

# WEST HIGHLAND FOUNDATION MEETING MINUTES

**Location:** Fayette Area  
M & T  
Conference  
Room  
**Date:** 1/9/26  
**Time:** 12:00 PM  
**Facilitator:** Valerie Branyon

## Agenda items

1. Call to order.
2. Prayer
3. Minutes from 09/19/25 and 10/24/25 meetings
4. Old Business
  - Applied for Walmart Grant.
  - Interviews with former West Highland Students. We are scheduled to interview others soon, with plans to interview and record some via Zoom.
  - Valerie has spoken to Alabama Representative Bryan Brinyark about Funding. He indicated we could apply for a grant through the Alabama Historical Commission
  - No progress with potentially selling Timber on property. The prices have decreased, and the potential buyer is not currently interested in purchasing right now.
5. New Business
  - Valerie Branyon received a letter of resignation from one of the members of the Board of Directors. We are saddened to accept the resignation of Nichole Morgan from the Board of Directors as well as her position as treasurer. We as members of the West Highland Historical Foundation appreciate everything Mrs. Morgan has done to get the foundation to this point and we would like to thank her for her service as treasurer and board member.
  - As a result of Mrs. Kathryn Stowe attending past meetings, working at our booth during the Fayette County Fair, and having close connections with the Fayette Community as a whole, Valerie Branyon recommended that a motion be made to appoint Mrs. Kathryn Stowe to the Board of Directors and as the new treasurer to replace Nichole Morgan.
  - It is requested that all board members supply their physical address for the filing of the Amended Articles of Incorporation paperwork

- Photos need to be updated on the website and Facebook Page.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> phase money and the statement of what the 1<sup>st</sup> phase is, September and October 2025 minutes, and funds collected need to be updated on the website and Facebook page.
- Mr. Bill McCollum of McCollum Barbecue has offered to assist us with a fundraiser (like Swamp John's) doing a ticket pre-sell before the event.
- The official address for the West Highland Recreational Center is 631 Martin Luther King Jr Drive, Fayette, AL 35555 or 631 1<sup>st</sup> Street SW, Fayette, AL 35555. The 911 office indicated that there has been some confusion concerning the two addresses. Discuss how the West Highland Historical Foundation can designate one address for all purposes.
- Pictures of the Clean-Up Effort for the inside the building were posted in the Board of Directors' group message on Wednesday night. The goal is to get all rooms cleaned and for volunteers to move garbage bags to dumpsters on community cleanup day.
- We would like to obtain permission for WHHF to sign up as a service organization in JustServe (Just Serve does the work of researching organizations, finding service projects, coordinating schedules, and bringing local service projects to people's fingertips)

Today, January 09, 2026, the West Highland Foundation Committee Board Members met in the ALDOT Fayette Area M & T Conference Room, Fayette, Alabama.

Board members present:

Valerie Branyon, President

Katelyn Vann, Vice President/Website Committee via zoom

Andrea McCollum, Secretary

Alexis Wilson, Website Committee via zoom

Kathryn Stowe, Treasurer via zoom

In today's meeting, Valerie Branyon Prayed and called the meeting to order, the minutes from the September and October 2025 meetings were read by Andrea McCollum, Secretary.

- The application to deem West Highland High School as historic was completed on December 21, 2025.
- We have not received any updates on the status of Walmart Grant currently, however the next opportunity to apply opens in March 2026.
- Two alumni from West Highland have been interviewed: Mary E. McCollum Spears and Edward R. McCollum. Others have been scheduled for interviews. We would also like to consider scheduling alumni from the Area Vocational School.
- Upon meeting with Valerie Branyon, Bryan Brinyark suggested that we apply for funding through the Alabama Historical Commission. He is not aware of anything else that we may be able to apply for currently
- Andrea McCollum motioned to appoint Kathryn Stowe to the West Highland Historical Foundation Board of Directors, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Katelyn Vann and Kathryn Stowe was elected by unanimous vote.
- Alexis Wilson motioned to elect Kathryn Stowe as the New Treasurer, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Katelyn Vann and unanimously approved by the board.

- Valerie Branyon requested that all board members provide their current physical addresses for the filing of the Amended Articles of Incorporation Paperwork.
- Mr. Bill McCollum of McCollum Barbecue has offered to assist us with a fundraiser (like Swamp John's) doing a ticket pre-sell before the event. Kathryn Stowe suggested that Chat GPT be used to create tickets to be printed on card stock.
- Katelyn Vann suggested that food options be put on the tickets and it should be discussed with Mr. McCollum concerning a limited number of tickets and how much food he is willing to prepare for this cause.
- The need for photos to be updated on the website and Facebook Page was discussed and the possibility of using Chat GPT to remove past board members and add new ones without having to take more photos.
- Valerie Branyon motioned to approve permission for WHHF to sign up as a service organization in JustServe (JustServe does the work of researching organizations, finding service projects, coordinating schedules, and bringing local service projects to people's fingertips) 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kathryn Stowe.
- We received a \$5,000.00 grant from Fayette Community Fund through Judge Oswalt's office to be used for mowing the lawn and dumpster rental for clean-up efforts.
- Kathryn Stowe requested permission to reach out to Attorney David Wright, West Highland Alumni, to ask for donations and to reach out to fellow classmates to see if they would be willing to make donations to the West Highland Historical Foundation and if any of them would be willing to be interviewed. The motion was unanimously approved.

Motion to adjourn by Valerie Branyon and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Andrea McCollum January 9, 2026, at 12:59 PM.

Andrea McCollum, Secretary

AM