

Friends of the St. Joe River Association Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 24, 2017—1:00 PM
Three Rivers Public Library—Three Rivers, MI

IN ATTENDANCE:

Directors: Bill Courliss, Dona Hunter, Bob Jones, Eric Kerney, Matt Meersman, Ron Niezgodski, Grant Poole, Jeff Reece, Kim Sinclair, Jeff Wenzel

Watershed Council: Ron Johnson, Fabius Township

Visitors: Jason Tharp

Call to Order:

President Matt Meersman called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM, welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for introductions.

Minutes of the June 22, 2017 meeting at Pine Knob Park, Howe, IN were reviewed. Bill Courliss moved to accept the minutes as printed, Jeff Wenzel seconded. **Motion carried.**

The **Treasurer's Report** was presented by Matt Meersman in the absence of Danielle Meersman. Matt noted that Danielle had not yet transferred \$45,000.00 into an eighteen month CD. He expects she will have that completed by our next meeting. We had income of \$275.00 from individual and business memberships. The City of St. Joseph Water Plant became a member. Several individual memberships were also a result of our sponsorship of the SJRBC Symposium. We had expenses for the luncheon at the Symposium and liability insurance and permit associated costs for the 14th Annual St. Joe River Races. Our total income for June 22, 2017 through August 24, 2017 was \$275.00. Total expenses for the same time period was \$1,903.82 leaving a net loss of \$1,628.82. Year to date net income is -\$1,499.05. Our total balance from checking and savings is \$65,846.18. Kim Sinclair moved to accept the treasurer's report as printed, Ron Niezgodski seconded. **Motion carried.**

OLD BUSINESS:

Strategic Planning

Matt asked if there were any additions to the list of goal ideas we have been reviewing and discussing. It was decided to table further discussion until next meeting.

14th Annual St. Joe River Races

The 14th Annual St. Joe River Races will be on Saturday, September 23rd at Veteran's Memorial Park in South Bend, Indiana. The 5K run will begin at 8:30 AM with the single canoe/kayak 3 mile race starting at 10:00 AM. A team canoe race will begin at 1:00 PM with an after race celebration likely to be held at the Crooked Ewe around 3:00 – 3:30 PM.

Bylaws Update for 2018

A bylaws committee had been formed last meeting consisting of Matt Meersman, Grant Poole, and Jeff Reece with Bob Jones as chairperson. Ron Niezgodski said he would be interested in being on the committee also. Bob said they had not met yet but suggested they do meet on the Thursday morning, September 28th, before the next board meeting. Grant had forwarded samples of the Two Rivers Coalition and Portage Lake Watershed Forever bylaws to committee members to use for comparison. It is the intention of the committee to have any changes or revisions presented to the board no later than the January 2018 board meeting so they can be acted on at the annual corporation meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

11th Annual Watershed Council Event Planning

Matt said it is time to choose a topic for our Annual Watershed Council Meeting in March. Several board members said they liked having the Annual Corporation meeting dealing with membership in February and the Annual Watershed Council Event in March. After a short discussion, Ron Niezgodski moved to have our Annual Corporation Meeting in February, Kim Sinclair seconded. **Motion carried.**

Discussion continued on what to call the Watershed Council event. It really is not a meeting but more of a social event. One suggestion was Watershed Council Educational Forum.

Several topics and possible speakers were discussed. Some included flooding/climate change with possible speakers Peter Sinclair, Kyle White, or Mark Shephard; Kevin Kincare, geologist; water withdrawal tool for Great Lakes; and wetlands 2014 status report.

Board Member Recruitment

We have five board members terms expiring in 2018. Jeff Wenzel can run for another term but the other four have completed their two term limit. Those four are Rudy Kappe, Eric Kerney, Danielle Meersman, and Matt Meersman. Matt is encouraging those going off the board to try and recruit someone to take their place as they know best of people in their geographic area who might be interested.

Other

Matt received a request from Marcy Hamilton of Southwest Michigan Planning Commission for a letter of support for a 319 grant for urban BMPs for Ox Creek. There is no monetary or matching funds required. Ron Niezgodski moved to send a letter of support, Dona Hunter seconded. **Motion carried.**

ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR:

Announcements:

Grant Poole announced the Pokagon Band Sunrise Ceremony & Women's Water Walk will be on Friday, September 1st at sunrise at Rodgers Lake in Dowagiac, Michigan

Bob Jones will be manning a FotsJR display at the Middlebury Riverfest in Middlebury, Indiana on Saturday, August 26th from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

Kim Sinclair announced two events that the Van Buren Conservation District is sponsoring. The first, 2017 Fall Farm Day, is on Wednesday, September 6th in Hartford, Michigan from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM. The main topic is drainage water management. The second is a Household Chemical Waste/Latex Paint Recycling Collection & Passenger Tire Clean Up on Saturday, September 16th from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the South Haven Public Works Building.

NEXT MEETING: 1:00 pm, Thursday, September 28, 2017 at the Three Rivers Public Library, Three Rivers, MI

Adjournment: Kim Sinclair moved to adjourn, Ron Niezgodski seconded. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Jones