

MINUTES - FRIENDS OF THE MANCHAC GREENWAY (FMG) BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, June 27, 2018, 2:07 P.M., Turtle Cove classroom, Galva, La.

INTRODUCTIONS/WELCOME GUESTS/QUORUM CALL –

Board Members in Attendance:

Alma Chasez (Treasurer), Terri Abadie (St. John Parish Economic Development), Ben Taylor (Secretary), Christie Gardnier, Lisa Williams, Za Maurin, Galen Schum, Dr. Rob Moreau (SLU/Turtle Cove), Clay James (LADoT&D) and Frank Neelis (President).

Absent:

Rev. Donald August, Melinda Holloway and Bridget Bailey (Tangipahoa Planning).

Bruce Labrecque and Diana (and Mike) Esordi have recently resigned from the board. We thank each of you for your help in getting our project off the ground.

A quorum was achieved.

Guests:

Terry Jones and Steve Jones (The Village at Port Manchac), Sarah Giles (ELOS Environmental), Dwight Williams (Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation) and James Sparacello (TPSO, Manchac Greenway Commission).

Ben made a motion to accept, Galen 2nded. Passed.

FINANCIAL –

Alma reported no activity and an account balance of \$2,880.52. It was also announced that an Agreement with the SLU Small Business Development Center has been signed in order to be eligible for current and future economic assistance projects for the Manchac Greenway by this group.

BOARD NOMINATION –

Frank introduced George Becnel, proprietor of Bec's At The Lake restaurant in Fernier. George has considerable experience in successfully promoting his enterprises electronically and volunteered to assist FMG in informing the public about the Greenway and gain support for this project by making further improvements to our

website and managing our social media presence. Frank's nomination was 2nded by Za and unanimously approved by the board.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT -

Galen reported his research on the basic components of a good not-for-profit organization membership program and produced a Power Point-style presentation that covered topics like the role of members, fees, membership drives, interactions with the internet, promotions, motivations, membership benefits, membership management throughout the year and data management. George, Alma, ZA and Ben volunteered to sit on a committee with Galen to work on the details to create a viable FMG program.

APPRECIATION AWARD –

Frank made a presentation to James Sparacello, Deputy with the Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff's Dept. (and member of the Manchac Greenway Commission) with an FMG Award of Appreciation for his department's assistance in the recent Clean Sweep litter cleanup on the Greenway and in particular, the enthusiastic participation of members of the Sheriff's Inmate Litter Abatement Program.

BEC'S BIKE EVENT -

George reported on the June 23 Frenier-Ruddock Gator Swamp Fun Ride on 16 miles of the Greenway to raise funds for fighting children's cancer. There were 18 riders and \$510 was collected for the cause. George was particularly inspired by the father & son team who stuck it out the whole way and pledged more such rides in April and in the fall. George mentioned the need for improving safety at the intersection where Peavine Rd. from Frenier Village meets the Greenway. Frank mentioned a similar need where a local couple has recently cleared parts of the old Hammond Hwy. for cycling/walking.

RING AROUND THE LAKE PROJECT -

Ben reported on a recent meeting with the Greater New Orleans Regional Planning Commission, an organization involved with planning transportation projects and helping direct their funding, with FMG representatives Ben, Za, Frank and Melinda. The meeting centered on the topic of the 150 mi. Ring Around the Lake bike path and compliment to the Manchac Greenway. We were introduced to new RPC Executive Director Jeffery Roesel who previously worked closely on this project and Lynn Dupont who gave us a rundown of policies, procedures, protocols and prognostications about this project. At this time, the state apparatus appears to be constipated but there's always hope for a good idea. In the meantime, Bill Joubert of the SLU-Small Business Development

Center has pledged to assist FMG with a presentation for the Ring Around the Lake in order to help develop support.

SHELL BANK BAYOU CANOE AND BOAT LAUNCH ENHANCEMENTS -

Za has facilitated materials and equipment to improve parking and safety for canoe and boat users at this site. Byron Almquist of Canoe and Trail Adventures of New Orleans, one of the original and biggest commercial user of this launch, has pledged to enlist in the LA DoT&D Adopt-A-Road Program to help keep the area clean. Frank has sent application forms for this program to Canoe and Trail and George has promised to help solicit some of the other Shell Bank canoe interests who visit his restaurant to consider helping on the Greenway in like manner.

OWL BAYOU ENHANCEMENTS –

Frank reported that the Tangipahoa Gravity Drainage District has recently removed the collapsed iron girders that once supported a bridge over what has been called Upper Owl Bayou. The bridge was from a 1980s attempt to create a bike/hiking path on the abandoned Hammond Hwy. and has since become an obstruction to drainage and paddlers. Entergy and Tangipahoa Parish crews have cleared vegetation, illegally dumped debris and litter from the site, which leads into the waters of the Joyce WMA. It is now the newest of the Greenway's several canoe and small boat launches.

CARTER/REAGAN REST AREA / NORTH PASS BOAT LAUNCH LANDSCAPE CONCEPT -

Lisa, drawing on her experience in planning, drafted a plat for a planting program for this under utilized facility on the Greenway. It had been designed and partly executed in the 1970s as an interstate exit/rest/recreation area with concrete roadways, parking, curbing, an RV dump station and even a tennis court, until Ron Reagan killed the project. Only the boat launch on North Pass was completed and has since been so heavily used it is said to be the busiest in the state. Lisa intends for the work she did to be a starting point for others to contribute to so it can perhaps be included in the Master Plan for the Greenway.

FRIENDS OF THE MANCHAC GREENWAY WEB SITE/FACEBOOK -

Our website can be viewed at: www.manchacgreenway.org/

Our Facebook page is listed as: *Manchac Greenway*

We solicit any and all who would like to submit comments, images or text for inclusion in either to: George Becnel - becsatthelake@gmail.com

MASTER PLAN CONSULTANT -

Sarah Giles, representing ELOS Environmental, a locally-based consulting group on tap, along with Meyer Engineering of Metairie to create a Master Plan for the Greenway, introduced herself and described some of her organization's program. We are encouraged by their bonafides, which includes much local training (SLU, LSU), knowledge and experience and we look forward to working with them and the Parish. Funding for their services is provided by British Petroleum in partial compensation for their 2010 Gulf oil disaster and was kindly directed to this project by Tangipahoa Parish Government.

VILLAGE AT PORT MANCHAC DEVELOPMENT –

Terry Jones and Steve Jones gave a presentation on an ambitious project to convert Port Manchac into a waterfront development loaded with many amenities and the promise to be respectful of the local environment. The Stantec company of Baton Rouge has completed many impressive development and infrastructure projects and has done a fair amount of research on this one, including consultations with the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation and many others. Mr. Jones solicited ideas and opinions from FMG by a deadline on 7/10 and we have several we will submit.

NEXT MEETING –

July 25, time/place to be determined