

**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), Dave Norwood (DN), Brandy Siedlaczek (BS), Carol Snodgrass (CS), Myra Tetteh (MT), Susan Thompson (ST), Gerry VanAcker (GVA) (10 total)

**b. Directors Not Present:**

Samra'a Luqman (SL), Madelin Maher (MM), Mike McNulty (MMN), Jeremiah Steen (JS) (4 total)

**c. Staff Members Present:**

Allison Eder (AE), Ashley Flintoff (AF), Karen Hanna (KH)

**d. Guests Present:**

None

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

a. Agenda was moved (DN/MT) and approved.

**4. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES**

a. EL had a question about the word "revenue" on page 2 under line item 3. It should read "expenses."

b. The November 13, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes and the December 11, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes were moved (EL/PD) and approved with the edit from "revenue" to "expenses" on the November minutes.

**5. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS - Voting**

**a. FY 2025 Budget Approval** KH Reported

- i. EL asked about the source of the data in the report summary.
- ii. KH will put together an updated budget report with the actual 2024 data to provide more information and context for the proposed budget for 2025.
- iii. MT asked about the process for budget adjustments. KH confirmed that budget amendments are first brought to the finance committee before being brought to the board.
- iv. KH then provided further detail to explain budget lines for programs and professional fees.
- v. EL asked about fundraising expenses. KH confirmed this includes the native plant sales.
- vi. After this updated report has been created, it will be sent to the board for a vote.

**b. Finance Committee** CS Reported

- i. October 2024 and November 2024 Financial Reports, including the Treasurer Report and Supporting Documents, were moved (DN/BS) and approved.

**6. BOARD OFFICERS ELECTION** AF Reported

- a. We will be electing officers for the board via email vote in February.
- b. If you feel you want to be part of the Executive Committee, let Ashley or Jessica know by end of January and they will send out a slate for voting in Feb.
- c. Expectations of the Executive Committee roles according to the current by-laws will be sent to the board. This will include notes about recommended changes to the by-laws that would impact these roles and their expectations.
- d. Proposed revisions to by-laws will be presented and discussed in a future board meeting.

**7. STAFF COMPENSATION STUDY RESULTS** KH and AF Reported

- a. A Compensation study was conducted mid-2024 by The Employees Association (TEA). They were provided with current salaries and job descriptions. First they performed a job duties analysis using a point factor rating system. Then TEA determined competitive pay ranges for each job.
- b. The graph in the packet indicates where the employee's salaries are charted against the recommended pay ranges.
- c. TEA also provided a benefit analysis. Market is significantly better to FOTR in terms of healthcare costs, but FOTR was slightly better than market for PTO, Dental, Vision, and holidays. KH noted additional benefits were offered to staff in 2025.
- d. AF confirmed that this information was considered when working on the budget and staff salaries. They adjusted the percentage of salary increase based on information from this report in an effort to get everyone closer to market and closer to a competitive rate. It was also considered when individuals were in a similar type role to promote pay equity across the programs.
- e. TEA did assess the cost to bring everyone to market rate would be about \$60,000. The current proposed budget increase is about \$30,000. Not everyone is at market, but we are getting closer while trying to adjust for equity in salaries
- f. KH confirmed the market rate was determined regionally.
- g. JEA noted that every year the proposed salary schedule adjustments are reviewed by the Executive Committee before the budget goes to the board for a vote.

**8. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS/STAFF REPORTS**

**a. Executive Director** AF Reported

- i. We received an update from Six Rivers Conservancy about Bonnie Brook that the Initial letter of intent was cancelled, but they will continue to keep tabs on this opportunity.
- ii. FOTR signed the sub-award agreement with Ducks Unlimited on December 19, 2024. This will allow us to begin due diligence work to prepare to make an offer to Livonia Public Schools to purchase the property on Hix Road.
- iii. Thanks to board members who made it to Toast the New Year with Friends last week. We liked having the event as a way to kick off the new year in January.
- iv. Strategic Plan

1. Together Together will be conducting an on-site visit February 11-12, 2025. This will include in person interviews with selected members of the Board.
  2. AF will be sending a list of key topics that Together Together will be examining based on what they have already learned about the organization. These topics may include: centering environment justice, defining organizational scope and impact, clarifying role and contribution to the watershed, and strategic growth and sustainability.
  3. Two surveys will be sent out on 1/20. One survey will be sent to the board and staff. Another survey will be sent to members, partner organizations, and community stakeholders.
    - v. FOTR will be hiring a part time seasonal position in the Trails program.
    - vi. Congratulations to Rosina on the Restoration team for writing an article about FOTR in Neighbors of Canton and Plymouth Neighbors
    - vii. Congratulations to JEA on her new job.
    - viii. The new website will be launching next week.
    - ix. Next year will be FOTR's 40th anniversary. FOTR will be starting the planning process for this major event.
- b. Report Out Only-** See Board Materials
- i. Board Development Committee
  - ii. Education Program/Committee Report
  - iii. Executive Committee Report
  - iv. Fund Development Program Report
  - v. Grants and Funding Report
  - vi. Monitoring Program Report/ Monitoring Committee Report
  - vii. PR/Marketing/Media Board Committee Reports
  - viii. Restoration Program Report
  - ix. Water Trail Leadership Committee/Water Trail Program Reports

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. None to Report

## **10. REMINDERS**

### **a. Upcoming Board Meetings:**

- i. March 12, 2025, 5 - 6:30 PM
- ii. May 14, 2025, 5 - 6:30 PM
- iii. June 11, 2025, 5 - 6:30 PM
- iv. September 10, 2025, 5 - 6:30 PM
- v. November 12, 2025, 5 - 6:30 PM
- vi. December 10, 2025, 5 - 6:30 PM

### **b. Upcoming Organizational Events:**

- i. January 25, 2025 - Stonefly Search

## **11. ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting adjourned at 6:22 pm.