

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

President, Jessica Eiland-Anders, called the meeting to order at 5:06 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

a. Directors Present:

Jessica Eiland Anders (JEA), Alice Bailey (AB), Paul Draus (PD), Erma Leaphart (EL), Mike McNulty (MMN), Carol Snodgrass (CS), Susan Thompson (ST), Gerry VanAcker (GVA), Myra Tetteh (MT), Dave Norwood (DN), Samraa Luqman (SL) (11 total)

b. Directors Not Present:

Madelin Maher (MM), Nick Leonard (NL), Jeremiah Steen (JS), Brandy Siedlaczek (BS), (4 total)

c. Staff Members Present:

Marie McCormick (MMC), Allison Eder (AE), Lauren Eaton (LE), Rosina Newton (RN), Cyndi Ross (CR), Jacqueline Kristofik (JK), Lian Anderson (LA), Sam Davis (SD)

d. Guests Present:

None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

a. MMC requested the addition of the Best Friends of the Rouge Awards as presented by the Friends of the Rouge Staff.

b. Agenda was moved and approved with the addition of the Best Friends of the Rouge Award as presented by the Friends of the Rouge Staff, which will take place after the staff presentation.

4. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

a. EL had a question about the word "sleep" on page 2 under line item 8D. It should read "steep."

b. The March 13, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes with the change from "sleep" to "steep." was moved (DN/GVA) and approved.

5. STAFF PRESENTATION – Rosina Newton, Restoration Assistant - PARC Gardens

6. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Membership Committee GVA Reported

i. The committee is working to enhance branding for the Best Friends Club for monthly givers and the Stonefly Society.

ii. The Earth Day campaign was focused on growing the Best Friends Club. It brought in 31 new monthly member households. The sustained revenue is \$919 a month. Before this campaign, it was \$487 a month.

- iii. The annual meeting has been combined with the member and volunteer appreciation event. It will share the impact of FOTR, celebrate the friends, and recognize our volunteers and members.
- iv. The event is at the Warrendale Pavilion on June 11th.
- b. Finance Committee: CS Reported**
 - i. CS presented the January and February 2024 Treasurer's Report and board financial reports.
 - ii. JEA had a question about the header title for the previous month for the January Receipts and Disbursements Report.
 - iii. EL had a question about the change in insurance companies.
 - iv. January and February Financial Reports, with the correction of the header title on the January Receipts and Disbursements Report, were moved (DN/ST) and approved.

7. ACTION ITEMS

a. Best Friends of the Rouge Awards

- i. The awards go to volunteers and members who have gone above and beyond the call of duty. The awards can go to individuals, municipalities, small groups, foundations, and other entities.
- ii. The staff has come up with 5 nominations for the Best Friends of the Rouge Awards, including a nomination for the Julie Rose Friendship Award.
- iii. The nominations are: Ann Ivory for the Julie Rose Friendship Award and for Best Friends of the Rouge Award: Canton Township, Old Village Association of Plymouth, Kellie Stark, and Inkster Task Force.
- iv. The slate of candidates for the Best Friends of the Rouge Award was moved (MMN/EL) and approved. DN recused himself from the vote.

8. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS CONTINUED

a. Executive Committee JEA Reported

- i. Executive Director Search Committee Update
 1. The job posting for the Executive Director position is on the website and on the FOTR LinkedIn page and can be shared. The job has been posted on 40 different sites and on social media posts.
 2. As of May 7th, there have been 27 applications. The Andrews Group is screening 13 candidates. This screening process will be ongoing until interviews begin at the end of this month.
 3. The goal is to have 6-8 candidates for the initial round of interviews for the end of May. Then, the candidate pool will be reduced for the finalist interviews with the search committee and a panel of staff.
 4. Morgain MacDonald, FOTR's DEIJ consultant, had the opportunity to speak with the Andrews Group.
 5. The goal is to make an offer by the end of June.

- ii. **Executive Director Transition**
 - 1. MMC has been working on an Executive Director Playbook and a Relationship Tracker for the next Executive Director.
 - 2. MMC has also been working on her “Garden” to capture tasks and duties to provide clarity on how to manage them moving forward.
 - 3. MMC and Program Managers have created a “Theory of Change” Document. This will be a tool for a new leader so they can understand the context for the impact that the programs currently have and the philosophies around them.
 - 4. MMC is creating guidelines for her advisory role starting in July.
 - b. Fund Development Committee SL Reported**
 - i. No Updates
 - c. Board Development Committee: MMN reported**
 - i. There are five directors up for re-election at the end of 2024: DN, PD, SL, EL, and BS. All 5 are eligible for one more 3 year term.
 - ii. DN, PD, and SL have committed to running again.
 - iii. EL and BS are leaning yes, but will make the decision in Summer 2024.
 - d. Advocacy Committee: (MMN reported)**
 - i. The committee moved quickly to sign on to a letter in support of Representative Tsernoglou’s introduction of the PFAs Hazardous Product Act. We missed the window to sign on to this letter, but FOTR did submit a comment in support of the act.
 - e. Restoration Committee:**
 - i. See board materials
 - f. Monitoring Committee:**
 - i. See board materials
 - g. Education Committee:**
 - i. See board materials
 - h. Water Trail Leadership Committee:**
 - i. See board materials
- 9. Staff Program Reports**
- a. Executive Directors Report: MM reported**
 - i. See board materials.
 - ii. We received news from the City of Detroit that they are allocating \$900,000 in funding to complete Phase II construction of Fort Street Bridge Park
 - iii. We are moving forward for ARPA funding from Wayne County Economic Development Corporation to support Rouge Gateway Greenway Phase II
 - iv. Upcoming Events:
 - 1. Gathering of Friends on Tuesday June 11.
 - 2. Next Board Meeting is Wednesday June 12.
 - 3. Heart of the Rouge is Wednesday August 7.
 - b. Fund Development:**

- i. Welcome to Elizabeth Lewandowski, FOTR's new Development Coordinator.
 - ii. We have 757 donor households, which is a new record for FOTR.
- c. Grants and Funding**
 - i. See board materials.
- d. Education Programs**
 - i. Excited to welcome Erin back at part time status.
 - ii. There are 15 schools participating in the REP Spring Monitoring Program.
- e. Restoration Programs:**
 - i. See board materials.
- f. Monitoring Programs**
 - i. See board materials.
 - ii. We are happy to welcome Lian Anderson to the monitoring team for the Summer.
 - iii. The team is gearing up for summer time sampling. This will include Red Swamp Crayfish sampling, Culvert Inventories, Fish Surveys, and our Frog and Toad Survey.
- g. Trails Programs:**
 - i. See board materials.
 - ii. There are some upcoming paddling events and logjam work days.
- h. PR/Marketing/Media**
 - i. There was a lot of media around the Report Card Release and Earth Day events.

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a. MMC asked the board to help with the leadership timeline for FOTR, specifically who was ED before 1992.
- b. MMC asked if a board member would be willing to be the board point person for the conversations surrounding the Bonnie Brook Golf Course. Thank you EL for volunteering for this task.

11. REMINDERS

- a. Upcoming Board Meetings:
 - i. June 12, 2024, 5 - 6:30 PM (FOTR Board Meeting, Hybrid @FOTR offices)

12. ADJOURNMENT: PD/DN motion to adjourn moved and approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:44 pm.