

**Friends of the Rouge Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**September 13, 2017**  
**U of M Environmental Interpretive Center**  
**Dearborn, MI 48128**

**Directors Present:** Mike Darga (MD), Alice Bailey (AB), Orin Gelderloos (OG), Zachary Lovall (ZL), Emily Lowery (EL), Anne Naszradi (AN), Brandy Siediaczek (BS), Susan Thompson (ST), Al VanKerckhove (AVK), Laura Wagner (LW) (10 total)

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

**Directors Excused:** Scot Martin (1 total)

**Directors Absent:** Dave Norwood (DN) (1 total)

**Staff Members Present:** Marie McCormick (MMC), Karen Hannah (KH), Sally Petrella (SP), (3 total)

**Guests:** Paco Ollervides (River Network)

1) CALL TO ORDER

President MD called the meeting to order at 5:11pm

2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

3) APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

a. Minutes from August 9, 2017. Motion to approve made by BS, seconded by EL. 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 August 16- updates on items discussed later in tonight's meeting agenda

b. Executive Director

Refer to report for additional highlights

8300 "likes" for FOTR Facebook and an increase in website usage

FOTR recently featured in MetroTimes and Metromode articles

c. Rouge Education Project (REP)

d. River Restoration/Volunteer Monitoring (PI)

Funding for fish surveys was released

Two paddling trips scheduled in September and October

e. Membership Committee

Detroit Free Press Marathon charity runner number achieved goal; need to recruit volunteers

f. Fund Development Committee

Meeting with Paco Ollervides (River Network) about fundraising strategies

g. Finance Committee/Treasurer

i. July 2017

Motion to approve July 2017 financial report made by DH, seconded by EL. Motion carried.

ii. Audit 2016

Motion to receive and file 2016 Audit made by BS, seconded by ST. Motion carried.

Funds for endowment are going to be released next week

5) NEW BUSINESS

a. FOTR-ARC Merger Update

Full merger is not feasible due to differences in setting up an organizational structure that would make both groups happy. The attorneys suggested a joint venture, and discussions are to be continued. ARC asked for more information on services that FOTR could provide. Options at this juncture were discussed. The ERB Foundation has not given the OK to reallocate ARC/FOTR merger funding for other uses at this time MD and MMC met with the City of Dearborn to discuss partnership development

b. Board Retreat Update

Retreat coming up at the Howell Nature Center September 21, 2017

c. Board Development

MMC sent committee descriptions to the committee chairs for review.

Propose the Member-at- Large serve as a chair of the Board Development Committee and the FOTR by-laws could be changed to reflect this. LW is volunteering to serve as the Committee Chair. Board members need to identify at least 10 potential board members- recommend one potential recommended per member.

Suggest querying the board to determine the current board talents and strengths and then recruit for talent/skill gaps. Chester Marvin and Keith Armitage terms are ending in 2017. ST, AH, and AN terms are also ending. Need a minimum of three persons to run for the Board.

d. Jerry Ringer (University of Phoenix PhD Candidate)

Mr. Ringer is conducting a PhD research project and reached out to work with FOTR on his research.

e. FOTR Office Location

The lease with UM-D is up in less than a year. The cost currently is \$17.50 per square foot. Brainstorming potential office locations including Phoenix Mill, Wilcox Mill, vacant space in Southfield and land on the Middle Rouge, and others. The goal is to build out to house 12-14 staff including storage; the bare minimum recommended is 2500 square feet. Paco suggests distributing a "want ad" in the newsletter. Forward potential office space suggestions to MMC.

f. Climate Action Council (CAC) Update

MMC was planning to participate with the CAC and decided against doing so

g. Free Press Marathon-marketing and fundraising

Encourage support as this is the prime fundraising time for this event

h. Additional issues from the floor

Terrain Model is \$340 short. ERC gave a \$1400 match. The goal is for full board support of this funding effort. A Task Force for designing the model is being formed

6) ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by OG, seconded by ST. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:32pm

Respectfully Submitted by:

Susan Thompson FOTR Secretary