

MEETING MINUTES - FRIENDS OF THE MANCHAC GREENWAY (FMG)
2:00 PM, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 2018, FRENIER LANDING RESTAURANT,
PEAVINE RD., StJB PARISH

WELCOME BOARD MEMBERS & GUESTS

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Board Members - Lisa Williams, Diane Esordi, Alma Chasez, Terry Abadie, Za Maurin, Galen Schum, Bruce Labrecque, Frank Neelis, Ben Taylor, Melinda Holloway and Steve Perilloux.

- Guests – James Sparacello - Tangipahoa Sheriff's Office, Joey Hebert - Manchac Boating Assoc., Phillip Graves – Maintenance Specialist LADOTD District 62

MINUTES:

- Minutes of the meeting of 02/20/2018 were approved.

FINANCIAL ISSUES:

- A motion was made and passed to acquire a "Square" for accepting credit card payments on a smart phone.

- It was authorized to pay Pay Pal \$30.00 to open an account.

- Our checking account balance as of 02/28/18 was \$2,827.40.

- Alma reported she obtained a quotation of approximately \$700.00 for annual Non-profit Board Indemnification Insurance to help protect our group from liability.

- Alma is seeking an exchange of letters with Marathon Oil for returning the donation check previously sent for the cancelled Spring Roll cycling event.

EVENTS:

- The **Entergy/LPBF Clean Sweep** on the Tangipahoa Parish part of the Greenway is scheduled for 03/24/18. Ben and Joey described plans that include coordination of several citizens groups, Entergy crews and Tangipahoa Parish Jail trustees for work along the roadway as well as in adjacent waterways. Tents, t-shirts, litter-sticks, food, beverage, boats, bags and heavy equipment were in the mix. Phillip of LADOTD stated his agency has been committed to picking up trash on the neighboring I-55 bridge and will extend this service to the Greenway. (final person count for LPBF?)

- The **Strawberry Festival** is scheduled for 04/13-15/18. Frank described our booth set-up and got commitments from FMG Board members to be in attendance.

- Frank displayed one of the dummy **video surveillance** cameras he acquired for mounting on poles at some of the “litter hot spots” on the Greenway. These are meant to be “placeholders” for permanent, functioning equipment and may, perhaps, “draw fire” and help determine the viability of this program. The Sheriff’s Dept., Entergy and the Canadian National Railroad could possibly monitor this surveillance. Phillip mentioned permits might be needed for work on Public Rights-Of-Way (ROW).

FUNDS/GRANTS:

- **Restore Fund allocation** – Frank described how these monies will occur over several years and require a local governmental sponsorship. This will be accomplished by the inter-parish Manchac Greenway Commission, of which FMG is part. Frank gave an update on the formation and activities of this group.

- Frank reported that Requests for Qualifications (RFQ) for consultants interested in delivering a comprehensive **Master Plan** for the Greenway were published in local newspapers today. This plan will be paid for with the first year’s draw on Restore funds.

- Frank reported funds through the Regional Planning Commission may possibly be used for building and maintaining **canoe launches** on the Greenway once a Joint Use Agreement (JUA) is signed by a responsible local government entity.

- Frank announced the **Trails Grant** previously awarded for shoulder improvements (resurfacing, striping and vibration strips) to the Tangipahoa part of the Greenway has been held up by the LADOTD in Baton Rouge in order to explore compatibility with the forthcoming Greenway Master Plan.

- Frank announced that, based on the severe flooding that occurred in Tangipahoa Parish in 2016, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) may assist with drainage issues in the parish and this may help in eliminating the old bridge girders that block the canoe launch FMG has proposed at **Upper Owl Bayou**. This work may be accomplished by Tangipahoa Drainage District #1. Frank mentioned a Joint Use Agreement (JUA) with a responsible local government entity might be needed to commence this project.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Frank reported his chance encounter with a real estate manager for the **Canadian National Railroad (CN)**. He felt the meeting went very well; the problem with the “gap” between the north end of the Greenway and the southern entrance into Ponchatoula (which occurs where the railroad ROW touches the I-55 ROW) was discussed and it was felt the problem could be solved.

- Frank discussed plans for getting Manchac Greenway signs (with logo) placed on the Greenway.

- Frank played a video of an interview he had with **SLU television** station student reporter Jadian Daniels on the Swamp Walk Boardwalk at the Joyce WMA. He did a good job of explaining our project and they got lagniappe video of a 16 ft. alligator that graced them with his/her presence.

- **Web Site and Social Media** - Diane passed around copies of the site map outline for FMG's new website being developed by her and husband Mike. They will gradually make improvements to the site as time permits. She mentioned that our organization needs a Facebook manager. Discussion ensued about the qualifications and responsibilities of this work and ramifications of using this useful and scandalous medium.

- Diane discussed the importance of having a descriptive and concise **Mission Statement** for the Friends of the Manchac Greenway and agreed to lead a session with the other members of the board to determine this at the next meeting. Ben volunteered to provide a giant Post-it Note tablet, like the professional use, to make it all look official.

- It was announced by Melinda Holloway that her husband Herb, Research Economist at the Small Business Development Center at Southeastern Louisiana University has been hard at work developing an **Economic Impact Study** of the Ring Around The Lake Bike Trail around Lake Pontchartrain of which the Manchac Greenway will be a key component. As an avid cyclist herself, Melinda is getting a great deal of enjoyment looking over Herb's shoulder at some of the interesting things he's found.

- Frank described some ideas to develop incentives/rewards for visitors to Shell Bank Bayou and other Greenway locations, possibly involving discount coupons and the like. The whole idea is to try to get visitors to enjoy

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Frank asked for comments of future Board meeting date and times. Ben suggested conducting an "e-poll" to seek a consensus at to preferred days of the week and time of day for regular FMG Board meetings

- Next meeting: **April 18, 2018** at either the Turtle Cove Classroom or in Ponchatoula.

ADJOURN

POSTSCRIPT:

Results of the **Entergy/LPBF Clean Sweep** – 125 volunteers, 22,181 lbs. (11.09 tonnes) 993 bags of trash delivered to the landfill plus 82 car tires, 18 tractor/truck tires, 6 boats and 2 trailers.