

Friends of the Rouge Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Virtual Meeting via Zoom December 8, 2021

I. Call to order

Motion to called to order the regular meeting of the at 5:09pm on December 8 via Virtual Zoom Meeting.

II. Roll call

Laura Wagner (LW), President
Alice Bailey (AB), Vice President
Sam Lulkin (SL), Treasurer
Jessica Anders (JA)
Paul Draus (PD)
Erma Leaphart (EL)
Mike McNulty (MM)
Brandy Siedlaczek (BS)
Susan Thompson (ST)
Al VanKerckhove (AVK)

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting

Motion to approve by Erma Leaphart, second by Sue Thompson-approved by all

Motion to approve minutes by Sue Thompson, second by Jessica Anders- approved by all

IV. Open issues

- a) **Executive committee:**
 - i) Marie highlighted-
 - (1) FOTR won BBB Torch award for Ethics
 - (2) Fiscal 2022 Budget-presented to Board
 - (3) Application to River Networks to River Rally Conference as presenter
 - (a) Exec. Director Clinton Watershed Council, Anne Brasie has resigned
 - (4) Budget and election-

- (5) Looking to hire Education and Monitoring Assistant as well as Policy staff member
- (6) Erb Family Foundation general operating support- renewal 3 year; significant increase in contribution

b) **Education Committee:**

- i) Rouge Education Program Project recommended for funding through Noah Buick grant? for 2022-23 REP
- ii) Mercedes Benz Financial- secured extra dollars to grow REP
- iii) Submitted grant to the Watershed Council to expand/serve underserved/under resourced communities within watershed to continue work around diversity, equity, and inclusion
- iv) Potential to hire another staff person
- v) Opportunities to provide Education Plans for school districts

c) **Restoration and Monitoring Committee:**

- i) Recently acquired 2021 Chevy Silverado truck
- ii) Quit a few projects on the docket for 2022-refer to report for detailed information
- iii) Submission of EGLE NPS Old Redford GSI Projects completed (marked as pending on report)
- iv) Close to 7,000 FOTR volunteers for 2021 - new record for FOTR!!
- v) FOTR store- 2021 \$40,000 in revenue- Rain Barrel and Native Plant sales
 - (1) Considering one larger event late June vs. three smaller sales for 2022
- vi) Rouge Rescue: Great expenditure to put on event- staff, materials, logo creation etc.; considering purpose and value of the brand-longevity, event/brand recognition; FOTR has ownership of brand; for 2022-take a step back to demonstrate value of Rouge Rescue brand by hosting dozens of events lead by FOTR- monitoring, paddling, k-12 education, invasive species removal etc.

d) **Water Trail Committee:**

- i) Finalized the Paddlers Companion for Water Trail

ii) Inkster Park Recreation Wellness Zone-support design development of Inkster kayak launch

iii) Quick progress on clearing log jams in Lower Rouge- contractor has been selected to clear woody debris

e) **Membership Committee:**

i) no new information currently

f) **Board Development Packet:**

i) Erb Foundation offered free service for Board talent recruitment

ii) Election results-all five candidates voted in

iii) A BIG thank you to Al Vankerckchove and his many years of service to the Board and FOTR

g) **Fund Development Committee:**

i) 100% Board participation matching opportunity; successful Giving Tuesday **\$22,800 (day of), \$14,000 (mail appeal week prior)** for a total to date of **\$37,000 (as of 12/5/21)**

ii) Free Press Marathon in October- FOTR participation/fundraising

(1) Possible subcommittee setup for 2022-Alice will gauge Board interest in continuing participation

h) **Finance Committee/Treasurer:**

i) October Financials- motion to approve ST, second by MM-approved by all

(1) Budget

Doubling of budget for 2022 compared to 2021- large grant expected from Ralph C Wilson Foundation + Erb Foundation- 2022 tripled from former request

Summary: Revenue increased by 73%, Expenses by 81% and Surplus at 31%

Motion to approve 2022 budget ST, second by SL- approved by all

i) **Advocacy Committee:**

- i) From Councilman Scott Benson- Detroit City Council District #3 request for FOTR to 'sign-on' to letter to ban Detroit Bulk Storage from operating on Detroit river- 3 dock collapses in the last three years

V. New business

- a) Benefits for part time staff (20+ hours)- exclude seasonal and interns
- i) PT permanent- ½ FT holiday pay + accrue ½ FT vacation time+ receive 50% taxable benefit (requires proof of insurance if taken outside of FOTR) + phone stipend
- ii) Draft to be presented to Board at January Board meeting

VI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting 6:54pm by Mike McNulty, second by Sue Thompson

Minutes submitted by: Melissa Wydendorf