

**ERIE TO PITTSBURGH TRAIL ALLIANCE, INC. (EPTA)**  
**Minutes of April 22, 2014 Meeting**  
**Held at Drake Well Museum, 202 Museum Lane, Titusville, PA 16354**

Participants

Organization

**Trail Organization and At-Large Members:**

Bill Joyce	Allegheny Valley Trails Association (alternate)
Ron Steffey	Armstrong Rails-to-Trails Association (delegate)
Toni Henry	Armstrong Rails-to-Trails Association (alternate)
Tom Baxter	Friends of the River Front (delegate)
Barney Scholl	Mercer County Trails Association (alternate)
Kim Harris	Oil Region Alliance (delegate)
Marilyn Black	Oil Region Alliance (alternate)
Leah Carter	Titusville Area Trails Association (delegate)
Roy Weil	At-Large (delegate)
Mary Shaw	At-Large (alternate)

**Guests:**

Emily Altomare	Titusville Area Chamber of Commerce
Kristin Arendash	City of Oil City
Merrilynn Cushman	Titusville Redevelopment Authority
Lyndsie DeVito	PennDOT District 1-0
Deb Eckleberger	Titusville Redevelopment Authority
Debra Frawley	Greenways Coordinator, Council on Greenways and Trails
Bob Jennings	Armstrong Rails-to-Trails Association
Adam Mattis	DCNR, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation
Scott McCray	Titusville Area Trails Association
Will Prince	Progress Fund (Trail Towns)
Sue Smith	Northwest PA Planning and Development Commission
Mike Steimer	Allegheny Valley Land Trust and Armstrong Rails-to-Trails Association

**Welcome:** Vice President Ron Steffey presided and called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Leah Carter on behalf of the Titusville Area Trails Association welcomed everyone to Titusville, and she invited participants to ride the Queen City Trail and the Oil Creek State Park Trail after today's meeting.

**Introductions:** Participants went around the room, introduced themselves, and indicated whom they represented.

**Guest Presentation:** Will Prince from The Progress Fund provided an overview of the services of the Progress Fund. Mr. Prince announced that the Progress Fund is expanding their service area to western Pennsylvania along mega corridors. The first communities along the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail that the Progress Fund has chosen to work with are Titusville, Oil City, and Emlenton/Foxburg. Services offered through the Progress Fund's Trail Town program include networking for the businesses, and starting in June 2014 a matching grant program for items like bike racks, etc. Trail town kick-off meetings have been held in Titusville and Emlenton/Foxburg; a kick-off announcement for Oil City will be held on April 24, 2014. Titusville has completed the trail town assessment in 2013 and has a complete trail town plan that they are beginning to implement. Trail town assessments are scheduled for Emlenton/Foxburg tentatively on May 22, 2014, and in Oil City on May 29, 2014. Mr. Prince entertained questions, and provided answers.

**Quorum of Voting Members:** A quorum of voting members was not present to conduct official business. M. Black moved that the group proceed as a committee of the whole. R. Weil seconded; motion carried. All motions carried will be presented at the July 22, 2014 Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance Board of Directors Meeting for ratification.

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes of the January 18, 2014 meeting were provided in advance. It was noted that Barney Scholl's name was misspelled in the second item of the minutes and should be corrected. Mr. Bob Jennings should be added as a guest at the January meeting. It was moved by R. Weil to approve the minutes as corrected, seconded by L. Carter; motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** T. Baxter, Treasurer distributed copies of the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Baxter noted that not reflected on the report is a membership of \$100 paid for the Titusville Area Trails Association; payment arrived after the report was produced. Therefore, the cash ending balance is \$4,423.42. Mr. Baxter also noted that the financials of the EPTA have been audited, and everything was found in order. R. Weil moved to accept the Treasurer's report with the addition of the recent membership payment received, L. Carter seconded; motion carried. A copy of the Treasurer's report will be kept on file with these minutes.

### **New Business:**

#### 1. Recent Grant Awards for Projects on the EPT

- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy 2014 Pennsylvania Trails Assistance Mini-Grant Program
  - Friends of the Riverfront: Produce and install EPT signage on a 1-mile corridor on street; match secured.
  - Oil Region Alliance: Prototype EPT signage for PennDOT approved use on PA State owned roads that are designated as a bike route; install EPT signs in Oil Creek State Park and Oil City on state owned roads. Already approved signage will also be installed on non-state road that share the road with bicyclists in Oil City, and along the Oil City trail segment.
  - Cranberry Township: Install a composting toilet facility along the Justus Trail; this will be a prototype to see how they work in this region. B. Jennings asked what the gross cost for this type of toilet, D. Frawley provided a cost of \$24,000 and noted that a sewage permit is required. The estimated life of this type of facility is 20 years, and it is ADA Accessible.
- Corry Area Community Foundation – Clear Lake Authority has been awarded \$1,500 toward appraisal cost for the proposed trail corridor from Corry south 6.2 miles toward Spartansburg.
- Trail Volunteer Fund – Armstrong Rails-to-Trails Association received funds to assist with limestone to resurface 1.5 miles of trail from East Brady to Phillipston.

#### 2. Upcoming Grant Opportunities

- PA Department of Economic Community Development; Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program
  - Redbank Valley Trails Association will be applying for the Climax Tunnel project.
  - Clear Lake Authority will apply for the Spartansburg to Corry extension
  - Oil Region Alliance will be applying but unsure of which project as they are still in discussions with project partners.
  - Titusville Redevelopment Authority is working on the Queen City Trail Extension to reach the Walmart Area. It was reported they are unsure if they will be submitting an application.
- TIGER VI
  - Lawrence County is submitting an application on behalf of the Power of 32 for joint projects including some planning and some implementation.
  - Armstrong Rails to Trails Association will be applying for the Climax Tunnel. Trail

- Trail Volunteer Fund – The deadline for the next cycle of funding is June 2014; however, this is not a rigid due date. Funding can be used for materials and equipment. The Application is easy; for more information on the Trail Volunteer Fund visit <http://they-working.org>.

### 3. Request for Letters of Support for the EPTA

K Harris explained the current mechanism to handle requests for letters of support from the EPTA: an officer of the EPTA receives a request. The Secretary drafts a letter of support; the Executive Committee reviews the draft, and if everything is okay, the President signs the letter. Because there are times when a short turnaround is required, K. Harris suggested all requests for letters of support be directed to the Secretary with a copy of the draft grant application; the the Secretary will draft the letter of support and send it to the president for signature. M. Shaw recommended that requests be made two weeks in advance, although on occasion, it may be necessary to waive this requirement. This should be for non-monetary requests. Any request asking EPTA for monetary support needs to involve the entire Executive Committee. K. Harris made the motion to have non-monetary requests for letters of support with a copy of the draft grant application be directed to the Secretary; the Secretary will draft the letter of support, forward it to the President for signature. Any request for monetary support will be sent to the full Executive Committee for input. R. Weil seconded; motion passed. At each meeting the Secretary will provide a report on all letters of support issued, and have a copy of the letters available for review.

### 4. Consideration of Strategic Planning for the EPTA

With the EPTA in a stage of expansion and increased activity, M. Black suggested the EPTA Board consider applying to the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society (PRPS) for their Recreation and Parks Technical Assistance Program (RecTAP) for facilitated strategic planning. If an organization is approved for the program, PRPS will pair the organizations with peer consultant; the project should be completed in 3-6 months. The professional peer consultant will provide the organization with verbal recommendations and written report. The grants have a maximum value of \$2,500. The Professional consultant is paid directly by PRPS. Applications are evaluated every 3 -4 months; there is no deadline for submission. If an applying organization is a non-member, there is a \$75 match requirement. Strategic Planning would likely require a few extra Board meetings. There was a question as to the cost of a PRPS membership; this was not known immediately.

T. Baxter moved that EPTA file an application for RecTAP assistance in facilitating strategic planning and if membership to PRPS is not more than the application cost, that EPTA becomes a member; L. Carter seconded. Motion approved. T. Baxter agreed to have the Friends of the Riverfront prepare the application for EPTA.

### 5. Consideration of Peer-to-Peer Study; DCNR Partnership Grant for Capacity Building Grant

M. Black noted this item was placed on the agenda for discussion purposes, and it is not recommended that we apply for a Peer-to Peer Study at this time; it is sensible to do strategic first. The application forms for this grant are the same as C2P2, although applications are accepted at any time; no application deadline. The grant award is a maximum of \$10,000, and a low cash match is required (10%). The grant period is 12 months. A. Mattis noted that applicants for this grant should be a municipality rather than a non-profit if at all possible.

R. Steffey suggested that the subject of Peer-to-Peer Study remain on the agenda so that the group can continue to discuss the possibility in the future.

## Old Business:

1. Confirmation of Meeting Dates and Locations:

R. Steffey noted that the Wednesday, July 22, 2014 meeting which will be hosted by the Redbank Valley Trails Association and the Armstrong Rails-to-Trails Association will be held in Brookville; the location is unknown at this time. R. Steffey will notify the Secretary of the location, so that she can distribute the information. The October 22, 2014 meeting hosted by the Friends of the Riverfront and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council is confirmed for Riverfront Park in Aspinwall. All meetings will begin at 10:00 A.M.

Vice President Steffey declared the July 22, 2014 meeting as the Annual Meeting; all members present concurred.

2. EPT Logo:

B. Scholl announced the EPT logo is registered as a trademark with the Commonwealth of PA.

3. Logo Use Policy:

Copies of the draft logo policy were made available to refer to during today's discussions. The following are the recommended changes to the draft policy; EPTA holds exclusive rights to merchandising, electronic use be included in the policy, approved usage of the logo will be for the duration of five-years from date of approval; after which the entity can submit another request for use, a proof of the use of the logo is required with the application, request are to be submitted to the EPTA Secretary, and Executive Committee Member can approve usage, for applications approves logo will be provided to applicant for use and the trademark symbol (<sup>TM</sup>) be added to the logo before issuing approval to any applicant. R. Weil moved to authorize any member of the Executive Committee to approve non-commercial use; commercial use with the inclusion of the phrase "sponsor of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail" and a recommendation of a donation to the EPTA; the policy be updated as discussed, and become effective as of today. B. Scholl seconded the motion; motion passed. President and Secretary will provide a report at each meeting of any approved request for use of the EPT logo.

4. Social Networking

Greg Troyer (the chair of this committee) was absent. K. Harris explained that EPTA runs a Facebook Page and Group for the EPT. Currently, there are mainly four people monitoring these on a routine basis (Greg Troyer, Deb Frawley, Kyle Garner and Kim Harris). She asked W. Prince to explain the difference to the meeting participants.

A Facebook Page is open and more public; thus, has a broader audience, users can share posts. "Likers," members of the public can share their images, or post on the page.

A Facebook Group is closed, and should be used mainly internally, such as a place voting members can communicate and share things.

K. Harris stated that since G. Troyer is not present today, we could delay action on which one or both forms of Facebook to use.

5. Approval of Organizational Letterhead

K. Harris explained that D. Frawley drafted a letterhead, but it was never formally approved. K. Harris distributed an updated draft version, including the official organization name (Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance, Inc). M. Shaw stated that letterheads sometimes has the entire Board of Director's names listed. L. Carter prefers no names on the letterhead. The letterhead will not be printed; it will be used

as a template. R. Weil motioned that the Secretary design the letterhead without officers or Board member's names and begin using it; seconded by B. Scholl. Motion approved.

#### 6. EPTA Website Update

R. Weil thanked those that had reviewed the updates made to the website. He reviewed the questions that were issued to all Board members. The web address is eriepittsburghtrail.org; several options for other addresses were provided by Mr. Weil; the consensus of the group is to keep the current address. Do we want to accept donations for the individual trail groups and the EPTA or just the EPTA? B. Jennings stated that groups have different facilities and instead of soliciting for individual group members, link to the individual group's web sites, and only solicit for the EPTA, as this will make things simpler; this was the consensus of the members present. What should the tagline be? The treasurer is agreeable to handle donations made through PayPal. A PayPal account for EPTA will need to set up. R. Weil suggested several taglines and recommended this be referred to a marketing committee. R. Steffey stated we do not want to market the trail at this time; rather branding is desired. L. Carter advocated taking the personal names off the website. If the EPTA, at some point in the future, votes on accepting general membership, the web verbiage can be added stating the EPTA is a 501(c)3 organization, and donations are tax-deductible.

R. Weil noted that the website hosting is about to expire and allows only four pages presently. R. Weil asked that a motion be made to permit him to change the hosting company; it was noted that this motion was approved at the January 2014 meeting. Mr. Weil asked if the EPTA wishes to contract with Roy Weil Consulting using Word Press as the software to host and maintain the EPT website, in return for the sponsorship of Freewheeling Easy on the website. Mr. Weil disclosed that he is a Voting Board Member of EPTA, and will benefit financially from the sponsorship of Freewheeling Easy. Hosting at this time cost \$119 per year, Mr. Weil will use oneonone.com, and there is no cost associated with its use. K. Harris motioned to acknowledge Roy Weil Consulting is on the EPTA Board, and will receive benefits from sponsoring Freewheeling Easy on the EPT website; and with this acknowledgement, EPTA enter into a contract with Roy Weil Consulting for web hosting and maintenance of the EPTA website. B. Scholl seconded; R. Weil abstained; motion approved. B. Scholl, K. Harris and R. Weil to draft the agreement.

B. Scholl and R. Weil will work on redirecting the domain name to the new website. It was noted that web hosting is currently with the firm of Reeves. Barney registered the domain originally.

#### 5. 2013 Trail Survey and Economic Impact Analysis

D. Frawley stated the report has now been officially released. A one-page summary of the report was distributed at today's meeting. D. Frawley noted that the 2013 study did not include water and hiking trails like the 2006 study. Overall, the 2013 report shows user numbers are up, as is the economic benefit. For a full report, contact D. Frawley and she will provide you with an electronic version. It was asked if there had been any press releases. D. Frawley replied yes, there was one locally by the Rails -to-Trails Conservancy, and that DCNR will issue a release in the near future.

#### 6. Bylaws – Committee Report

- Amend Articles of Incorporation-

M. Black noted that we are currently a “non-member” organization, and if we are considering amending our bylaws to provide for a mechanism for public to participate in the organization, she asked if we should amend our Articles of Incorporation to become a “member” organization. There was discussion regarding “member” organization versus “non-member” organization. A member organization gives voting power to all members, and a “non-member” organization gives voting power to only to the Board of Directors. B. Scholl stated he did not think the EPTA wanted to become an official “member” organization. Board of Directors present agreed that they did not want a general membership having voting power.

- Recommended Bylaw Amendments –  
The Bylaw Committee had provided a chart for use during today’s discussions on potential amendments to the EPTA Bylaws. After much discussion, attendees indicated general support for the types of amendments being considered, and indicated that there should be no more than 30 people serving on the Board of Directors, and that Directors must be current on their dues. The Bylaw Committee will next prepare actual amendment language for all of the various articles and clauses identified for updates. The full set of draft Bylaws will be provided electronically at least 10 days prior to the next Board meeting.
- Discussion – EPTA Membership Structure –  
M. Black distributed for discussion purposes proposed membership categories. Board Members will give this subject additional thought, and possibly take action at the next Board of Director meeting.

## 7. National Trails Designation

M. Shaw noted that at the January 22, 2014 Board of Directors meeting a motion passed that the Secretary of EPTA should issue a letter to all EPTA trail group members to seek their interest in apply for individual National Trails designation for their respective trail(s). K. Harris stated the letter was issued. M. Shaw distributed a spreadsheet of individual trail mileage complete and miles incomplete, surface type, and whether the trail is off the road or share-the-road (copy attached to these minutes). Individual trail groups are asked to review the information on the spreadsheet for accuracy, and provide corrections to M. Shaw as soon as possible. M. Shaw has had some conversations with others regarding criteria, specifically as to whether share-the-road segments are considered for designation. She has found out that share-the-road segments of trail can be considered, and the criteria looked at is: if the entire trail is continuous and substantially non-motorized, it is okay for some motorized segments that are well signed, safe; has written permission to use it as a share-the-road and is it signed for trail users, and the on the road segment provide continuity. Lastly, the public perceives the section as the trail.

Currently, M. Shaw is looking at the following sections to include in the application for designation – Titusville to Oil Creek State Park (Queen City and Oil Creek State Park Trail), McClintock Trail to Oil City, Justus Trail to Allegheny River Trail, Allegheny River Trail to Emlenton, East Brady to Ralston (Armstrong Trail) and the Redbank Valley Trail.

M. Shaw requested the Secretary issue a second invitation to trail organizations to become a part of the National Recreational Trail Designation.

## 8. Jim Holden Memorial Ride

K. Harris reported that the Committee looked at dates from July 1, 2014 to September 30, 2014; consideration was given to events happening in the region where the ride would be held, and other bicycling events that may conflict with the memorial ride. The committee for the memorial ride recommended September 6, 2014 from Titusville to Foxburg. K. Harris noted that the committee needs approval to move forward with detailed planning. K. Harris motioned that the Jim Holden Memorial Ride be held September 6, 2014, and the Board of Directors give approval for the Committee to immediately begin working on details of the ride. The motion was seconded by R. Weil; motion passed.

## 9. EPT Signage Plan

M. Black stated once a good funding source opens, she will write prepare an application. She noted that we really need a government entity as the lead applicant. R. Steffey asked if this will address Tourist Oriented Directional Signage (TODS). It will probably not.

#### 10. Electronic Greenways E-Magazine

The Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance provided a letter of support (dated May 9, 2012) for a Northwest Planning Commission's Greenways Mini-Grant that was filed by the County of Venango for an electronic trails and recreational newsletter. In addition to providing a letter of support, the EPTA pledged \$500 toward matching funds. M. Black noted that this grant was approved a while back and EPTA paid their pledge, but the RFP was just recently issued seeking professional services for editorial services and distribution. Letters of interest are strongly recommended and due by May 16, 2014. Proposals are due on May 23, 2014. M. Black passed around copies of the RFP, and those interested in possibly submitting a proposal, or if they know someone who might, were encouraged to take a copy with them. M. Black will circulate an email requesting two reviewers from EPTA.

#### 11. Other Old Business

L. Carter stated that making updates to the Rails-to-Trails website is difficult. Others agreed. It was recommended to try to resolve the issue through Pat Tomes.

A question was asked as to who collects trash for segments of trails that have trash receptacles it was noted most trails do not have trash receptacles.

#### Member Reports on Progress and Plans:

Armstrong Rails-to-Trails Association – Trail was resurfaced (limestone) from Phillipston to East Brady, three Porta-Johns will be rented this summer, need a lot of signage on the trail and along the road including state roads, numerous events were announced. Talking with Property owners from East Brady to Parker.  
Allegheny Valley Trails Association – Continuing re-topping of trail surface this year from Belmar to Brandon approximately 5 miles, the group is working on inventory of trail amenities and other items.  
Clear Lake Authority – Working on extending the East Branch Trail to Corry; currently, working on acquisition of property. There is a railroad bridge that needs an owner; the bridge is in jeopardy of being lost to scrap. EPTA was asked if they would be willing to own the bridge due to the emergency and this is on the main spine of the EPT. A comment was noted that EPTA does not own anything at this time and does not carry liability insurance for such structures. L. Carter suggested contacting Kathy Dahlkemper, Erie County Executive. It was noted that money to purchase the bridge is not an issue, the French Creek Conservancy is willing to purchase the parcel of property that is attached to the bridge, but do not want the bridge.  
Mercer County Trails Association - there is a possibility for trail from Greenville to Jamestown. Jamestown to Ohio is very active.  
Oil Region Alliance - McClintock Trail clean up by volunteers was held on March 29; Oil Creek Memorial Landing design is progressing well; a public meeting was held for the trail route through Emlenton on April 17, 2014.  
Redbank Valley Trails Association – Received the honor of 2014 “PA Trail of the Year,” construction happening on the trail in Jefferson County, still seeking funding for the Climax Tunnel project.  
Titusville Area Trails Association – Titusville Redevelopment Authority is now heading up trails in Titusville, the Trails Association is now picking up momentum and coming together.

Adjournment: R. Weil moved, B. Scholl seconded, and motion carried to adjourn today’s meeting; 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kim Harris, EPTA Secretary  
Minutes prepared 5/5/2014