a motion, seconded by Wendy Davis, to approve this expenditure. The motion carried.
- b. (Continued from June) Prohibition on horse-riding on the WHT. The officers have discussed this issue and concluded that our single-track trail is not appropriate for horse riding due to the lack of wide shoulders and the amount of usage by families and dog walkers. This decision is supported by Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation.
- c. RTC Parking fundraiser at Twin Lakes - Malcolm Sias reported that the total proceeds from the parking fundraiser were \$25,000 (lower than usual due to the heat wave), split between RTC and Westmoreland County Parks. A total of 146.5 hours were contributed by WHT volunteers, which made us the top earner of all trails with a total of \$4030.78.
- d. Results of Movie Filming on the Trail June 15th and 17th – Stan Rudget reported that despite promising not to interrupt trail use, the movie crew were quite disruptive on the initial day of filming. Stan spoke to them and said they were much more respectful of trail users on their second day of filming. They may be back in the autumn.
- e. Western PA Trails and Greenways Summit – this event will be on August 26 and 27 in Indiana PA. WHT will help fund the registration costs for anyone who wants to attend.

8. New Business

- a. Winner of the July 4 Bike Raffle – Vicki Rudge noted that the bike raffle made \$1000. The winning ticket was purchased by Malcolm Sias for one of his grandchildren, Wyatt.
- b. Allocating Comedy Night and Parking Fundraiser money – Ann Wade moved, with a second from Pat Norton, to transfer all of the money raised from these events to the designated Headquarters Fund for the trail. Chad Emahizer will track down the past five years worth of fundraising to make sure all of it has been transferred into the fund.
- c. Deallocating funds not needed for 2025 flood damage repairs – Chad Emahizer noted that the money that was set aside last year for emergency flood repairs was not used and suggested that it be transferred back into our general operations fund. Malcolm Sias moved to deallocate the funds, seconded by Wendy Davis. The motion passed.

- d. Leaning trees on the trail –two large and dangerous trees have begun leaning over the trail. Malcolm Sias moved, seconded by Michael Bertonaschi, to seek bids from professional tree-cutters to remove them. The motion passed.
- e. Second-quarter trail usage counts - see attached report from Dan and Kathy Sigg.
- f. Our new property at Route 66 has proven to be a little rough to mow with existing equipment. Stan has gotten a quote of roughly \$7000 for a large commercial lawn garden tractor to use for mowing this property. The RTC has already allocated \$2500 toward this purchase. Stan would like to request up to \$3000 from the Pittsburgh Foundation along with \$2000 WHT funds. Michael Bertonaschi made a motion to approve the purchase of this tractor, seconded by Malcolm Sias. The motion carried.

9. Standing Committee Reports

- a. Real Estate/Acquisitions & Engineering/Construction - Jeff Richards presented updates on Zones 3 and 5. GAI Consultants recommends that the intersection of Laufer Mine Road and Athena Drive be turned into a three-way stop to improve the safety of the planned trail crossing. Drilling to determine the subsurface geology near the Route 66 crossing will occur in August. Export is planning to build a new municipal building just east of our Trail Head. Trafford Planning Council will meet on July 16 to discuss the expansion of the Great American Baseball site, which will need to be integrated with the current plans for the Turtle Creek Connector trail being developed by Friends of the Riverfront and Pennsylvania Environmental Council. The two groups hope to have the Norfolk-Southern track segments acquired by the end of the year. Finally, the Delmont Visionary group will be having an Open House on July 14 to discuss their trail alignment project. All interested parties are welcome to attend.
- b. Public Relations – Vicki Rudge reported that WHT Facebook followers increased again to 4676, Instagram followers rose to 252, and X followers grew to 164. The Poker Run on June 6 was the largest ever with 92 participants. The event made a \$5595.84 net profit for the trail. At the Trafford Flavor-Fest, the WHT Booth selling clothing and raffle tickets made \$421 in sales. Clothing sales continue to be strong, and the new bicycle design is almost sold out. Vicki also thanked all of the kiosk maintainers for their hard work promoting the trail.
- c. Website – the volunteer intake form is getting a trickle of fake registrations from Russia that Chad has been blocking. Many other useful applications have come in as well.
- d. Membership – The trail now has 604 active members, which is a new record for any Westmoreland County trail chapter.
- e. Maintenance – Michael Bertonaschi reported that Zone 4 is in good shape, but rain has delayed some of the Zone 5 maintenance. Drainage problems continue in the zone that will be closed for sewage line replacement; Malcolm Sias noted that these will be addressed during the project. A large lot has recently been repaved opposite the funeral home, with new run-off channels directing water away from the road. Pat Norton reported that some dust was placed down near the Mine Safety gate where storm runoff was

formerly concentrated. Other areas along the stream were also shored up. Rick Fisher noted that the county used their articulating mower to mow Zones 5 up through Zone 2, and those areas look good. The trail's last Pittsburgh Foundation grant has been closed through purchases of additional accessories for the tractors. Rick also told us that he has the new gates that PEC purchased and that they will be installed soon.

- g. TRAILS Maintenance Project – Rick Fisher will be spearheading this effort to monitor and digitally track areas of the trail that need additional maintenance. The work is continuing.
- h. Fundraising – Rob Cronauer is stepping down as the Comedy Night organizer. Anyone interested in helping in the future should contact Stan Rudge.
- i. Trail Ambassadors – Steve Ising reported that several new Trail Ambassadors have been trained, some of whom came in through the website volunteer forms.
- j. Regional Trail Corporation / Trans-Allegheny Trails – Stan Rudge noted that the RTC has developed a new website which is getting close to completion. The GAP slide repair is moving along slowly but surely, with fundraising continuing for that expensive project.
- k. Municipal Representatives – Michael Bertonaschi reported for Trafford that Norwin high school track team members have been doing organized practices on our trail, and we may need to request proof of insurance. Tom Marcin reported for Monroeville that their police are purchasing police e-bikes and a drone in order to monitor their section of the trail. There is still no update on when the Saunders Station Bridge will be replaced. Stan Rudge reported for Murrys ville that their police are also patrolling the trail on their bikes.

10. Next meeting – August 13, 2026, 7:00 PM in person at the Pedora Park in White Valley.

11. Adjournment

Jerry Detar made a motion, seconded by Chad Emahizer, to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 PM. The motion passed.

Westmoreland Heritage Trail 2026 Event Calendar

Month	Date	Time	Event	Location
JAN	8	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Zoom
FEB	12	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Zoom
MAR	6 & 7	6 - 9 PM	Comedy Night at LIVE Casino	Greensburg
	12	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Zoom
APR				
	9	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
	19	8 -11 AM	Burn Boot Camp 5K Race & MDA Fundraiser	Zone 4
	25	8 AM – 4 PM	Norwin AF-JROTC Annual Bataan March	Zones 4 and 5
MAY	14	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
JUN	6	9 AM – 2 PM	Poker Run Fundraiser	Trafford B-Y
	11	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
	28	12 – 5 PM	WHT Info Table at Trafford FlavorFest Event	Trafford B-Y
JUL				
	9	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
	12	7 AM–12 PM	GCGX Murrysville Monster Race	Zone 4
AUG				
	6	9 AM – 2 PM	Westmoreland Land Trust Ribbon-cutting	Zone 5
	8	8:30–9:30 AM	Slickville 5K race and 2-mile fun walk	Zone 2
	13	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
SEP				
	10	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Pedora Park
OCT				
	3	All-day	Export 100 Trail Race (pending approval)	All trail zones
	8	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
	31	8AM-11AM	GCXC Racing Trick or Trot 5K	Zone 4
NOV				
	12	7 PM	WHT Board Meeting	Lamplighter
DEC				
	10	6 PM	WHT Volunteer Appreciation Night	WCD