

Friends of the St. Joe River Association, Inc. Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 28, 2017 – 1:00 PM
Three Rivers Public Library – Three Rivers, MI

In Attendance:

Board of Directors – Jeff Reece, Ron Niezgodski, Grant Poole, Kim Sinclair, Carol Higgins, Roxanne Barton

Watershed Council – Ron Johnson

Visitor – Bruce Howe SWMLC

Call to Order: Vice President Jeff Reece called meeting to order 1:05pm with welcome and introduction.

Minutes of the August 24, 2017 meeting were reviewed. Ron Niezgodski moved to accept the minutes as presented, Kim Sinclair seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

- Current Liabilities & Equity balance is \$65,941.74
- 2017 YTD Profit & Loss is -\$1,403.49.
- New Activity \$45,000 CD created 1%
- New Activity \$289.60 this month net ordinary income from South Bend canoe / kayak event, membership dues, interest and insurance reimbursement.
- Discussion on Net loss for YTD 2017 – Just mentioned it's due to Basin Commission Event cost.
- Kim Sinclair moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented, Carol Higgins seconded. Motion carried.

Old Business:

Strategic Planning – Topic tabled till next meeting

Bylaws Committee Update – Ron Niezgodski, 7/12th of current bylaws have been reviewed and edited by the committee. Committee plans to meet again at 10am on Oct 26th to complete first review and edit session.

2018 Annual Meeting & Board Member Recruitment –

- Ron Johnson started discussion on why have term limits for Board of Directors and Officers? Bylaws Committee mentioned they are reviewing those term limits and will likely propose changes.
- Roxanne Barton started discussion on Grass Roots vs Agency representation and activities which led to Ron Johnson asking if FotSJR mails out newsletters anymore to inform public. It was explained that cost of creating and mailing newsletter vs exposure for FotSJR was just not viable. Suggestions to get more exposure of FotSJR to watershed residents could occur by partnering with Basin Commission newsletter or maybe create more media news releases for local papers.
- Carol Higgins started discussion on Portage Lake and issues of runoff to this lake from upstream sources. How could FotSJR help? Group suggested a representative could be sent to Lake Association meeting but further information was needed to understand issues. FotSJR members could then direct Lake Association to proper agencies to assist if impairment of waters was occurring.
- Jeff Reece started discussion on Board of Director Recruitment and need to replace 4 members who would need to step down this year due to term limits. Suggestion for new Board of Directors candidates can be pass along to Jeff Reese or other members of the Board of Directors.

New Business:

SWxSW Corner Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) – At the timely urgent request of Van Buren Conservation District, FotSJR’s President, Matt Meersman created and submitted a letter of support, which requires formal support from FotSJR Board, for the District’s efforts to create a CISMA. Ron Niezgodski moved to accept created/executed letter as was submitted by Matt, Carol Higgins seconded. Kim Sinclair abstained due to conflict of interest. Motion carried.

Granham Woodhouse Award Presentation – Oct 17, 2017. Jeff Reece informed group that the Paw Paw River South Branch Watershed Improvement project had won the award of which FotSJR was a partner of support. Matt Meersman plans to attend the award presentation and will represent FotSJR at the event being held in Dowagiac. All members of FotSJR are welcome to attend the event.

Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy (IWLA) – The St. Joseph River Basin Commission (SJRBC) is currently taking applications for a scholarship to IWLA (at Purdue University). Those interested need to apply by Oct 23rd for more information and can contact Matt directly via his e-mail address: BasinDirector@macog.com. See the following link for more information: <http://www.sjrbc.com/news/index.html>

ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

Announcements:

Bruce Howe – Replaced Geoffrey Cripe and that the SW Michigan Land Conservancy was looking to restart meetings to discuss partnerships in conservation efforts in the Dowagiac-Three Rivers, MI Region. For more information see <http://swmlc.org/>

Kim Sinclair – TRC and Van Buren Conservation District fall volunteer macroinvertebrate survey event occurring Oct 1st for more information see <http://vanburencd.org/events/list/>

Carol Higgins – Oct 8, 2017 Three Rivers Fall Color Tour for more information see <http://trchamber.com/>

NEXT MEETING: 1:00 pm, Thursday, October 26, 2017 at the Three Rivers Public Library in Three Rivers, MI.

Adjournment: Having no other business before the Board, Kim Sinclair moved to adjourn the meeting, Roxanne Barton seconded. **Motion carried.** Meeting adjourned at 2:34 pm.

Note from Jeff Reece:

Because of the unexpected need for the Secretary, Bob Jones, to be absent from the Board meeting, Grant Poole graciously agreed to transcribe the minutes of the subject September Board Meeting of the FotSJR and he submitted same to Jeff Reece and Bob Jones for further review of any omissions or needed revisions. The minutes provided here are those same minutes as so transcribed by Grant and with appropriate revisions and additions from Jeff Reece.