

Friends of the Rouge Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2015
U of M Environmental Interpretive Center
Dearborn, MI 48128

Directors Present: Keith Armitage (KA), Alice Bailey (AB), Adam Cloutier (AC), Mike Darga (MD), Chester Marvin (CM), Dave Norwood (DN), Carla Rigsby (CR2), Brandy Siedlaczek (BS), Susan Thompson (ST) (9 total)

Directors Excused: Heather Esper (HE), Andrew Hoffman (AH), Mike McNulty (MM), William Stone (WS), Steve Weis (SW) (5 total)

Directors Absent: None

Staff Members Present: Aimee LaLonde-Norman (ALN) (1 total)

1) CALL TO ORDER – President Michael Darga called the meeting to order at 5:12 pm

2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda made by AC, second by DN, motion carried.

3) APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

a. Minutes September 9, 2015

Motion to approve minutes made by DN, second by AC, motion carried.

4) REPORTS

a. Executive Director

Newsletter was mailed out to 1400 addresses

The Rouge cruise dates are set for 2016: Rouge Brew Cruise is Wednesday, June 15, and the dinner cruise is August 9.

The Phone- A-Thon is set for March 15 and 16, 2016

Three MDEQ/MDNR Habitat Grant applications were denied. The projects applied for were invasive species removal, aquatic habitat improvement, and Johnson Creek protection

NPS-The checklist was received for the grant contract

Erin Cassady and ALN met with Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan to discuss REP program multiple year funding to support the program and innovations into the future

The next ARC/FOTR Reorganization meeting is Tuesday October 20

Reached out to Denso about the possibility of obtaining a new Rouge van

Updated the stewardship packet and a first meeting is scheduled with ITC

Public Education campaign with ARC is ongoing

The FOTR website transition is ongoing and the new website should be operational December 1

Staff merit raise plan is going to be under discussion

Reached out for intern support from Pure Oakland Water (POW); there may be \$5000 available for interns.

i. Rouge Education Project (REP)

8 schools participated in REP Fall monitoring. GM Romulus is engaged in the project, plus IKEA

LUSH is supporting FOTR again

REP is preparing an online classroom curriculum

ii. River Restoration/Volunteer Monitoring (PI)

There is a rain garden celebration tomorrow at 8:00pm

Three River Friendly workshops were held, with lower attendance than those held in the spring

Saturday May 21, 2016 is the 30th Annual Rouge Rescue

132 people are signed up for the Fall Bug Hunt

No funding for the frog and toad, and fish surveys next year. Met with Michigan Sea Grant to discuss potential funding sources

The fall canoe trip and Rouge A Palooza October 10 in the City of Wayne was very successful

The Coastal Zone grant for the water trail is available again

b. Membership Update/Committee

The membership committee is meeting after the board meeting tonight

There is an uptick in membership renewals recently

c. Fund Development Committee

The planned giving discussions are ongoing, and a major gift subcommittee meeting. A list of action items, set dates and events and ramping up planned giving in relation to the 30th Anniversary was done at the last meeting. The next Fund Development Committee meeting is November 11 after the board meeting.

d. Finance Committee/Treasurer

i. August 2015

Motion to approve August 2015 report made by ST, seconded by CM, motion carried.

5) NEW BUSINESS

a. Board vacancy

Sharon Oliver-Merchant is officially off the FOTR board and the filling the vacant position is deferred for now

b. Reorganization Investigation

Meeting is scheduled for October 20. Reported to ERB on the reorganization status and the next meeting of the committee may be critical in determining if the reorganization is going to move forward

Discussions between the parties continue

c. 30th Anniversary

i. Planning

Look at branding and a logo/theme for the 30th Anniversary before the beginning of the year. Ideas discussed

ii. Letter from the River

AC is drafting a letter "from the river" for fundraising. Ideas for content and themes discussed

d. Changes on campus

The recent changes in the relationship with University of Michigan-Dearborn website support, parking, and construction issues discussed

e. Printer/copier

Asked Toshiba for new pricing options

f. Board training

Earth Share presentation for 15 minutes at the next board meeting in November

g. Additional issues from the floor

Rouge "Mystery oil spill" DARP plan discussed. FOTR will draft comments for submission to USFWS in response to DARP

h. Sign thank you letters/individual updates

Signed sympathy card for family of former Livonia Mayor Robert Bennett and other thank you cards

i. Geocaching

30th Anniversary geocaching event discussed.

The number of geochachers participating in the Explore the Rouge Newburgh Lake hike is encouraging

6) ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by ST, second by AC, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:33pm

Respectfully Submitted by:

Susan Thompson
FOTR Secretary