

**ERIE TO PITTSBURGH TRAIL ALLIANCE, INC. (EPTA)  
Minutes of January 16, 2019 Regular Business Meeting  
Held at Benjamin's Roadhouse, Franklin, PA**

Participants

Organization

**Voting Members**

Bob Jennings	Allegheny River Trail in Clarion (delegate) (ART in C)
Chris Ziegler	Allegheny Valley Land Trust (delegate) (AVLT)
Dan Kostella	Armstrong Rail to Trails Association (delegate) (ARTA)
Debbie Swettenam	Butler Freeport Community Trail (delegate) (BFCT)
Jim Fincher	Chautauqua Rails to Trails (delegate) (CRT)
Courtney Mahronich Vita	Friends of the Riverfront (delegate) (FOR)
Marty Radock	IMPACT Corry (delegate) (IC)
Barney Scholl	Mercer County Trails (delegate) (MCT)
Kim Harris	Oil Region Alliance (delegate) (ORA)
Sandy Mateer	Redbank Valley Trails (delegate) (RVT)
Leah Carter	Titusville Area Trails Association (delegate) (TATA)
Ron Steffey	At-Large (delegate)
Roy Weil	At-Large (delegate)
Debra Frawley	At-Large (delegate) <i>Pennsylvania Environmental Council</i>

**Voting Members Absent:**

Bill Weller	Allegheny Valley Trails Association (AVTA)
Tom Baxter, IV	At-Large
Emily Beck	VisitErie

**Guests:**

Designated Alternates--

Beth Kostella	Alternate for ARTA
Marilyn Black	Alternate for ORA

Ronnie Beith	City of Franklin
Karen Carey	Titusville Area Chamber of Commerce
Chris Corban	Pennsylvania Environmental Council
Lyndsie DeVito	PennDOT District 1-0
Dick Garrard	Foxburg Mayor
Layne Giering	Clarion County Trails Association
Juliet Hilburn	Oil Region Alliance
Caryl Holden	Allegheny Valley Trails Association
Tori Kapopoulos	Crawford County Planning
Zach Norwood	Crawford County Planning
Renwick Steele	Allegheny Township
Erin Wiley Moyers	DCNR

Vice President Debra Frawley called the meeting to order at 10:10 A.M. welcoming everyone to the meeting. Self-introductions were made by meeting attendees. R. Beith, Events Marketing Coordinator for the City of Franklin, welcomed guests to Franklin, provided an overview of events held in Franklin,

described what trails mean to the community of Franklin, and named the newest businesses making Franklin home due to trails and outdoor recreation.

A quorum of the Board of Directors was present (25% of the total shall constitute a quorum).

B. Scholl arrived and presided over the meeting from this point forward.

**Approval of Minutes:**

- The minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting held October 17, 2018 were provided in advance. It was noted the minutes should be changed to reflect that B. Jennings was present. R. Weil moved that the minutes be approved as corrected, B. Jennings seconded. Motion approved.
- Minutes for the October 17, 2018 regular EPTA Board of Directors meeting were provided in advance. R. Weil moved to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by B. Jennings. Motion approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer's Report was provided in advance of the meeting. R. Weil noted 2019 dues invoices have been issued. There was discussion regarding sending a cover letter with the invoices thanking the members for their support, and possibly including an annual report. R. Weil noted that the accounting method has been changed from cash to accrual. S. Mateer moved that the Treasurer's Report be placed on file for audit, seconded by C. Ziegler. Motion approved.

**2019 Budget:** A draft budget was prepared by the Treasurer and sent out in advance with the Treasurer's Report. It was discussed and requested that for ease of reading and understanding, the layout should be side-by-side with prior year to new year. Clarification was requested for the budget line for grant \$0 - \$2,500 for brochure. R. Weil moved to approve as a preliminary 2019 budget at amounts shown, S. Mateer seconded. Motion approved. Final action on the budget will take place at the next Board meeting.

**Letters of Support:** No letters of support were requested this past quarter.

**Logo Usage Request:** No logo use requests were received.

**Communications:** Secretary, K. Harris, reported that a donation of \$950 was received from Mary Shaw and Roy Weil; acknowledgement was prepared and issued. Since the October meeting, Toni Henry submitted a resignation from the Board as an At-Large Director. R. Weil moved to accept T. Henry's resignation, J. Fincher seconded. Motion approved.

**Grant Opportunities and Workshops-** Erin Wiley Moyers, DCNR Regional Advisor, issues a comprehensive list of grants, workshops, and other pertinent information via email weekly. Please let E. Wiley Moyers know if you would like added to her email list to receive this information.

**Old Business:**

1. **Conflict of Interest Policy** – K. Harris reminded attendees that signed forms for the Conflict of Interest are due; she will send the policy again with forms to those who have not submitted theirs.

2. **Strategic Plan Discussion:** The plan needs to be implemented. B. Scholl requested volunteers to serve on a committee to work on implementation of the plan. D. Frawley, C. Mahronich Vita, and L. Carter volunteered to serve on the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee with B. Scholl.
3. **EPT Gap Committee:** A report was issued prior to the meeting. The spreadsheet details are constantly changing and are continually being updated. PEC and the EPTA Gap Committee are working together as not to be redundant, but to complement each other's work. Discussed were requests for letter of support and the need for the Gap Committee to understand what projects are being submitted for funding (federal, state, and private). Letters of Support show working together and the bigger picture. It was noted that the EPTA Board passed by motion at its April 22, 2014 meeting that those wanting to include a letter of support from the EPTA need to submit requests to the Secretary a minimum 2 weeks prior to the grant deadline, and include their draft grant request and budget. R. Steffey highly encourages participation in the PennDOT Long Range Transportation Planning process. C. Mahronich Vita noted the Southwest Commission wants to hold a group meeting of trail groups in their region within the next month or so.

R. Steffey noted that he has been seated as an At-Large Member on the PA DCNR's National Award-Winning Trail Advisory Committee. The State Committee consists of 20 people, each serving a 3-year term and meeting quarterly.

It was noted by K. Harris the information that is in the spreadsheet, report, and stated at the EPTA meeting should all be handled as confidential and not taken to the public.

R. Steffey noted that he is often asked when the EPT will be complete. He stated he would like the goal of 90% complete by December 6, 2029, which would have been the late Jim Holden's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday; "90 by 90." The Marketing Committee will look at this as a potential marketing piece to call people to action.

4. **PA Sales Tax License:** R. Weil reported that there was no progress.
5. **Update on RTC Trail Counters:** The Gap Committee needs to develop a use policy; K. Harris is assigned to draft this policy. There is a need in the southern portion of the EPT trail corridor to store counter equipment for easier access by EPTA trail groups in that area.
6. **Marketing Committee:** A report was sent out prior to the meeting. A draft of the Annual Report was distributed. It was noted that there are a few items that need to be inserted, including the financials. The Marketing Committee has been actively meeting via conference call. R. Weil distributed a draft brochure, and it was noted that the Marketing Committee has agreed that the draft brochure would continue to be worked on to refine the information and develop a professional-looking piece. The goal is to have a full draft for the April 2019 EPTA Board meeting. It was also noted that for the map the focus needs to be on keeping the website up-to-date and "super" current. The committee was asked to consider adding information to the website so that it is easily accessible and discusses the benefits of the trails to adjacent landowners such as studies, testimonials, etc.
7. **Industrial Heartland Trail Coalition Update:** A report from D. Frawley was provided prior to the meeting. The next Industrial Heartland Trail Coalition meeting will be held February

11, 2019 in Pittsburgh with a guest speaker from the Bayer Foundation on non-profit management. D. Frawley noted the Pennsylvania Environmental Council has received an Appalachian Regional Commission grant to review indepth trail gaps along the EPT and the PA Wilds Loop of the IHTC network. This will involve reviewing all prior studies and engineering, and other tasks and meetings. As part of the Community Outreach, the County Executives of Erie and Allegheny Counties are hosting a meeting of County Commissioners along the corridor. The EPTA will be represented by B. Scholl who will be making remarks. The Alliance and the Gap Committee will be in attendance. This is an invitation-only meeting and will take place in Foxburg.

Nominations are being sought for the Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards. Nominations are due February 8, 2019. More information on the awards and submitting a nomination can be found on PEC's website. The awards will be announced on May 22, 2019 at a dinner ceremony. Award recipients receive \$5,000 for a non-profit of the winner's choice.

The EPTA for the past few years has donated a basket of various items that Board Members gather from businesses for an auction that takes place at the awards dinner. Once again, we are being asked to donate a basket; if you are able to gather an item or two for the basket, please get to D. Frawley, K. Harris or bring to the April meeting.

8. **Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Northern Endpoint:** No report available – M. Baker unable to attend this meeting due to weather. However, K. Harris stated she spoke with the regional PA DCNR Bureau of Park office and they would most definitely welcome a meeting to discuss the Presque Isle Park trails and the potential of the EPT beginning in the park, as there are some concerns.
9. **General Membership:** L. Carter stated she would very much like to have a committee to work on membership, if anyone is interested in serving on this committee, M. Black agreed to serve on the committee. If anyone else is interested, please let L. Carter know. L. Carter noted that a cover letter and copy of the Annual Report should be sent with each new or renewal request. She also indicated that there needs to be a program that can be used by the Treasurer, Secretary, and Membership Chair to keep track of requests and acknowledgements sent and received. R. Weil has reviewed a program called “Sales Force” that can accomplish this and he, K. Harris and L. Carter will be having a conference call to discuss this. C. Mahronich Vita noted that Friends of the Riverfront uses “Sales Force” with good results.
10. **Equipment to Facilitate Call into EPTA Meetings:** Equipment has been purchased, and if time permits it can be demonstrated today. In future meeting notices, there will be call-in instructions if someone is not able to attend.

### **New Business:**

1. **EPTA Draft Share the Road Policy:** A copy of the draft policy was provided in advance. It was acknowledged that it was evident hard work went into drafting this policy. The policy was discussed with some concerns that it would possibly remove large sections on the road trail thereby reducing the miles on the ground. How can we enforce the policy? Some of the

verbiage could cause legal issues. It was noted that the policy does allow for some exemptions regarding share-the-road, and that we want to encourage the construction of off-road trail when able to move trail off the road. It was suggested that B. Jennings work with D. Frawley to refine the policy.

2. **Website:** R. Weil noted that it is his goal to have information for riders on bikes. Structure of the site is private and public pages. It was stated that confidential information is not to be on any website even in private sections. It was noted that information provided to anyone as an EPTA Board Member should not be used for any other purpose. A 2012 Linking Up booklet was produced by Mary Shaw and Roy Weil with all proceeds going to the Trail Volunteer Fund. R. Weil noted that a similar booklet is being prepared for the EPTA entitled "Linking Up." It was again noted that confidential information that was obtained through the EPTA meetings should not be used, and that information needs to be sought directly from the trail owners.

**Member Reports on Progress:** Very few written reports were received in advance of this meeting from members; therefore, each participant was provided the opportunity to provide an update. It should be noted that in order to keep meetings to a minimum amount of time, reports should be submitted in writing to the Secretary prior to meetings and should contain current updates as they relate to the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail. Events supporting local trails are encouraged to be included in the reports.

**Adjournment:** S. Mateer moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by C. Mahronich Vita. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 2:08 PM.

The next EPTA meeting will be held April 17, 2019 at 10:00 AM at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center (TREC), 301 Peninsula Dr, Erie, PA 16505.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kim Harris, EPTA Secretary  
Minutes Prepared January 23, 2019