

# West Pikeland Land Trust

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## **MEETING MINUTES**

September 22, 2008

Attendance:    Jim Rowan                    Ann Orth                    Sean O'Neill  
                      Suzanne Kaplan            Tom Williams            Curt Grogan  
                      Melinda Mercurio        Teresa Wood            Mike Groman

Guests:            Lisa Lacroix, Kim O' Rourke, Mead and Patti Rudasill

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### **1. Minutes of Meeting**

Minutes of previous Board of Directors Meeting August 25, 2008 were reviewed. Mike Groman motioned to approve, Curt Grogan seconded and minutes were unanimously approved with no corrections.

### **2. Financial Report**

Teresa reviewed the complete financials dated June 30, 2008, including the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss statement. The NLT account reconciliation was included, indicating a remaining balance of \$33,366.81. Approximately \$35,000 also was available in CD, Operating Expense Account and DCNR Grants. Approximately \$16,000 was invested in a restricted cash CD for Endowment Funds. Based upon Township finances, it was assumed that WPLT operations would be self funded for 2009. Teresa also advised that there was a problem with the recording of OS funds from Berkheimer and that she planned to meet with Bill Cracas to confirm proper accounting of these funds.

### **3. Committee Reports**

**Open Space:** Curt advised that the OS Resolution was approved by the BOS at the September 15<sup>th</sup> BOS meeting, but the Township had forgotten the required 15 day advertisement period. Curt was assured that this was a formality and the Township will complete advertisement and formally approve ASAP. Curt expressed frustration with the sloppy administration by the Township throughout this process and Sean O'Neill volunteered to contact the township office about assigning a point person within the Township office to track WPLT submissions and requests.

Ann Orth submitted a draft of Project Financial Analysis. This was a one page summary of information designated to inform BOS of pertinent information regarding proposed transactions. Ann requested that Board review and forward comments to her.

**Trails:** Lisa advised that she was still awaiting the DEP Permit for the Clover Mill bridge project, which she expected by the end of September. She also indicated that she will probably be able to complete the trail map of Pine Creek Park at no cost, as a potential outreach project. Her initial review suggested that the trails will not be impacted by the proposed construction of the LYA fields.

Lisa again reviewed the benefits of the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, including publication dated 9/10/08 summarizing Regional Park, Open Space and Recreation Plan Scope of Services. Due to the recent controversy over Park usage and the fact that there were grant funds available to match up to 90% of the costs for regional Park and Recreation Plans, it was agreed that this could be a valuable resource for WPLT for a \$200 annual membership fee. Melinda made a motion, seconded by Tom Williams that WPLT join this organization. The Directors present voted unanimously in approval.

Communication: Melinda advised that the WPLT website was up and live. Melinda indicated that invitations to the October 11 event at Binky Lee (see Education) had been mailed out. It was agreed to contact other conservation organizations, including NLT to spread the word about this event. Her next project will be the November membership appeal. She strongly felt that a volunteer coordinator was needed and should be a priority of the new Board and committee structure to maximize the effectiveness of communications and events. It was suggested that note cards with Bill Richmond photos of West Pikeland scenes be offered as an incentive for the appropriate membership level.

**Monitoring and Stewardship:** Tom Williams advised that he had contacted the Brenners' and their broker and offered the services and support of WPLT to accommodate the sale of this property. He also reported on his attendance at the Land Trust Alliance Rally last week in Pittsburgh, representing WPLT, where he attended full day seminars on *Conservation Easement Drafting and Documentation* and *Conservation Easement Stewardship*, as part of LTA's Standards and Practices curriculum.

**Development & Grants:** The timing of the annual appeal was determined to be mid November. Jim Rowan, Ann and Melinda will get together before the next meeting to prepare a timeline and assign responsibilities for completing this task. Ann Orth volunteered to coordinate a spring event, hopefully with a speaker. Tom Williams volunteered to contact Peter Hausmann once the details were more concrete.

**Education:** Mike Groman reviewed details of October 11 event at Binky Lee and handed out copy of invitations that were mailed. Directors were requested to distribute and/or post conspicuously to encourage attendance. Mike will contact township and obtain necessary form to post invitation on the township website. Ann will coordinate a Spring education event and Teresa will coordinate Plant sale again next year.

**Strategic Planning:** Suzanne reminded all committee chairs that quarterly reports were required to be submitted to the Township with a summary of WPLT operations for the past quarter. Committee chairs were requested to submit a paragraph summarizing their efforts to Suzanne by September 30.

**Governance and Compliance:** Jim Rowan advised that Lisa Lacroix's appointment to the WPLT Board did not make the agenda for the September Township meeting. Her appointment was expected to be approved at the October BOS meeting.

**General and Administrative:** Jim Rowan indicated that he had been unable to coordinate a meeting/conference call with the Executive Committee to propose and nominate a slate of Officers and Committee Chairs for 2009. Jim would email Executive Committee to schedule a same in the next couple weeks. It was agreed to postpone the 2009 Budget development process until the new Officers and Committee chairs have been identified.

Jim asked Sean O'Neill to see if he had the latest electronic version of the WPLT Contact list. If so, he requested Sean to update and reissue. Jim also indicated that he would provide Lisa access info to the WPLT intranet.

#### **4. Natural Gas Pipeline Discussion.**

Suzanne Kaplan distributed a copy of Philadelphia Inquirer article concerning the proposed expansion of natural gas pipelines in Chester County and West Pikeland Township. It was agreed that WPLT should be aware of the proposed locations within the township, especially any properties where conservation easements existed or were proposed. WPLT could become an advocate for the landowner in these situations. Ann Orth volunteered to contact the utility company (ies) to try and get a plan of the proposed expansion.

#### **5. WPLT Role in Township owned properties**

Jim Rowan advised that the letter he had submitted to the BOS on behalf of WPLT regarding usage of Pine Creek Park was ignored in the public hearing and discussion about ball fields. This again raised the question about WPLT role in stewardship of public-owned land and specifically township owned property. It was agreed that the best way to protect the conservation values of these properties would be to attempt to secure conservation easements on them, but that a more focused public campaign, including the use of appropriate media would more effectively represent the interests of WPLT.

Sean O'Neill suggested that TCA was working on a new comprehensive plan and that it would be a good idea to work with TCA to recommend a Conservation easement Plan for these properties and make this part of a 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase planning document. Curt Grogan indicated that his request that the Township support WPLT to solicit proposals to prepare a Conservation Easement Plan for Township owned properties was not met with enthusiasm when presented to the BOS.

**The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on Monday, October 27, 2008 at 7:00 pm at the Township Building.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Thomas L. Williams  
September 26, 2008