

**MEETING MINUTES for the Friends of the Manchac Greenway
2:07, June 27, 2019 @ on the Turtle Cove boat, Galva Canal**

IN ATTENDANCE:

Rev. Don August, Ben Taylor, Galen Schum, Tom Dumas, Dwight Williams, Za Maurin, Frank Neelis, Lisa Williams, Dr. James Nelson and Ashley Goodrich

APPROVAL OF 05/30/19 MEETING MINUTES

FINANCIAL REPORT (Galen):

- Bank balance - \$3,928.30 (less \$300 outstanding for brochure map work).

MEMBERSHIP/ SPECIAL EVENTS:

- There was further discussion about FMG hosted canoe trips on Shell Bank Bayou in the fall. One event will be planned for local officials and other interested parties on a Thursday afternoon and another on a Saturday for the general public as part of our membership drive. We are awaiting price quotes from Canoe and Trail Adventures, the vendor who will provide canoes, paddles & lifejackets.
- Bec's Pass Manchac Bridge Half-Marathon is planned on November 23 from the Gator's Den south. FMG will have a tent and table there.
- A Bec's on the Lake Restaurant bicycling event was held on the Greenway June 8 with fifteen participants who raised money for cancer research.

MANCHAC GREENWAY COMMISSION REVIVAL:

- St. John the Baptist Parish planner Ashley Goodrich reported that she had yet to hear from Tangipahoa Parish planner Bridget Bailey to discuss plans for re-establishing this bi-parish group composed of FMG, parish council and administration members to help coordinate the Greenway effort and seek funding for the project. She has well thought-out plans for seeing this worthwhile project through, though upcoming parish elections may alter the group's membership roster. Once Tangipahoa reports in, a meeting will set priorities. One large item looming over Greenway plans in St. John is the construction of the new storm surge protection levee through the southern part of the Greenway.

RESTORE PROGRAM:

- There has been no word from Tangipahoa Parish on an upcoming meeting for proposed Greenway improvements between Pass Manchac and Ponchatoula nor for future funding for the Greenway from this program. Ben will inquire.

SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING:

- Ashley, Za, Galen, Frank and Ben attended a recent "charrette" in Laplace for local stakeholders to map out non-automotive transportation ideas. Our contingent was certain to include the Manchac Greenway in this regional planning scheme.

ADOPT-A-ROAD:

- As the next two litter pick-ups must be done by the end of the year and since the weather has become reprehensible, it was unanimously decided to schedule the next two litter pick-ups toward the fall.
- With a generous offer to FMG for a large quantity of plastic 55 gal. barrels for litter collection on the Greenway, a maintenance plan must also be included. Ben will contact Greenway owner LA DOTD to discuss the possibility of accomplishing this with their current or new litter clean-up vendors.

ST. JOHN PARK IMPROVEMENTS:

- Don reported on his efforts to restore roadside picnic parks on the Greenway in St. John Parish; vegetation removal is the first priority. The Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation and St. John Parish Public Works are assisting.
- Don also reported on his efforts to plan a boardwalk above the muddy "Swamp Trail" in the Maurepas Swamp WMA on the Greenway. He, Ben and Dwight Williams recently measured the path (2,230 ft.) to an old 100' x 200' drill pad that is now a lovely meadow out in the middle of the swamp. He is currently researching coordination with the LA WL&F, maintenance issues, engineering and sponsorship.

PORT MANCHAC UPDATE:

- James reported that despite previous movement toward examining alternative uses for the 40 acre site in the Manchac marsh at North Pass on the Greenway, the Port Commission suddenly elected to not hire a consultant to do this research and to make recommendations. **The Commission will have its next public meeting on June 9 at Ponchatoula City Hall.**
- While unknown influences apparently work to maintain the status quo of this fiscally and institutionally bankrupt facility at all costs (and don't even want to examine possible alternative uses for the non-port) there are plenty of local citizens who do. Stay tuned...

CANOE LAUNCHES:

- At Upper Owl Bayou, illegal dumping of a load of mattress (from a renovated motel?) and of tires have been utilized to bridge access to the Canadian National Railroad tracks and its bridge over the bayou. CN, law enforcement and parish officials will be notified and the need for video surveillance at this site emphasized.

NEXT MEETING:

2:00, August 22 at Bec's On The Lake in Frenier Village