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 engages 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