

**Friends of the Rouge Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2020
Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

MISSION

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

VISION

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.

Directors Present: John Deslippe (JD), Paul Draus (PD), Orin Gelderloos (OG), Bill Hazel (BH), Erma Leaphart (EL), Mike McNulty (MM), Dave Norwood (DN), Elizabeth Palazzola (EP), Brandy Siedlaczek (BS), Susan Thompson (ST), Al VanKerckhove (AVK), Laura Wagner (LW) (12 total)

Directors Excused: Alice Bailey (AB), Andrew Hoffman (AH), Dave Maurice (DM) (3total)

Directors Absent: (0 total)

Staff Members Present: Marie McCormick (MMC), Karen Hannah (KH) (2 total)

Guests/Members Present: Dan Wellman, Robert Hurley, Michael Ralcheseck, Sara Rubino

1) CALL TO ORDER

President LW called the meeting to order at 5:05pm

2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

3) APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

a. November 11, 2020

Motion to approve the November 11, 2020 board minutes made by DN, seconded by AVK. 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 committee met last week to prepare the agenda for the board meeting. All items discussed are on the agenda for this meeting

b. Executive Director Report

Refer to reports attached for highlights

FOTR applied for a National Fisheries and Wildlife Grant and a 319 Grant for \$520,000 for a collaborative effort with Land and Water Works in the Old Redford neighborhood in the City of Detroit

Giving Tuesday campaign and hear end appeal has raised \$26,000 to date

There is a 92% uptick in the FOTR website use over the last twelve months

The DEI Training process with FOTR, Clinton River Watershed Council, and the Huron River Watershed Council is an ongoing process

FOTR staff hiring update:

Two positions are being filled

Over 70 applications received for the Trails Coordinator position

Over 50 applications for the Restoration Coordinator position

The applications are in the process of being reviewed to select candidates for interviewing

The Winter Stonefly Search is schedule for January 23, 2021

The FOTR Holiday Cheer is scheduled for December 18, 2020 (online event)

FOTR will participate in the Water Table- a cross-state coalition focused on water related issues. The group will define most pressing water related issues and how to address them collectively

c. Education (REP Committee)

Refer to reports attached for highlights

d. Restoration/Monitoring (PI Committee)

Refer to reports attached for highlights

e. Rouge River Water Trail Leadership Committee

FOTR was invited by the Corps of Engineers to provide input into the plan for the removal of the concrete channel and trail connectors

f. Membership/Committee

Refer to reports attached for highlights

g. Board Development Committee

i. Board Development work continues and there were positive comments received in regards to the recent IDI training. Work on diversifying the board continues

h. Fund Development Committee

Anticipate holding in-person Rouge cruise next year

i. Finance Committee/Treasurer

i. October/November 2020

Financial position of the organization discussed

\$166 million revenue anticipated for 2021

The Rouge Store is a new item this year

Motion to approve October and November 2020 reports made by DN, seconded by OG. Motion carried

j. Advocacy Committee

No activity to report

5) NEW BUSINESS

a. Approve 2021 budget

Motion to approve the FOTR 2021 budget made by DN, seconded by PD. Motion carried

b. 2021 Election and Results

December 9, 2020 FOTR Board Election Results

Board member John Deslippe reported the preliminary results of the Board Election

Five candidates were elected to the Board:

Sam Lulkin
Mike McNulty
Sara Rubin
Melissa Weydendorf
Susan Thompson

Candidates who were not successful on getting elected to the Board are welcome to join committees. Not getting elected to the Board does not exclude anyone from participating in the organization

New board members attending the meeting introduced themselves to the Board

c. Additional issues from the floor

FOTR was selected for the Detroit News Cheers for Charity, but did not make the top 5 charities selected. It is still good exposure for the organization

Elizabeth Palozza says goodbye to the Board as she will not be returning for the 2021 term. Also, thank you to Andrew Hoffman and David Maurice who are also not returning.

The efforts of FOTR staff to address and pivot operations and efforts to address COVID-19 pandemic were acknowledged

Introduction of guests/members attending the meeting

6) ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by ST, seconded by AVK. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:11pm

Respectfully Submitted by:

Susan Thompson
FOTR Secretary