

# **Friends of the Rouge Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

Virtual Meeting via Zoom January 12, 2022

## *MISSION OF FRIENDS OF THE ROUGE*

*To restore, protect, and enhance the Rouge River watershed through stewardship, education, and collaboration.*

## *VISION OF FRIENDS OF THE ROUGE*

*We envision a future where a clean and vibrant Rouge River is the center of our community. Individual and community actions protect and improve the health of the Rouge River, assuring that its natural, economic, and recreational value enhance the quality of life in the Rouge River ecosystem.*

### **I. Call to order**

Motion to called to order the regular meeting of the at 5:05 pm on January 12 via Virtual Zoom Meeting.

### **II. Roll call**

#### **Directors Present:**

Laura Wagner (LW), President  
Alice Bailey (AB), Vice President  
Melissa Wydendorf (MW), Secretary  
Jessica Anders (JA)  
Paul Draus (PD)  
Erma Leaphart (EL)  
Dave Norwood (DN)  
Brandy Siedlaczek (BS)  
Myra Tetteh (MT)  
Susan Thompson (ST)

#### **Directors Excused:**

Sam Lulkin (SL), Treasurer  
Mike McNulty (MM)  
Alicia Bradford (AB)

#### **Staff Members Present:**

Marie McCormick (MMC), Executive Director  
Karen Hannah (KH), Operations Manager

**Guests/Members Present:**

Annette Demaria, Principal Engineer at Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc.

Heath Kelsey, Program Director-University of Maryland-Center for Environmental Science

**III. Approval of minutes from last meeting**

Motion to approve by ST, second by MT- approved by all

Motion to approve minutes by BS, second by DN- approved by all

**IV. Open issues**

a) **Election of Officers:**

Motion carried to approve slate of officers

b) **Executive committee:**

- i) Application to River Network's, River Rally conference was accepted
  - (1) 90-minute presentation
- ii) Marie attended first SPAC-diversity, equity and inclusion subcommittee meeting and was elected Chair of RRAC- Rouge River Advisory Council
- iii) A few appearances on television
  - (1) FOX 2-Sally Stonefly search; Channel 7 Action News- Marie talking about "fat-bergs"
- iv) Staffing:
  - (1) In process of hiring a **Monitoring and Education Assistant**
  - (2) New **Monitoring Program** intern, Amber
  - (3) Looking to hire Restoration Landscape Architect/Mentor
    - (a) Requirement to be fully certified as Landscape Architect- help mentor landscape designers to help them achieve full Landscape Architect certification
  - (4) Hiring of one additional Monitoring intern in March
  - (5) Stonefly search on January 22<sup>nd</sup>

**Education Committee:**

- v) Erin will be on maternity leave come March-Cara to send e-mail with suggested gifts
- vi) Awarded NOAA B-WET grant to support REP- **\$80,000**
- a) Margaret Dunning foundation
  - i) Looking to purchase another truck and trailer for kayak transportation
  - ii) Beaumont Health donated funding to purchase three tandem kayaks
  - iii) Rouge Rescue

(1)

b) **Restoration and Monitoring Committee:**

- i) Stonefly search- January 22<sup>nd</sup>
- ii) Hosting Spring and Fall bug hunts
- iii) Assisting Ecology Center through community foundation for SE MI- 'Healthy Fish, Healthy People' and – protecting Southeastern anglers from toxic PFAS
  - (1) Help to inform Eat Safe Fish guidelines
- iv) Entering second year of European Frog-Bit surveying
  - (1) Hoping to continue invasive species monitoring- looking at jumping worms as a species of concern
- v) Sally attended Great Lakes PFAS summit
- vi) Working with WSU Healthy Urban Waters about emerging contaminants and other citizen science

**Water Trail Committee:**

- i) Lower Rouge Habitat project underway- two medium-slog jams removed
- ii) Grant application to Norwayne Community Group, FOTR and National Kidney Foundation-working Partners for Places grant application for 2023

- iii) 2.2-3-million-dollar request to Ralph C. Wilson Jr. to support Phase 2 construction of Rouge Gateway Greenways project, to connect The Henry Ford to UofM-Dearborn and Phase 3 connecting THF to Rotunda Dr.
- c) **Membership Committee:**
  - i) Membership continues to grow; currently 608 members; value of membership \$51,988; refer to chart on pg. 16 of Board materials doc
    - (1) Most popular membership level Wood Frog
- d) **Board Development Packet:**
  - i) Encourage reaching out to new Board Members
- e) **Fund Development Committee:**
  - i) Year-end appeal at **\$53,500**
    - (1) Lara's efforts coupled with Board participation match and corporate sponsor match
    - (2) Board members- please schedule one-on-one with Lara
    - (3) Location for FOTR fundraiser 2022- Phoenix Mill in Plymouth
      - (a) Details to follow; FOTR fundraiser **August 11, 2022**
      - (b) Lara new title Development Director
- f) **Finance Committee/Treasurer:**
  - i) Karen H. on behalf of Sam L.-Treasurer report-pay out to contractors for grants
    - (1) Above targeted cash flow by \$11,000
    - (2) Investments have made \$44,000 worth of gains as of November 2021
      - (a) Motion to approve financials DN, second by ST- all approved
- g) **Advocacy Committee:**
  - i) Letter in response to Detroit Bulk dock failure was drafted seeking more enforcement
    - (1) Response from Brian Kelly

- ii) Meeting regarding change in zoning ordinance
- iii) Marie creating spreadsheet for Advocacy and Lobbying activity spreadsheet for 2022; to include actions that Marie takes that does/does not require input from Advocacy Committee

## V. New business

- a) Watershed report card presented by **Heath Kelsey**
- i) Goal to help FOTR prepare report card that reflects socio-environmental health of Rouge watershed
  - (1) Process of developing categories of indicators: **water quality and quantity, ecosystem, recreation, economy, management, social and cultural and human health**
  - (2) Virtual workshops with 60 stakeholders from 5 basins
    - (a) Identified values, threats, and key features of individual watersheds
    - (b) Funding for the next 2 years provided by the Erb Foundation
  - (3) Next steps:
    - (a) Refine list of indicators developed by stakeholders
    - (b) Collect data and consult experts on how to analyze data

## VI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting 6:08pm by DN, second by ET

Minutes submitted by: Melissa Wydendorf