

**ERIE TO PITTSBURGH TRAIL ALLIANCE, INC. (EPTA)**  
**Minutes of July 17, 2019 Regular Business Meeting**  
**Held at Community Center, East Brady, 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)
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)
Emily Beck	VisitErie (delegate)
Ron Steffey	At-Large (delegate)
Roy Weil	At-Large (delegate)
Debra Frawley	At-Large (delegate)

**Voting Members Absent:**

Bill Weller	Allegheny Valley Trails Association (AVTA)
Jim Fincher	Chautauqua Rails to Trails (delegate) (CRT)
Leah Carter	Titusville Area Trails Association (delegate) (TATA)
Tom Baxter, IV	At-Large (delegate)

**Guests:**

Designated Alternates--

Beth Kostella	Alternate for ARTA
Marilyn Black	Alternate for ORA
Mary Shaw	Alternate for Roy Weil

Chris Corban	Pennsylvania Environmental Council
Frank Maguire	Pennsylvania Environmental Council
Joy Knapp	Erie County Department of Planning
Juliet Hilburn	Oil Region Alliance
Toni Henry	East Brady Development
Jennifer Feehan	Northwest Commission
Ed Heasley	Clarion County Commissioner
Wayne Brosius	Clarion County Commissioner

President B. Scholl called the meeting to order at 10:05 A.M. welcoming everyone to the meeting. Self-introductions were made by meeting attendees.

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

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes of the April 17, 2019 regular quarterly EPTA Board of Directors meeting were provided in advance of the meeting. R. Weil moved to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by M. Radock. Motion approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer's Report was provided in advance of the meeting. B. Jennings moved that the Treasurer's Report be accepted and placed on file, seconded by C. Ziegler. Motion approved.

**Communications Received:** A letter of appreciation was received from the Pennsylvania Environmental Council for the donation of the basket from EPTA that was auctioned off during the Western PA Awards Dinner held in Pittsburgh. Letters from the Erie Port Authority, The City OF Erie, and Erie County regarding the desire that Dobbins Landing be officially designated as the Northern point of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail.

**Letters of Support:** The EPTA issued a letter of support to the Allegheny Valley Land Trust for the Brady Tunnel funding request submitted to DCED Greenways and Trails Program.

**Logo Usage Request:** No requests received this past quarter.

**Grant Opportunities and Workshops-** Erin Wiley Moyers, DCNR Regional Advisor, continues to issue a comprehensive list of grants, workshops, and other pertinent information via email weekly. The Greenways and Trails Summit will be held in Shippensburg, PA in September. Early registration for the Summit ends August 31, 2019.

### **Old Business:**

1. **PA Sales License:** R. Weil reported the required license document has been received. EPTA can sell and collect sales tax.
2. **EPT Endpoints:** After several meeting and discussions, stakeholders in Erie are in agreement that for various reasons Dobbins Landing be the northern end of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail. After further discussion, suggestions of alternative locations, and questions, R. Steffey motioned that after review by the Gap Committee of the recommendations of the Presque Isle State Park Manager, VisitErie, the Erie County Executive and Planning Department, the City of Erie, and the Erie and Western Pennsylvania Port Authority moves that the northern start/end of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail be located at the Dobbins Landing on the Erie Bayfront Area. This includes the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Gap Committee involvement to assist and cooperate with the previously mentioned stakeholders and others to "Support partner organizations" as recommended by Key Issue #2 and to "Advocate, Educate, Promote" as recommended by Key Issue #4 of the Strategic Plan adopted on January 17, 2018. This will also include assistance design, manufacture, and install a marker designating the start/end of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail, Design and implement a route and signage for directions to and from the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail start point, and complete installation phase so a celebration can be scheduled during the PA Greenways and Trail Summit in Erie in 2021; K. Harris seconded. Motion approved with one "Nay" vote.

## **Committee Reports:**

1. **EPT Gap Committee:** A written report, prepared by Committee Chair R. Steffey was provided in advance to Board Members which contained a brief summary update of the committee's work. In addition, there were three additional motions in addition to the EPT Northern Endpoint.
  - a. In order to avoid confusion between the EPTA Gap Committee and the Great Allegheny Passage referred to by its acronym GAP, and to have a more positive name for the committee, R. Steffey motioned "The Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Gap Committee" be changed to the "Trail Development Committee" to better describe the work and to lessen the confusion with the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP). After discussion those present thought a better name for the Committee could be developed and it was requested that we return to this request later in the meeting giving meeting participants more time to think about a new name for the committee that was more accurate. R. Steffey withdrew his motion.
  - b. The strategies by funders for trail projects are more frequently requiring projects to be mentioned in official planning documents and on lists such as the TIP and the LRTP. Recently the Gap Committee was able to include projects on the Northwest Transportation Advisory Council's LRTP. The Committee wishes to work within the EPTA Board wishes. R. Steffey motioned that the Gap Committee be permitted to represent the goals and missions of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance when communicating with others such as PennDOT, DCNR, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and Rural Planning Organizations (RPO) when the "Local Champion Team" is not established, present, or requests assistance. President B. Scholl noted a second for the motion is not required since this is a motion of a committee (meaning it has already been seconded by the others in the committee). Motion approved.
  - c. A frequent question concerns on-road strategy. The EPTA Committee became bogged down trying to establish suggested guidelines for on-road sections of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail. Based on the consensus of the Committee R. Steffey moved that the EPTA Gap Committee that "8 80" concept be adopted for guidelines for an off road and on-road design, construction, maintenance. The concept is based on what is good for an 8-year-old and 80-year old is also good for the rest of the community. It was noted that the motion has a slight typo and should be "8-year-old to 80-year old, thus 8 to 80 would be the concept, with that correction the motion not in need of a second since it is a committee motion; motion was approved.

Updates on sections of EPT were provided by committee members and others present at the meeting.

C. Mahronich Vita provided an update on Aspinwall Riverfront Park, and the park's desire to purchase a 2-mile segment of land from the River 47 Development. To draw attention to this gap and show EPTA support it is suggested we hold the EPTA Board meeting there in October, which the President of the EPTA designated as the Annual Meeting. R. Weil motion to hold the meeting at Riverfront Park in Aspinwall, K. Harris seconded. Motion approved.

1. **Strategic Plan Committee:** A written report was prepared and provided in advance to Board Members. The committee continues to review the plan and determine what has already been initiated, its status, and what still needs to be done.
2. **Industrial Heartland Trail Coalition Update:** A written report was prepared and provided in advance to the Board. The Pennsylvania Environmental Council received an ARC grant for the feasibility of the EPT corridor as well as the PA Wilds corridor. This study is to be completed by December 2019, so PEC can apply in May 2020 for a POWER (Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization) grant for implementation of some of the ready-to-go sections of trail.
3. **Membership Committee:** A written committee report was provided. T. Henry Committee Member reported that the Membership Committee was asked to define Director, Members, Donors. The definition that the committee prepared is included in their report. K. Harris moved that we adopt the definitions of directors, members, and donors as presented by the Membership Committee, C. Mahronich Vita seconded. Motion approved.

Definitions are:

- **Directors:** The Board of Directors (aka Directors) have voting power; they are elected from among the dues-paid members; Directors represent various organizations or professionals that have an interest in the EPTA.
- **Members:** Members are dues-paying individuals who have an interest in EPTA but do not have a vote. Members can assist with committees and other activities of the EPTA.
- **Donors:** Donors are individuals, businesses or organizations that wish to support EPTA financially but may not wish to be members.

4. **Marketing Committee:** A written report was provided in advance.
  - a. A viewing of the template and information gathered thus far was reviewed on screen. It was noted that the content is still being built and uploaded. It was noted that photos are desperately needed for the website and social media. Each trail group/municipality should verify the link each local entity wants to use on the EPT site. This link will take users to your information. In regard to photos it was noted as a reminder to be sure to get model releases if the person is identifiable, and permission from the photographer to use the image.
  - b. Photos and trail updates are need for the next issue of the digital newsletter.
  - c. The Committee is still working on a few items such as the brochure waiting for the maps to be redone to look similar (overall EPT, trails in the Oil Region, Armstrong Rail-Trail, and the Redbank Valley Trail).
5. **2020 EPT Trail Summit:** The Committee has met and convened by conference call. The Summit is being planned for mid-August 2020; the exact date is pending. Registration fee will likely be \$25. The committee is looking for ideas on the theme and speaker suggestions. B. Jennings stated he would like to learn more on rail research.

*Convened for lunch at 12:00 pm reconvened at 12:45pm*

### **New Business:**

1. **Nominating Committee:** E. Beck, D. Frawley and C. Ziegler were appointed by B. Scholl, President to serve as the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will prepare nominations for Directors, and Executive Committee.
2. **2021 PA Statewide Greenways and Trails Summit** will be held in Erie, PA. The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association (PALTA) is coordinating the summits now. J. Knapp and a representative from VisitErie are on the Planning Committee. F. Maguire encouraged all trail organizations to be involved in the various committees.
3. **Trail Counters:** K. Harris noted that we are ready to purchase the software subscription “Datanet” for the trail counters. The purchase of the software was approved by the EPTA Board at the July 25, 2018 meeting.

The **Gap Committee renaming** was revisited. After discussion and several options mentioned S. Mateer moved that the Committee’s name be changed to “Connections Committee,” seconded by R. Weil. Motion approved.

### **Other Business:**

Roy Weil Website Draft - R. Weil noted that he is working on the <https://pgherie.com> website. Information being compiled and worked on was provided to the Board in advance of the meeting. R. Weil requested anyone with updates to contact him. It was noted this is not an EPTA website.

**Member Reports on Progress:** Written reports provided in advance were issued as part of the agenda packet.

**Adjournment:** S. Mateer moved to adjourn the meeting, B. Jennings seconded. Meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

The next EPTA meeting will be held at Aspinwall Riverfront Park. Details will be forth coming.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kim Harris, EPTA Secretary  
Minutes Prepared September 5, 2019