



Turtle Creek Watershed Association Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

January 27, 2026

Call to Order Vice President Chuck Duritsa called the Board of Directors meeting, conducted via Zoom due to severe weather, to order at 5:33 pm.

In attendance:

Board of Directors: Jim Brucker, Smokey Burdin, Karen Rose Cercone, Chuck Duritsa, Jason Fronczek, Jason McCabe, Bill Mihalco, Kylie Schultz, Paul Whealdon

Associate Directors: Amy Baer, Rob Cronauer, Ed Zinkan, Chrissy Edwards McCune

Executive Director: (absent)

Members and Guests: Mike Baer, Monica Rebar, Matt Valentine

1. Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made by Bill Mihalco, seconded by Smokey Burdin, to approve the minutes of the November 25, 2025 meeting. The motion was approved.

2. Treasurer's Report and Invoices

- A motion was made by Karen Rose Cercone, seconded by Chuck Duritsa, to approve the Treasurer's Report for November-December 2025. The motion was approved.
- Our Wagner Insurance Liability Invoice will be paid when Jim fills out the paperwork
- A motion to approve Tom Keller's expenses of \$156.64 for November and December 2025 was made by Smokey Burdin, seconded by Paul Whealdon. The motion was approved.

3. Executive Director's Report (report given by Karen Rose Cercone)

- 102 Membership Letters were sent out this month.
- Over \$8,000 of in-kind volunteer hours were donated to TCWA in 2025
- Thank you letters will be sent to the Pittsburgh Foundation for Wish Book grants

4. Old Business

a) Letters issued and letters / emails received since the last meeting

- Charity registration (BCO-10 / BCO-23) was resubmitted and renewed for 2026
- Several grant notifications were received since the last TCWA meeting:
 - Woodard & Curran Surprise Grant (\$10,000)
 - FOF Golf Association (\$1500)
 - Pittsburgh Wish Book (\$5500)

- ARIPPA Spring Grant Notification – TCWA was notified about a small grant opportunity for AMD-related projects across PA. Karen Rose will pull together a grant proposal to cover Biddle gate installation and entrance road repair, with assistance from Rob and Jason.

b) Irwin Discharge Committee

- Jason reported that progress is being made on the AML grant, with a recent visit made to the Alfieri site with BAMR personnel due to the owner's concerns.
- Kylie Schultz reported that an initial reimbursement request will be made soon for the AML grant, but not much else needs to be done at this time.
- Rob Cronauer noted that contractor quotes are in hand for the entrance gate.
- Jason Rigone has heard from Congresswoman Lee that our federal earmark appropriate request is still included in the bill going through Congress.
- Bill Mihalco reported that six or seven hunters reached out this winter to ask for permission to hunt and trap on the Biddle property. One of them reported trespassers vandalizing the site, which was reported to the Game Warden.

c) 2026 Membership Drive – Karen Rose Cercone and Tom Keller

- Board members are asked to send the TCWA membership link to their home municipality, if they are not already a business or business gold member
- Karen Rose Cercone moved and Chuck Duritsa seconded that TCWA extend a complimentary annual membership to the Westmoreland Land Trust in thanks for hosting our files at their Schwarz Farm property. The motion was approved.

5. New Business

- a) Annual Conflict of Interest forms will be mailed with membership renewals for non-lifetime board members. Please bring yours to the February board meeting or mail it.
- b) Bill Mihalco announced that several TCWA board members will meet with the Westmoreland County Commissioners on Tuesday to discuss progress on Biddle.
- c) It has been several years since the last TCWA audit. Bill Mihalco moved and Karen Rose Cercone seconded that we arrange for an audit this year. The motion was approved.
- d) Bill Mihalco noted that most of our 2025 goals were accomplished, include setting of corners. He asked board members to suggest 2026 goals for our February meeting.
- e) 2026 Event Calendar –
 - On April 11, TCWA will again co-sponsor a roadside litter clean-up with the Conservation District along Mahaffey Hill Road.
 - On April 19, TCWA will co-sponsor a Watershed Walk with Westmoreland Land Trust at the Ackermann Nature Preserve. Jason McCabe suggested that invitations be sent to Cleveland Price and Representative Bryan Rasel for both events.

- In May, Bill Mihalcon plans to organize a kiosk inspection and clean-up along the Westmoreland Heritage Trail.
 - On June 20, TCWA will again cosponsor a Rubber Ducky fundraiser with Irwin Borough. The 2026 event will be held a bit earlier in the day (11 AM to 2 PM) to avoid the worst summer heat. and will have a less expensive DJ.
 - In July or August, TCWA will partner with MAWA to host another Tap Talk, this time at Helltown Brewery.
- f) Kylie Schultz shared the several variations of a new TCWA logo which could be used on our letterhead, website, and merchandise. On a motion by Bill, Mihalco, seconded by Karen Rose Cercone, the logos were approved. Kylie will begin investigating possible sources for t-shirts and caps.
- g) Kylie Schultz reported that the Westmoreland Conservation District is sponsoring a County Watershed Networking Event on April 30, with luncheon provided for up to three representatives of each county watershed association. Invitations will be sent
- h) Kylie Schultz would like to begin exploring a possible craft beer fundraiser with a local brewery, so that the beer sold includes a donation to the organization.
- i) Jason McCabe suggested that a website update could help TCWA raise its profile and gather more public support and donations. He offered a sample website development proposal from a local web developer. Investigations of possible solutions will continue.

6. Adjournment

- On a motion by Smokey Burdin, seconded by Chuck Duritsa, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.
- The next meeting will be held at the Monroeville Municipal Building on February 24, 2026 at 5:30 PM. Note - if weather conditions are poor, the meeting will again be converted to a fully remote Zoom meeting upon 24-hour notice.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Rose Cercone