

**MEETING MINUTES for the Friends of the Manchac Greenway (FMG)  
@ 2:00, May 30, 2019 @ Bec's on the Lake Restaurant @ Frenier  
Village**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Frank Neelis, Dwight Williams (Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation), Chad Almquist and Tom Kane (Canoe and Trail Adventures), Ashley Goodrich (St. John Dept. Planning & Zoning), Za Maurin, Lisa Williams, Galen Schum, Dr. James Nelson, Ben Taylor, George Becnel and Rev. Donald August.

**APPROVAL OF 04/23/19 MEETING MINUTES**

**FINANCIAL REPORT:**

- Treasurer Galen reported that all membership donations that had been previously "stuck" in the PayPal system have been "unstuck" and have been fully accounted for.
- Our current bank balance is \$3,844.09.
- Ben brought up an unforeseen request for a \$300.00 payment for a digital recreation of our FMG trifold brochure map by the SLU student worker who performed this work. The FMG Board agreed to pay and a check was issued.

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT:**

- Galen reported that after an initial surge in membership in response to the introduction of our new membership program, new membership applications have fallen off. He suggested we might promote activities to draw attention to our project and this prompted a discussion for FMG to host a paddling trip for the public (see report below).
- Trifold update - Ben reported that a new map and text reflecting our current membership program and other details in this brochure are a work-in-progress in collaboration with Dr. Molly McGraw of SLU.

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**

- A Pass Manchac Bridge 1/2 Marathon (10 mi.) on the Manchac Greenway is still being planned for this November and a full marathon (26 mi.) is anticipated in 2020.
- Bec's on the Lake Restaurant will host a bicycling event from Frenier Village to Ruddock and back on June 8. Details can be found at the Bec's on the Lake website/Facebook. There was discussion for FMG-

hosted Paddling Trip(s) on Shell Bank Bayou and connecting waterways to be planned for this fall using the services of Canoe and Trail Adventures. Ben and Za agreed to co-chair a committee to put this together

#### MANCHAC GREENWAY COMMISSION REVIVAL:

- St. John the Baptist Parish Planner Ashley Goodrich agreed to seek a conversation with Tangipahoa Parish planners in order to revive a joint-parish committee made of StJB and Tangi Councilmen, Administrators and the FMG in order to help move the Manchac Greenway project forward.

#### RESTORE PROGRAM UPDATE:

- Ben reported that we are waiting on revised details and drawings from the Tangipahoa Parish contractors ELOS Environmental and Meyer Engineering for Greenway improvements recommended between Pass Manchac and into Ponchatoula. A meeting with the principles involved in the project, funded by the BP/New Horizon oil spill/Restore Act, is anticipated in June.
- In anticipation of continued funding by Tangipahoa Parish's Restoration Act allocation for the Greenway we will be soon submitting a "wish list" of further projects for the Greenway.

#### ADOPT-A-ROAD:

- The next FMG Adopt-A-Road pickup of our mile at the north end of the Greenway is planned for June 15. At this time some of us with smart phones will attempt to begin using the Litteratti litter-tracking app. A tutorial on how to use the app can be found at <http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/pwa/documents/report/oak066246.pdf>.
- Canoe and Trail Adventures reported that one of their two Adopt-A-Road signs was apparently clipped clean-off at the base. (This sounds like the work of a saws-all or a hydraulic hog de-header.)

#### ST. JOHN PARK IMPROVEMENTS

- Don reported on recent work to recover an unused picnic park on the spoil bank between the Greenway and the I-55 Canal (once built and maintained by a former Sheriff of St. John). Weed-eaters have been used for the initial work and Don will inquire about the use of dredged material to restored the park's banks.

- Don is continuing his efforts to seek funding from a corporate sponsor for building a boardwalk above the existing ground-level (and flood-prone) "Swamp Trail" in the Maurepas Swamp WMA on the east side of the Greenway. Ben pledged to help with a tape-measure for a survey. Chad recommended reaching the work to in building a similar boardwalk in nearby Wetland Watchers Park in St. Charles Parish.

#### RING AROUND THE LAKE:

- Frank described his continuing work with SLU's Dr. Molly McGraw and personnel with the Greater New Orleans Planning Commission to use GIS techniques to map and describe places and things to do and see on a Ring Around Lake Pontchartrain bike trip.

#### PORT MANCHAC UPDATE:

- Dr. James Nelson reported that the agenda for the upcoming meeting of the Port Commission may finally yield a decision to hire a consultant to make recommendations for moving this 40 acre facility away from the purpose of maritime commerce (which it rarely does) into in a different direction.

#### SHELL BANK CANOE LAUNCH ISSUE:

- Chad reported that his research indicates some three-quarters of a million dollars will be made this year from the volume of canoeists brought to this site by local eco-tourism companies and a system for registration, occupational licensing and safety requirements is needed.
- George reported his research has revealed new owners for this site (from transfers of public lands during the Jindal Administration) which casts the situation in a whole new light. Stay tuned.

#### OTHER BUSINESS:

- A meeting of the South Central Regional Planning Commission on June 6 at the Main Library in Laplace was announced. This organization overlaps in purpose and territory with the Greater New Orleans RPC and our delegation will be represented to promote the Manchac Greenway in their plans.

#### NEXT MEETING:

- 2:00, June 27 @ the Turtle Cove office, Galva, LA