Pittsburgh Day of Giving

For several years, The Pittsburgh Foundation has run "Day of Giving" campaigns that encourage people to donate to nonprofits in Allegheny and Westmoreland Counties (Armstrong County has a similar campaign). In these campaigns, The Pittsburgh Foundation raised a pool of matching funds and signed up nonprofits to participate. Then for one or two days, the public was invited to contribute, and the matching pool was distributed in proportion to the public contributions.

The Pittsburgh Foundation has changed their Day of Giving model. There will no longer be general Days of Giving with the Foundation as the lead organizer (and raiser of the matching pool). Instead, the campaigns will be focused on specific areas such as arts, education, or environment. In this model, a group of nonprofits organizes itself and raises the matching funds, and The Pittsburgh Foundation provides the web site, some of the publicity, and technical support.

The first campaign under the new model was the Arts Council Day of Giving last October, https://nonprofitquarterly.org/philanthropy/24136-6th-day-of-giving-excites-and-unnerves-pittsburgh-nonprofits.html. On May 8, there will be a campaign for Westmoreland and Butler counties. Forty Butler county groups will split a $10,000 match and 100 Westmoreland groups will split a $50,000 match. Another focused campaign in planning for probably next year, will be centered on environmental organizations.

All this is an introduction to a suggestion that the EPTA Board consider an Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Day of Giving. This would include the 14 mainline trail groups and the 7 connecting trail groups, assuming all want to participate. We think a $5,000 to $10,000 match pool could be found. Yesterday we were at The Pittsburgh Foundation for an event and took advantage of the opportunity to inquire in general terms whether this would be an appropriate scale -- it does seem to be in range. The reasons for doing this would be several:

- Previous Days of Giving events have had matches from 8 to 25%. Thus the donor dollars go further
- There is large media campaign associated with the event, which would bring publicity to the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail.
- The first few times that the previous event was held, it brought new money to the groups.

The reasons for not doing this would be several:

- To be successful, the trail groups would have to reach out to their members, friends, donors and potential donors to encourage them to give to the group at this time, in order to get the match.
- To be successful, the trail groups would to promote the event via their media contacts, mailing lists, etc.
- Each of the groups that wants to participate would need to fill out a two page form verifying they are 501c3 status, and that they have filed their 990s

- The campaign would get a cut of the take (5.99%) as credit card and license fees, but that should be covered by the match
- Several of the trail groups are already part of a local Day of Giving.
- Someone would have to coordinate with the Pittsburgh Foundation and lead the campaign.

The Pittsburgh Foundation would provide:

- Staff time for help in organizing the campaign
- The web site that handles the PR, contributions and bookkeeping.
- Media kits
- A project plan that has been used on past campaigns, so that we would have guidance on what to do and when
- Distribution of media material to over 20,000 media, donor contacts
- Phone call support for contributors on the Day of Giving

Action items:

- A commitment by the organization would be needed 8 weeks before the date.
- Matching funds would need to be at the Pittsburgh Foundation 4 weeks before the date.
- A proposed target date could be Wednesday July 29. At present there are no other Pittsburgh Foundation Days of Giving scheduled after May for this year. I am guessing that next year there would be several.
- We would need to raise a match of $5,000 to $10,000
- I (Roy) would be willing to organize, chair a committee, etc. to pull this off.

Motions:

1) In order to participate (receive funds) from Armstrong Day of Giving, The Pittsburgh Foundation, and the Westmoreland Foundation, authorize Roy Weil to submit a profile and letter of agreement to the Armstrong Day of Giving, The Pittsburgh Foundation, and the Westmoreland Foundation.
   Note: There is a deadline of 30 Apr for Armstrong.

2) In order to have an *Erie to Pittsburgh Day of Giving* event sometime in July or August, authorize Roy Weil to form a committee, work with the Pittsburgh Foundation, solicit match grants and do whatever else is necessary to make it happen.