

Friends of the Rouge Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2017
U of M Environmental Interpretive Center
Dearborn, MI 48128

Directors Present: Mike Darga (MD), Alice Bailey (AB), Dr. Orin Gelderloos (OG), Emily Lowery (EL), Scot Martin (SM), Chester Marvin (CM), Anne Naszradi (AN), Dave Norwood (DN), Susan Thompson (ST), Al VanKerckhove (AVK), Laura Wagner (LW) (11 total)

On Conference call: Andrew Hoffman (AH) (1 total)

Directors Excused: Zachary Lovall (ZL), Brandy Siediaczek (BS) (2 total)

Directors Absent: None

Staff Members Present: Marie McCormick (MMC), Karen Hannah (KH), Erin Cassady (EC), Sally Petrella (SP), Matthew Bertrand (MB) (5 total)

1) CALL TO ORDER

President MD called the meeting to order at 5:12pm

2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve agenda made by ST, seconded by AN. Motion carried

3) APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

a. Minutes from May 10, 2017. Motion to approve made by AN, seconded by LW. Motion carried

4) REPORTS (also refer to reports in Board packet)

a. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee (EC) is scheduled to hold calls on a monthly basis

The EC conference call was May 17- updates on items in tonight's meeting agenda

b. Executive Director

FOTR staff attended River Rally. Refer to reports for further information

The new website is ready for "soft" launch

Introduced new staff member Matthew Bertrand

Two interns are going to be hired one for PR and the other for GIS

c. Rouge Education Project (REP)

Twenty-nine schools participated in the REP this spring

d. River Restoration/Volunteer Monitoring (PI)

Refer to reports for Rouge Rescue update

River Restoration still waiting on QAPP approval from the State of Michigan

The spring bug hunt was delayed and rescheduled; 24 sites sampled

Fish surveys delayed due to delay in grant funds- no funding until July 1

GM is providing \$5000 worth of funding next year

e. Membership Committee

Looking for access at Sassafraz Woods for a potential Explore the Rouge event

f. Fund Development Committee

The Fund Development Committee meeting is after tonight's board meeting

The Rouge Cruise is coming up August 8

g. Finance Committee/Treasurer

i. April 2017

Motion to approve April 2017 financial report made by AH, seconded by ST. Motion carried

Sold 50 percent of the investments to invest in more "trackable" funds. The Finance Committee is meeting later this month. The audit will be presented at the August board meeting

5) NEW BUSINESS

a. Board Training- Paco Ollervides, River Network

Taking the Fear Out of Fundraising: Board Roles and Responsibilities

Board exercise on Staff/Board organizational roles

Presentation on fundraising plan and strategies

Recommends putting FOTR "Elevator Speech" in writing

Have tangible fundraising plan and goals

Use dashboards to keep on track with goals

Identify how much corporations and individuals can give

b. Board Retreat Location

Retreat location suggestions: Escape Room, Fowling, Tigers Suite

The Tigers game is approximately \$120-140 per person and looking to schedule a mid September game

More information and updates later

c. FOTR-ARC Merger Next Steps

The first FOTR/ARC Transition team meeting was held May 30. The meeting went well. FOTR presented their picks for the new board: MD, AB, LW, DN and ST; ARC did not present their selections, but have identified board members and alternatives.

Motion to approve GLELC legal contract made by EL, seconded by LW. Motion carried. The legal counsel is secured with an agreement- a flat \$5000 fee with the funds from the ERB Foundation ARC/FOTR merger funding.

d. Water Trail Fiduciary/Caretaker:

The Rouge River Water Trail group is seeking support for signage, funding and promotion. Canton and Dearborn are going to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Wayne County for signage and markers. A formal proposal is being developed to make FOTR a fiduciary for the Water Trail. The water trail is a unique opportunity as it is part of the Motor City Auto Heritage Area. The Huron River, Flint River, and Clinton River have river trail models to emulate.

Motion to move forward on developing water trail partnerships/fiduciary made by ST, seconded by AN. Motion carried.

e. Marathon Mascot

Discussed the Frog mascot for use in promoting the FOTR as a Detroit Free Press Marathon Charity Partner and a mascot name. The name selected is *Rana Ribbit*. EL will take photos of the frog mascot at various locations in the watershed.

f. Additional Issues from the Floor

Discussed development in Willow Creek (Canton Township)

October 22 is the proposed date for the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy hike in LeFurge Woods

7) ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by LW, seconded by EL. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:50pm

Respectfully Submitted by:

Susan Thompson
FOTR Secretary

Friends of the Rouge
Board of Directors Meeting
August 9, 2017
Membership Committee Report

The membership Committee met on July 26, 2017 at the FOTR office.

The Committee discussed goals and objectives for 2017 and a follow up on tasks discussed on the June 1 conference call.

Explore the Rouge

Explore the Rouge 2017 events are:

Lower Rouge bike ride

Held Thursday June 22 meet at 7:00pm and rode along the scenic Lower Rouge Trail. Participants learned about the geology of the Glacial Lake Plain of Southeast Michigan. Thirty adventuresome riders headed out onto the trails. Unfortunately, some the group encountered some severe thunderstorms, but everyone took this in stride. Thanks to board member Al VanKerkhove for leading the ride and the fascinating geological tour.

Rouge Cruise

When: Tue, August 8, 2017, 5:30pm – 8:30pm

Where: Stroh Co, 300 River Pl Dr # 5000, Detroit, MI 48207, USA ([map](#))

Rouge Adventure Bike Ride #2

When: Saturday, August 26, 2017, 9:30am-12:00pm

Where : Environmental Interpretive Center, 4901 Evergreen Rd, Dearborn, MI 48128, USA ([map](#))

Explore where the Main, Middle & Lower Rouge and, Native American Trails meet. We will ride along the Rouge Gateway, Middle Rouge Parkway and Rouge Park Trails. The 12 mile, approximately 1 1/2 hour ride takes place on relatively flat asphalt/concrete surfaces within the SE Michigan Glacial Lake Plain with a few slopes riding in-&-out of flood plains. Meet in front of the Environmental Interpretive Center(EIC) at the University of Michigan–Dearborn. Free parking in the structure nearby

Rouge Kayak Tour

Sat, September 16, 2017, 9am – 1pm

Where: Belanger Park Drive, Belanger Park Dr, River Rouge, MI 48218, USA ([map](#))

Description: Meet at Belanger Park to leave your car and catch the shuttle to Melvindale, kayak from Melvindale to Belanger Park. Register at <http://www.riversidekayak.com/industrial-rouge-tour.html>

Lower Rouge Canoe Tour

When: Sat, October 7, 2017, 10am – 12pm

Description: Annual Canoe Trip from Commerce Court to Goudy Park. Meet at 3600 Commerce Court at 10 am. Rental canoes and kayaks (\$45) and shuttle (\$10) available from Heavner Canoe Rental, register to <https://docs.google.com/a/therouge.org/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfoMpVo6MDNTqeUSuKFadRBSOdnfc-HYzPEgruPSXWurGpPtw/viewform> reserve. Register:

Board members are going to be needed to assist in supporting the Explore the Rouge events (*registration, introductions, etc.*)

The committee is still gathering more information on potential events for later this year.

The committee is still reaching out to non-profits to find out what other groups do to attract and retain members. The groups contacted had a range of suggestions, such as offering incentives, holding member appreciation events, tangible incentives (like pewabic tiles or tree sponsorships, special mailings), other membership premiums.

Hosting a Film Festival was discussed for environmentally themed films. The committee is checking into Making Waves- a documentary on Great Lake invasive species. No response to inquiries about screening the film. The Wild and Scenic Film Festival staff was contacted for information about hosting a film festival and the committee discussed the possibilities of FOTR hosting one. The Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC) held a Wild and Scenic Film Festival in February 2017. A call is into HRWC staff to find out how the event went.

Meetup groups: there is a \$15 subscription fee to have an account and post.

The FOTR social media intern is working on posting events. 15 persons who attended the June bike ride were from a Meet Up group.

The committee is working on revamping thank you letters.

Discussed holding about holding a question and answer session regarding Rouge River related issues and partnering with state and local representatives to host. Plan to reach out to Board members to identify potential representatives that may be interesting in hosting a Q and A.

The next committee meeting is going to be at date TBD after the Labor Day holiday