

**Friends of the Rouge Board of Directors**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**November 13, 2019**  
**PARC Offices**  
**Plymouth, MI 48170**

**Directors Present:** Alice Bailey (AB), Orin Gelderloos (OG), Mike McNulty (MM), Dave Norwood (DN), Elizabeth Palazzola (EP), Mike Rudell (MR), Brandy Siedlaczek (BS), Susan Thompson (ST), Al VanKerckhove (AVK), Laura Wagner (LW) (10 total)

**On Conference call:** Mike Darga (MD), Andrew Hoffman (AH) (2 total)

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

**Directors Absent:** John Kelly (JK), Paul Draus (PD) (2 total)

**Staff Members Present:** Marie McCormick (MMC), Karen Hannah (KH), Lara Edwards (LE) (3 total)

**Guests:**

1) CALL TO ORDER

President MD called the meeting to order at 5:12pm

2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

3) APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

a. September 11, 2019

Motion to approve made by MM seconded by LW. 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 met in last week. Most of the items discussed are on the agenda

b. Executive Director

Refer to reports attached for highlights

MMC reports the number of press events for October is very high and helped by the media partnership. FOTR received coverage for the Rouge Burn anniversary by USA Today, NPR, Fox 2, and nationwide outlets.

Meeting to discuss the watershed report card and scaling up restoration work in future

c. Rouge Education Project (REP)

Refer to reports attached for highlights

REP is 97% funded for the year

d. Restoration/Watershed Monitoring\**note name changes*

Refer to reports attached for highlights

Some program changes forthcoming to better reflect the work and managers managing is broader than “programs”

e. Membership Report/Committee

Refer to reports attached for highlights

Reminder to attend the film screening of *Clear Water- Detroit's River Revival* tomorrow, November 14, 2019. This event is to be used as a membership building event

f. Fund Development Committee

Thank you to all who assisted with and attended the Rouge Burn anniversary event. Spent a total of \$1500 on the event

113 persons are signed up for the film screening

Continue working on the Capital Campaign

Will hold a retrospective on events in January 2020

g. Rouge River Water Trail Leadership Committee

MMC meeting with contractors for launch redesigns in Melvindale and River Rouge for ADA accessibility, and Fort Street Bridge Park signage study. Need a more formalized package to approach communities for support

h. Finance Committee/Treasurer

i. September 2019

ii. October 2019

Motion to approve the September and October 2019 Treasurer's Reports made by DN, seconded by EP. Motion carried

Withdrew from the investment account to make payroll in September 2019

October deficit did not change, and receivables came in and the drawdown monies will be paid back

Revenue from last year gives FOTR a surplus of \$200,000

5) NEW BUSINESS

a. Board Elections

There is a slate of seven candidates; candidates; John Deslip (OJHM) and Bill Hazel (MPC) are added to the ballot. The minimum ballot is as follows: Alice Bailey, Laura Wagner, Orin Gelderloos, Dave Maurice, and Matt Gower. Motion to accept the slate as presented made by MM, seconded by AVK. Motion carried.

Michael Darga, John Kelly and Scot Martin are stepping down from the board at the end of this year

There are five-3 year terms and one- 1 year term

The ballots are being sent to Susan Thompson as Laura Wagner is running for reelection

b. Development Coordinator

Introduction of Lara Edwards, new FOTR Development Coordinator

c. New Hire/upcoming hire updates (*\*note title updates*)

Three interviews for the Watershed Planner (Water Trail) position held. One very strong candidate interviewed. Position not formally offered as of yet. The funding for the position is provided by the National Kidney Foundation

d. Board Development-**Training: The Thank You**

Lara Edwards conducted first board training about thanking members

She calls two members randomly to say "thanks"

The longer a person is involved in the organization, the more revenue generated due to that membership

If a person is involved for five years, they usually stay involved long term

Looking for board volunteers to make phone calls to new members

e. 2020 Budget Update/Team Reviews

Working on the 2020 budget and it is going to the Finance Committee. The managers are also getting involved in their working on their own budgets

f. Wayne County Property Sales- Update

The sales of Newburgh and Wilcox Mills are going to be sent to the Wayne County Commission in November 2019. Save Hines Park is hosting an informational meeting at Schoolcraft College Vis-Ta-Tech Center on November 18, 2019 at 6:30pm

g. Upscaling Restoration Program Opportunities

Earned revenue with Restoration Rain Smart (NPS 319 Grant funds) and working with other watersheds to bring Rain Smart branding to all area watersheds. Matthew Bertrand and Cyndi Ross are taking the lead and asking for funding through ERB. The goal is to build maintenance programs for Green Infrastructure. Potential connection with Good Will Industries to develop and broaden a GI workforce.

h. Monitoring Program funding

Working with Sally Petrella on monitoring funding: benthic, fish and Frog and Toad monitoring. Need \$40,000/year for benthics. The Stonefly and fall bug hunt for done for \$20,000. Approaching the individual communities to help fund the monitoring by pledging \$550/site. Did not ask the communities for Stonefly Search funding; the ARC has provided \$5000 over the last three years. Received funding commitments from the Cities of Southfield, Novi, Livonia; Plymouth and Northville Townships, and Washtenaw County for the fall bug hunt. Some communities that were asked to financially support declined. ARC pledged to give \$10,000, but this amount cannot be counted on each year. Stonefly is funded for 2020. Requesting funding for the watershed report card that will go to support the reporting and monitoring.

i. Fort Street Bridge Park- Updates

The construction is underway, selecting a sculptor, working with Friends of the Detroit River, Downriver Linked Greenways to develop a gateway feature funded through the Ralph C. Wilson Foundation. FOTR will assume fiduciary responsibilities.

j. Additional issues from the floor

FOTR will be joining other organizations for the Global Cleanup on April 22, 2020 (50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Earth Day). This event is also going to be a Rouge Rescue kick off

Motion to support a resolution that the FOTR will collaborate with other watersheds to support all watersheds equally well; and encourage the Executive Director to continue pursuing these collaborations made by DN, seconded by MM. Motion carried

k. Sign thank you notes

6) ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by DN, seconded by LW. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:11pm

Respectfully Submitted by:

Susan Thompson  
FOTR Secretary