

# FRIENDS of the MANCHAC GREENWAY (FMG) MEETING MINUTES, 2:10, Thursday, February 25, 2021 @ Bec's On The Lake, downtown Frenier

IN ATTENDANCE: Tom Dumas, Tom Kane (Canoe & Trail Adventures), Ben Taylor, Greg Za Maurin, Frank Neelis, Lisa Williams and George Becnel

## APPROVAL of 11/18/20 MEETING MINUTES:

- Frank's motion to accept was accepted and so were the minutes.

## FINANCIAL REPORT: (Galen Schum, Treasurer)

Checking Balance as of December 31, 2021	\$2,811.63
Checking Activity December 2020	
Deposits \$20.00 - one membership renewal	
Withdrawals - \$0 withdrawals	
Current Checking account balance as of 11/30/2020	\$12,831.63
Current Savings base share	\$10.00
Balance all accounts	\$12,841.63

## MEMBERSHIP/OUTREACH/EVENTS:

- **Marketing RFP** - A draft letter to help identify a marketing agency to help increase FMG membership, enhance the organization's effectiveness, its political relevance and gain financial support was presented and discussed. Frank agreed to complete the letter.

- The first quarterly **FMG Adopt-A-Road** litter pick-up for 2021 was scheduled for March 13. We will meet in the Joyce WMA parking lot at 9:30. Bring your favorite bag-spreader stick. If you want to get fired up about the state of litter pollution in this state, watch this episode of *Louisiana Public Square*: <https://video.lpb.org/show/louisiana-public-square/>. You'll decide you want to be part of the solution.

- Ben brought up the possibility of cleaning up the area on the west side of the Greenway at North Owl Bayou for a recreation spot. Frank discussed approaching Tangipahoa Sheriff Daniel Edwards again about adopting this site and providing video surveillance for this area.

- The **"Cruise'n the Lake Car Show"** is schedule for 9:00 - 5:00 on 3/20 at Bec's on the Lake in Frenier (there will be a band 3:00 - 6:00). The FMG will have a table there, so FMG Board Members are asked to please drop by and help fly the flag.

- **The Friends of the Manchac Greenway Bike Ride** from Bec's on the Lake in Frenier to Ruddock and back is scheduled for 4/18/21. George and Za are planning a full-

out event with food, bottled water, a raffle, police escort and more for a 15 mile ride on the Greenway's new smooth asphalt road and shoulder. Look for it on Facebook.

#### FUNDING:

- The Entergy Environmental Grant is in the planning stage.

- Frank described an exciting new program that has the potential of tying together and significantly enhancing several aspects of the Greenway concept. The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) SeaGrant Program is working on adding a **National Estuarine Research Reserve** in Louisiana and the Pontchartrain Basin is under consideration (see <https://www.laseagrant.org/deltanerr/updates/>). An example of a nearby Estuarine Reserve can be seen at <https://www.outdooralabama.com/lands/weeks-bay-reserve>. Much of the site criteria being sought seems to fit the Manchac area perfectly. It was decided Frank would compose and send a letter of recommendation to this effect to their search committee. A public Zoom Meeting on the Louisiana estuary search is scheduled on April 7 on the SeaGrant website.

#### THE ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST MASTER PLAN FOR THE MANCHAC GREENWAY:

- The US TREASURY has given St. John the Baptist Parish the go-ahead to use funds from the Restore Act (resulting from the BP oil spill) to deliver a professionally produced comprehensive **Master Plan for the Manchac Greenway in St. John Parish**. Besides consulting with the FMG, the Parish planning office will work with the Greater New Orleans Planning Commission (RPC) to finalize a scope of work needed to search for a qualified planning contractor. The RPC will also include in their FY2022 plan a Stage 0 Feasibility Study for bike lane improvements along the Greenway. They have started the required public notice period for the project - [http://sjb-parish.com/zoning\\_general.php?id=2661](http://sjb-parish.com/zoning_general.php?id=2661) and a public zoom meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 7 at 5:30 p.m. to discuss the project. Stay tuned.

#### ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS:

- It was reported that recent discussions between the LA Dept. of Transportation and Development, Tangipahoa Parish and others brought to light a federal DOT prohibition against many types of development within 300 ft. of the I-55 Interstate bridge for fear of presenting anything that could jeopardize the structure (like a fire) or activities within this boundary (like the hazard of things thrown off of the interstate). Unless exceptions, similar to those made under and around the many miles of raised interstates in this country, many Greenway improvements envisioned for these properties will remain curtailed.

- The ownership of the property at **Shell Bank canoe launch** is still in question. Representatives of the Louisiana DOTD have agreed to do a property search to untangle ownership issues here and other locations along the Greenway.

- Now that the winter is coming to an end, FMG can look forward to brush clearing promised by Tangipahoa Parish Government for a proposed picnic area at the North Pass Boat Launch.
- Hoping to leave something for posterity, Lisa continues her solo, home-grown cypress planting at the Carter-Regan Rest Area and other locations on the Greenway. She announced plans to collaborate with other groups to do this at other locations on the Greenway.
- Gladly, only a modest amount of trash was found by Frank the Ruddock Mini-park just before the meeting. Thanks Frank.
- Sadly, the big roll-off Dumpster at **N. Pass Boat Launch** has been removed by Tangipahoa Parish. Although it was doing what it was intended to do - give boat launch users and local camp owners a convenient place to dispose of their trash at this remote location, it was apparently being terribly over-used and abused. Instead of requiring infrequent pick-ups, the Parish has had to call the hauler as many as two to three times a week to empty the box. Trash from as far away as St. John Parish was being found inside it. Without mandatory subscription or universal garbage pickup services in the unincorporated parts of the two parishes, scofflaws and cheapskates would rather make the long trip to this box. It was a great idea that no-doubt alleviated illegal dumping on the Greenway and we will have to see if a better solution can be found.

NEXT MEETING: will be on Thursday, April 1, at 2:00 at *Bec's on the Lake* in Frenier