

FRIENDS of the MANCHAC GREENWAY (FMG) BOARD MEETING MINUTES - 2:00, Wednesday, March 22, 2023 @ the Sunset Stop "roundtable" (next to the Gator's Den), Galva, LA

IN ATTENDANCE:

Galen Schum, Tom Dumas, Lisa Williams, Dwight Williams (Lake Pontchartrain Conservancy), Robert Arcuri (St John Parish Council Dist. 5), Dov Block (St John Parish Planning), Eva Hillman, Frank Neelis, Kerry Brignac (St John Parish landscaping contractor) and George Coxen (Chief, Manchac Volunteer Fire Dept.)

ACCEPTANCE 2/23/23 MEETING MINUTES

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Treasurer Galen Schum reported that after receiving a generous lifetime membership donation from James Nelson and a final payment to FMG Contractor Frank Neelis the balance in our organization's bank account is \$7,330.47.

GREENWAY PLANNING:

Tangipahoa Parish - Ben reported that we are awaiting the opening of the US DOT's Restoring Communities Planning Grant to make an application. This funding might help solve the problem of completing the Manchac Greenway, Ring Around the Lake and Louisiana Bootlace Trail where I-55 overlaid US 51 and cut off pedestrian and cycling access.

St John Parish - Mr. Block reported his office awaits a response to the Parish's application for a Scenic Byways Grant to fund a Master Plan for the Manchac Greenway. Neither has this office received any word from the Greater New Orleans Regional Planning Commission about funding for a study for the Manchac Greenway from Laplace to Pass Manchac. Ben inquired about the \$150,000.00 previously allocated by the Parish Council for Greenway planning.

Louisiana Bootlace Bike Trail - Frank made note that representatives from Bike Easy, leaders of the Bootlace project, had recently gone to Washington, DC for a national conference.

INFRASTRUCTURE:

Tree Plantings - Eva reported the Pontchartrain Conservancy nursery in Bucktown continues to produce thousands of new trees - 1,750 cypress were planted on SLU property on North Pass at the eastern end of Jone Island. These trees have an 83% survival rate with the use of plastic nutria guards. (She noted PC plantings in the Madisonville area enjoy a remarkable 97% survival rate!)

Eva and Dwight related word that the Restore the Earth Foundation plantings on LA WL&F Wildlife Management Areas on the Isthmus of Manchac have not used nutria guards and may be suspended.

Sunset Park - Za noted new concrete rip-rap had been distributed on the lakeshore and along the I-55 Canal in the park. Mr. Brignac related plans to level this material and add clay to make a suitable shore for fishing. He also noted a grant for more picnic cabanas has been applied for.

Lake Maurepas CO2 storage - Mr. Williams and Ben reported recently attending a large, public meeting of the newly formed Lake Maurepas Preservation Society in Springfield. Speakers included Louisiana Representative Bill Wheat who will introduce legislation to ban this activity under our lake. Other speakers spoke about lacustrine and wetlands ecology, the ins and outs of carbon capture and storage, geology and the technical, political, safety and social ramifications of this project. A federal Environmental Impact Statement is being requested for this project.

Mr. Arcuri noted his Parish resolution opposed this project in the lake and sought an examination for its placement elsewhere.

OUTREACH:

Adopt-A-Road - Lisa announced a litter collection for the FMG adopted mile will meet at the Joyce Swampwalk Boardwalk parking lot at 9:00 on April 22, 2023.

COMMENTS:

Lisa invited Greenway friends to a viewing of the Tickfaw 200 Boat Poker Run at the Williams Camp on Pass Manchac Saturday, May 27, 2023. B.Y.O.B., etc. Inquiries - (985) 687-5561

NEXT MEETING:

2:00, Wednesday, April 26, 2023 @ the Sunset Stop roundtable (next to the Gator's Den), Galva, LA