

Friends of the St. Joe River Association Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 26, 2016—1:00 PM
Three Rivers Public Library—Three Rivers, MI

IN ATTENDANCE:

Directors: Bob Jones, Jeff Reece, Eric Kerney, Bill Courliss, Dona Hunter, John Law, Danielle Meersman, Matt Meersman

Watershed Council: Marcy Hamilton, SWMPC

Visitors: Reynaldo Hernandez, Lisa Harris, St. Joseph County Indiana League of Women Voters

President Matt Meersman called the meeting to order at 1:14 PM, welcomed everyone to the meeting and called for introductions.

Minutes of the April 2016 board meeting were reviewed for approval. Jeff Reece moved to accept the minutes as printed, seconded by John Law. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report was presented by Danielle Meersman. She noted there were some additional membership dues received this month. Bill Courliss moved to accept the treasurer's report as printed, seconded by Jeff Reece. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

CurrentCast MOU – Matt reminded us about the daily, 60-second syndicated radio series and podcast about water stewardship and sustainability in the Great Lakes and surrounding watersheds. CurrentCast is asking if FotSJR would be willing to distribute their information through our website at no cost. John Law moved to host CurrentCast's information on our website at no cost, seconded by Jeff Reece. Motion carried.

ACOE Sediment Work Presentation – Matt contacted Jim Selegan of ACOE to see if he was available for our May meeting. Jim could not. Several FotSJR members are still interested in Jim's presentation. Our June meeting is not a good one for us, so Matt is going to check with Jim again and plan on the August 25th meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Healthy Watershed Consortium grant proposal review – Matt shared with us some of the feedback from our grant proposal to the HWC. Probably the biggest issue was the huge number of applicants. Only 8% of requests were able to be funded. Our proposal did not really fit the funding specs of the HWC through the EPA and Endowment for Forestry. It seems the proposals that received funding were those that include the purchase of property or development rights on high quality natural lands. Bill Courliss wondered if we could buy some land. It was noted that buying land was not really our mission. Maybe we could partner with a land conservancy or a county park. Eric Kerney suggested we might shop the idea to other groups. Matt shared that there may be funds available for something like the original project through the Great Lakes Protection Fund, but they tend to fund very large projects (millions of dollars). He did note that we had great support from Michigan drain commissions and Indiana county surveyors for our proposal. It was suggested that our approach would be to try and measure whether the project could create any change. Preliminary results tend to indicate the practices we are promoting work, but we need to push for continued monitoring over a 10 to 20 year period. Jim Klang at Kiser & Associates might be a good contact and advocate for future grant proposals.

Lake Michigan Lakewide Action & Management Plan (LAMP) – Matt has received some information on possibly becoming a stakeholder in LAMP. The Lakewide Action and Management Plans are action plans for restoring and protecting the Great Lakes ecosystem. This program is under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA). Through this agreement, the governments of Canada and the United States have committed to restore and maintain the

physical, biological and chemical integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes. Matt will forward this information to all via e-mail.

13th Annual St. Joe River Races – The 5K run and canoe/kayak races will be on Saturday, September 24, 2016 at Veteran’s Memorial Park in South Bend. John Law moved that FotSJR support Matt and Danielle with liability insurance expenses for the race, seconded by Dona Hunter. Motion carried.

OTHER/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Pint Night – Marcy Hamilton mentioned that The Livery in Benton Harbor, MI sponsors “Community Pint Nights”. The Livery will donate 50 cents to a local non-profit organization for each pint sold from 5 to 8 PM. Several thought that might be something to consider.

John Law moved to adjourn at 2:23 PM, seconded by Eric Kerney. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, June 23, 2016 at 1:00 PM at Pine Knob Park, 2825 E SR 120, Howe, IN.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Jones