

Friends of the St. Joe River Association Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 23, 2017—1:00 PM
Three Rivers Public Library—Three Rivers, MI

IN ATTENDANCE:

Directors: Roxanne Barton, Bill Courliss, Daragh Deegan, Dona Hunter, Bob Jones, Danielle Meersman, Matt Meersman, Grant Poole, Jeff Reece

Watershed Council: Marcy Hamilton, SWMPC; Kim Sinclair, Van Buren County CD

Visitors: Bruce Barton, Ike Pangle, Ron Niezgodski

Call to Order:

President Mat Meersman called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM, welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for introductions.

Minutes of the January 26, 2017 meeting were reviewed. Jeff Reece moved to accept the minutes as printed, Bill Courliss seconded. **Motion carried.**

Treasurer's Report was presented by Treasurer Danielle Meersman. She noted we have received several membership renewals and registration fees for the Annual Meeting. She also received a donation of \$111.00 from the bartenders from The Crooked Ewe Brewery that sponsored Matt's team in the Au Sable Canoe Marathon last year. With interest income of \$2.01, we had a total income of \$753.01 from January 26, 2017 through February 22, 2017. Expenditures for bank service charges of \$18.63 left a net income of \$734.38. Total net income for April 1, 2016 through February 22, 2017 is \$2,746.70. Our Total Balance is \$66,059.78. Dona Hunter moved to accept the treasurer's report as printed, Daragh Deegan seconded. **Motion carried.**

OLD BUSINESS:

Last minute items for Annual Watershed Council Meeting

- Matt informed us that our speaker, David Mifsud, charges a \$300.00 speaker's fee. Jeff Reece moved to pay \$300.00 in speaker's fees, Dona Hunter seconded. **Motion carried.**
- Silent auction items and their information are due on Monday, February 27, 2017. We will have information sheets available on Friday of the Annual Meeting for last minute items.
- Bob Jones said he would bring the LaGrange County SWCD's screen, projector, presentation station, computer, and back-up sound system.
- Jeff Reece agreed to contact AEP for folders to be handed out to those registrants attending the Annual Meeting. Anyone with their organization's information may bring that information on Friday to stuff in the folders.
- Anyone bringing a display should let Bill Courliss know so tables are available for set-up.

Strategic Planning & SJRBC Collaboration

There was some discussion on where we see The Friends of the St. Joe River moving in the next few years. As in our past history, we have reached a lull in our activity and maybe should reevaluate where we are and where want to go. Bob Jones has been putting together a binder on our by-laws and revisions, meeting minutes, and wetland partnership meeting minutes since 2006. He has found it very interesting in that we started with a single goal in mind, completed that goal, started a new goal, completed it and are now looking for a new goal. We all seemed to agree that there are a number of new goals we might pursue. It was decided to table this discussion until next meeting when we will have more time for thoughtful discussion.

NEW BUSINESS:

Election of New Directors

The nominating committee of Daragh Deegan and Jeff Reece reported there are five (5) terms expiring this year. They are Eldred Adams, Daragh Deegan, Bob Jones, John Law, and Ray Leising. Bob Jones and John Law are able to run for one more term and both have agreed to serve a second term. The other three have to be off the board for one year before being able to serve on the board again. Jeff and Daragh presented a slate of Carol Higgins, Ron Niezgodski, and Kim Sinclair to replace the three members going off the board. The floor was open for any other nominations. None were presented. Dona Hunter moved to accept the slate as presented, Bill Courliss seconded. **Motion carried.**

Election of new officers

The nominating committee presented a slate of officers including Matt Meersman as President, Jeff Reece as Vice President, Bob Jones as Secretary, and Danielle Meersman as Treasurer. It was first necessary to vacate the offices before electing new officers. Bill Courliss moved to vacate all offices, Dona Hunter seconded. **Motion carried.** Jeff Reece moved to accept the slate of officers as presented, Bill Courliss seconded. **Motion carried.**

Adoption of budget

After a brief discussion that we should first determine what direction we want to go before we pass a budget, Bob Jones moved that we table the adoption of a budget, Kim Sinclair seconded. **Motion carried.**

Other

- John Law and Mat Meersman will be attending Great Lakes Day in Washington DC March 14 and 15, 2017. Their travel expenses and the second night's lodging has been covered by scholarships. Matt asked if the Friends of the St. Joe River would be willing to pay for the first night's lodging of \$320.00. Kim Sinclair moved to have the FotSJR pay the \$320.00 lodging for the first night. Jeff Reece said he felt having representatives from the Friends attend this event would be money well spent. Ron Niezgodski seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**
- Grant Poole asked if anyone had received any response from either Jack Knorek of MDARD or Garry Lee of Michigan NRCS concerning RCPP schedule for training. No one has received any response at this time.
- Bob Jones presented the notebook he has been working on of the history of the Friends of the St. Joe River from 2006 to the present. It's not quite done yet. Several members noted they may have some materials that would be relevant for this notebook.
- There was a little more discussion on strategic planning and collaboration with the SJRBC. Most felt there is a good fit between the two organizations and time spent pursuing a collaboration may be a good thing.
- As we brainstorm our vision for the future, it was suggested we might want an outside person to help us prioritize what we should do.
- Annual Meeting set-up will begin at 3:30 PM on Friday, March 3, 2017 at Sturges-Young Auditorium.

Adjournment

Bill Courliss moved to adjourn, Kim Sinclair seconded. **Motion carried.** Meeting adjourned at 3:05 PM.

*Respectfully submitted,
Bob Jones*