

ERIE TO PITTSBURGH TRAIL ALLIANCE, INC. (EPTA)
Minutes of July 20, 2016 Board of Directors Meeting
Held at Carini Restaurant, 212 Main Street, Greenville, PA 16125

Participants

Organization

Trail Organization and At-Large Members:

Toni Henry	Armstrong Rails to Trails Association (delegate) (ARTA)
Barney Scholl	Mercer County Trails Association (delegate) (MCTA)
Fred Kiser	Mercer County Trails Association (alternate) (MCTA)
Mike Kotyk	Mercer County Trails Association (alternate) (MCTA)
Kim Harris	Oil Region Alliance (delegate) (ORA)
Marilyn Black	Oil Region Alliance (alternate) (ORA)
Leah Carter	Titusville Area Trails Association (delegate) (TATA)
Deb Eckleberger	Titusville Trail Town Action Team (TTTAT) (delegate)
Debra Frawley	At-Large (delegate)
Ron Steffey	At-Large (delegate)
Roy Weil	At-Large (delegate)
Mary Shaw	At-Large (alternate)

Guests:

Erin Wiley-Moyers	PA DCNR
Jim Becker	Titusville Redevelopment Authority
Janet SeGall	Mercer County Trails Association
Courtney Mahronich	Trail Town Program of the Progress Fund

Welcome And Introductions: President Ron Steffey, called the meeting to order at 10:10 A.M. Each person in attendance took a moment to introduce themselves. Fred Kiser from the Mercer County Trails Association welcomed everyone to Greenville and provided a brief overview of the Mercer County Trail Association projects.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the April 20, 2016, regular quarterly EPTA Board of Directors meeting were provided in advance of the meeting. R. Weil moved to accept the minutes, seconded by B. Scholl; motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's Report covering the period of January 1, 2016 through July 15, 2016 was submitted by T. Baxter electronically. R. Steffey passed the report around at the meeting for participants to review. B. Scholl motioned to accept the report as presented, R. Weil seconded; motion carried. A copy of the written Treasurer's Report will be filed with the minutes.

New Business:

1. EPTA Logo Usage Request Received

No requests received this past quarter.

2. Request for Letters of Support -

No requests for Letters of Support were received this past quarter.

3. Grant Opportunities and Workshops

A handout of known funding and educational opportunities was provided. E. Wiley Moyer added that the DCNR Grant Workshop will be held November 17, 2016 in Clarion at the Park Inn, and she also will provide information on the Southwest date and location. R. Steffey reminded attendees of the meeting that it is never too early to begin thinking about and working on a project. He also suggested contacting your regional DCNR Advisor as soon as you know you want to submit a project for funding.

4. NW PAssages – “Best of NW Passages”

K. Harris presented the invitation to partner with NW PAssages on an one-time edition of “Best of NW PAssages.” This will be a high quality full color printed publication. Partner rates are \$1,200 for Gold level and \$750 for silver level. Partners are provided space in the publication for advertisements and/or information. Depending on level of partnership, a number of hard copies of the printed publication are provided to partners. It was noted that the ORA and the County of Venango are sharing a partnership at the gold level. During discussions, it was asked if Venango County and ORA could include the EPT logo on their page; yes, ORA and Venango County is willing to include the EPTA logo at no charge. R. Weil moved that EPTA declines the invitation to become a partner of the “Best of NW PAssages,” and to authorize Venango County and the ORA to use the EPT logo within their pages in the publication that are included in their partnership fees and to thank Venango County and ORA for their inclusion of the EPT logo, L. Carter seconded; motion carried.

5. 2017 PEC Award Nominations

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council annually presents awards to local organizations that have demonstrated leadership, effectiveness, and results in positively affecting the environment. R. Steffey asked the EPTA their thoughts on nominating the EPTA for projects completed as a group. Winners of the annual awards each receive \$5,000 to support a non-profit environmental program of their choice. It was also noted that Dominion Energy is one of the major sponsors for this event. R. Steffey offered to gather

and write the nomination. After additional discussion, K. Harris moved to authorize the writing, signing and submission of the nomination, R. Weil seconded; motion carried.

6. Trail Adoption Guidelines

K. Harris noted that she has been receiving calls regarding wanting to adopt a section of trail. Although she refers them to individual trails near their locations, most of the individual trail organizations do not have policies for volunteers wanting to adopt trail. K. Harris asked for thoughts on whether the EPTA should develop a standard set of guidelines that would be available to EPTA member entities to utilize if desired. It was noted that the Armstrong Trail has guidelines, but is not having very good luck with theirs. After some discussion it was recommended by several attendees to collect samples for potential development of a model. E. Wiley Moyers will see if the PA Statewide Trail Advisory Committee has any samples they can share, and K. Harris will check with American Trails Association and Rails-to-Trails Conservancy to see what guidelines they have and willing to share.

7. Industrial Heartland Trail Coalition

At the April 2016 EPTA meeting held in Mayville, N.Y. the Board of Directors voted to become an official supporting member of the Industrial Heartland Trail Coalition with membership fees up to \$200. K. Harris stated fees are \$100 and the required agreement is ready to be signed by R. Steffey today. The agreement does require naming a designate and alternate. Under normal circumstances, it was felt that the President of the Organization would be the delegate; however, R. Steffey currently attends for the Allegheny Valley Land Trust, but also has represented the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail. In addition, the Titusville Redevelopment Authority that oversees the Titusville Trail Town Action Team and the Oil Region Alliance are members and attend the meetings, as does Deb Frawley who is now employed by PEC. Vice President Roy Weil agreed, and was then appointed as delegate. R. Weil motioned to appoint Barney Scholl as alternate, L. Carter seconded; motion carried.

8. Industrial Heartland Trail Coalition November 4, 2016 Summit; EPTA Presentation – “Building a Coalition”

R. Steffey stated the IHTC asked EPTA to present a workshop on “Building a Coalition.” The workshop will be in a panel discussion format. K. Harris, D. Frawley, and D. Eckerberger will join him. The Summit will be a one-day event held in Cranberry Township, Butler County, PA on November 4, 2016. The Event is open to all focusing tools for working together, how to gain support, what the Industrial Heartland Trail Coalition can do to help. The cost to attend the Summit is \$30, which includes lunch; registration forms are on the PEC website. (<http://pecpa.org/event/industrial-heartland-trails-coalition-2016-fall-summit/>)

9. 2016 EPTA Annual Meeting

R. Steffey set the 2016 Annual Meeting of the EPTA for October 19, 2016. The Meeting will be held in Etna at 10:00 AM. The regularly scheduled EPTA quarterly business meeting will follow.

10. Nominating Committee Appointment

R. Steffey appointed M. Black, D. Eckleberger, and B. Scholl to serve as the 2016 Nominating Committee; M. Black will serve as Chair.

11. IHTC GoToTrails Website

D. Frawley, of PEC, provided a brief overview of the Industrial Heartland Coalition and her tasks as the contact person for northwest PA. She then provided an overview and demonstration of the website www.GoToTrails.com, and how it can benefit trail organizations for planning and managing their trail.

12. Other New Business

Mr. Jim Becker, Executive Director of the Titusville Redevelopment Authority, presented to the attendees "Bicycle Routes PA." He noted that a study is being conducted on the western portion of the Route 6 Corridor for potential bicycle improvements. He has discussed with stakeholders, and the Pedestrian and Pedalcycle Advisory Committee (PPAC) a goal of connecting PA Bicycle routes to Titusville as well as other communities such as Meadville, Oil City, and Franklin. One of the State Routes that Mr. Becker is wanting to have designated as a BicyclePA Route is State Route 8 from Route 6 Bicycle Route "Y" in Union City south through Titusville, Oil City Franklin and on to connect to Bicycle Route "V" near the southern Venango County border. He asked the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance to consider utilizing Route 8 north out of Titusville as part of the EPT on a temporary basis while still working to develop a designated off-road trail. Mr. Becker noted if the EPTA Board agrees he felt that Route 77, to make the connection to the East Branch Trail in the Spartansburg area, could be designated as a bike route too. After much discussion, it was determined to defer these questions (on-the-road segment criteria) to EPT strategic planning.

Old Business:

1. Signage Guideline Committee

A written report was distributed electronically with the meeting agenda, and several printed copies were available at today's meeting. The Committee has several questions that they are requesting guidance from the EPTA Board as how to proceed.

- a. Should connecting trails utilize the same logo signage? Or should the sign say member of the EPT System, or member of the EPT corridor? There would be no need to update the logo policy as it already indicates EPTA Members can use the logo. After discussion, it was decided that logo marking signs state "a member of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail System."
- b. Totem signage was discussed as to whether we should or should not utilize. Pros and Cons of use were noted. R. Steffey offered to try both on new signage he will be installing, and ask trail users their opinion. R. Weil will design a horizontal example. Ron will install a horizontal and a totem (vertical).

R. Weil distributed draft copies of the "Graphic Identity & Sign Guidelines Manual" for review and comment. A digital version will be uploaded, and EPTA Board members will be notified when it is available.

2. Peer to Peer Study

Grant was approved and the contract has been executed; a notice to proceed has not yet been received. E. Wiley Moyer stated that Jim Young will be the project manager at DCNR, and Bob Good of Pashek and Associates will be the contracted vendor for the study. Note: Bob Good of Pashek and Associates was the contracted professional that performed the EPTA Organizational Analysis that was completed in April 2015.

3. RTC / Industrial Heartland Trail Coalition Trail Counters

R. Steffey noted that Eric Oberg from RTC was in the area of the EPTA corridor July 13 and 14 for a meeting; during this visit he downloaded the data from all trail user counters on the EPT and replaced the batteries. The counters will remain on the trails until November. At the beginning of 2017, individual trails will be able to request use of counters to conduct their own counts. R. Steffey noted it would be very good to have user data on a section of trail just prior to constructing additional connecting miles, then conduct a count once the new section is complete; this way you will be able to gauge the increase in users.

4. Website Updates

R. Weil had no changes to report. K. Harris reminded everyone to provide R. Weil with links to news articles regarding their respective trail that they would like shared on the media section of the website.

5. Social Networking

K. Harris stated the EPTA Facebook Group has now been designated as “unofficial”, but where peers can discuss with peers; The Facebook Page is now designated as official and only designated administrators can post or approve posts to the page. Both the group and page continue to grow with followers.

6. Other Old Business.

No other old business was brought to the floor.

Member Reports on Progress:

Written reports from members were distributed electronically with the agenda packet prior to today’s meeting. Written reports will be filed as part of the official minutes.

Adjournment:

The next meeting is scheduled to be held Wednesday, October 19, 2016 at 10:00 A.M. in Etna, PA.

F. Kiser and other members of the Mercer County Trails Association offered to take meeting participants to the soon-to-be newest section of trail in the Greenville area.

R. Weil motioned to adjourn the meeting, K. Harris seconded; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Harris, EPTA Secretary
Minutes Prepared July 29, 2016