

**MINUTES of the FRIENDS of the MANCHAC GREENWAY (FMG) BOARD MEETING and RETREAT - 11:00 am, October 9, 2019 @ the Williams Camp, Pass Manchac**

IN ATTENDANCE: Greg “Za” Maurin, Frank Neelis, Lisa (& Dennis) Williams, Ben Taylor and Galen Schum

MEETING MINUTES of 09/19/19 were accepted.

**FINANCIAL REPORT (Galen):**

- The balance of all accounts is \$4,215.04

**CANOE LAUNCHES and PARISH ISSUES:**

- The upcoming (12/6/19) “Influencers Tour” on Shell Bank Bayou in partnership with the River Parishes Tourism Commission was discussed.

- The possibilities of a canoe dock at Shell Bank was discussed including its placement, possible funding and land ownership issues. Floating, plastic “slide on and off” docks were talked about and Ben described an idea for a rigid, horizontal “launching pole” for paddlers to hold on to attached to a wooden dock.

- Parish elections, changing governmental leadership and representation at both ends of the Greenway was discussed as well as the prioritization and presentation of FMG issues.

- Ben described the effort to pursue Rev. Don August’s idea of improving the Maurepas Swamp WMA Swamp Trail north of Peavine Road. The first hurdle of finding a possible sponsor to assist with design engineering and cost estimates remains. The project must then be submitted to the Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries Dept. for their input before it can be advanced further to a possible construction phase.

**RESTORE PROGRAM UPDATE:**

- Frank brought up issues that needed to be resolved in the final report on the Tangipahoa Parish Master Plan for the Manchac Greenway from Pass Manchac to Ponchatoula. These include gaining the cooperation of the Canadian National Railroad for any railroad crossings, the need for this project to establish a more substantial relationship with the Greater New Orleans Regional Planning Commission (NORPC) and recommendations for funding sources for the project.

## RING AROUND THE LAKE (RAL):

- Frank described a recent meeting with the New Orleans Regional Planning Commission on further work on a GIS map and data-base for assets on this circuit which can be utilized by casual users as well as organized, escorted group-rides.
- The idea of a short informational video about the Ring Around the Lake concept and the current local, state, national and international bicycle tourism industry has been proposed to NORPC and the Northshore Safety Coalition for their comment and possible production assistance and funding sources.
- The addition of a levee-top path on the new West Pontchartrain storm surge protection levee in St. John Parish branching from the existing Audubon Park to Laplace Mississippi River levee-top bike path to the Manchac Greenway has been proposed and research on this possibility has commenced.
- At the suggestion of the NORPC, a Tangipahoa Parish Comprehensive Bike Plan will be requested and similar plans sought for the parishes on the RAL for integration to the over-all plan.

## MEMBERSHIP:

- Galen reported on his project to print and post "campaign signs" on the Greenway to solicit FMG membership.
- Ben will have 2,000 more trifold membership brochures printed.
- Efforts by Ben and George Becnel to update our website are continuing.
- IRS 501c3 rules notwithstanding, Za suggested we put together a "MANCHAC PAC."

## SPECIAL EVENTS:

- The River Parishes Tourism Commission/FMG canoe trip will be 12/06/19.
- The "Inaugural Old Highway 51 Half Marathon 5k and 10 mi. Run" benefiting the Shantel Lanerie Breast Cancer Foundation will be held 11/23/19 at the Gator's Den tavern in Galva. FMG plans to have a table at this event and asks for volunteers to help "stand the table."

NEXT MEETING: 2:00, Thursday, December 5 at Bec's on the Lake, Frenier Village, Laplace