

# **FRIENDS of the MANCHAC GREENWAY (FMG) MEETING MINUTES 2:00, Friday, June 24, 2022 @ the Gator's Den/Sunset Stop, Galva, LA**

## ATTENDANCE

Larry Sorapuru, Jr. (former St. John Parish Council), Eva Hillman, Lisa (& Dennis) Williams, Frank Neelis (FMG Contractor), Galen Schum, Ben Taylor, Za Maurin, Robert Arcuri (St. John Parish Council District 5), Tara Lambeth (St. John Parish Director Planning & Zoning) and Dwight Williams (Pontchartrain Conservancy)

## 6/24/22 MEETING MINUTES ACCEPTED

## FINANCIAL REPORT

Galen reported the current balance in the FMG checking account is \$10,259.09, less pending debits of \$500 for the FMG website and \$2,526.14 for FMG contractor mileage. The past month's activity included a \$40.00 donation from the Winn Dixie Community Bag Program and a \$116.00 donation from the Gnarly Barley Brewing Yoga Program.

Galen also reported on his work to renew FMG's System for Award Management (SAM) Registration. It's similar to a Dun & Bradstreet DUNS Number (Data Universal Numbering System) and a new bureaucratic requirement needed for applying for available government grants.

## CONTRACTOR REPORT:

Frank Neelis reported that he forwarded a LA DOTD map of property lines between Interstate 55 and the abandoned LA Hwy. 33 (the 1920s N.O.- Hammond Highway) to Lucien Gauff, St. John Parish Assessor. Hopefully, Mr. Gauff will be able to harmonize his and the LADOTD's assessment of these property lines and we can learn the true ownership of the abandoned road to help see its use as part of the Manchac Greenway. Frank proposed that sections of the old roadbed and/or the bridges that cross its numerous equalization channels can be "adopted" by various sponsors.

Frank reported on his research for the permitting that would be necessary for any new or repaired bridges on the Greenway. The trail led him through state and federal agencies to the LA Dept. Natural Resources designated Coastal Zone Manager - who would be St. John Parish's Tara Lambeth. She described some of the steps that will have to be done when the time comes.

Frank also researched (and photographed) the composting toilets recently installed at the Bonnet Carre Spillway Office with the idea that such facilities may someday be useful at locations on the Greenway.

## GREENWAY MASTER PLAN(S) / FUNDING - St. John Parish - Tangipahoa Parish - New Orleans Regional Planning Commission (NORPC)

Tara Lambeth reported that the co-application for a National Scenic Byways Grant for a Manchac Greenway Master Plan was successfully submitted by St. John Parish and the NORPC. If this grant falls through, a match from the (BP oil spill) Restore Act might be a fallback source of funding for this project.

There was no report from Tangipahoa Parish.

## INFRASTRUCTURE:

- **Cypress planting** - Eva reported approximately half of the cypress tree planted by FMG on the shore of Lake Maurepas at Sunset Park may be kaput from the recent weather. Her and her Pontchartrain Conservancy

group continue to scout new locations in the area with the idea of resuming their planting program in November.

- **Sunset Park** - St. John Parish has recently graced the park with cut grass, four loads of dirt and a load of limestone. Replacement picnic pavilions are next and the idea of sponsorships for these pavilions was discussed.

- **LA NERR** - The new Louisiana National Estuary Reserve will be in the Atchafalaya Basin. Hopefully, information gathered about assets in the Pontchartrain Basin for such a facility can be used sometime in the future.

- **Port Manchac** - So far, no pipe for the proposed project for CO2 storage under Lake Maurepas has been observed at this facility and no drilling (or even the suitability for drilling) in Lake Maurepas has been noted.

- **Ring Around the Lake** - Frank reported funds used to re-pave the old US 51 shoulder (the Manchac Greenway) between Ruddock and Laplace came from the underutilized post-Katrina Submerged Roads Fund and there may be a couple of billion dollars left. Can we use some more of this money to pave more of the Manchac Greenway shoulder?

Frank also noted a long and expensive tunnel under LA 59 on the Tammany Trace between Mandeville and Abita Springs was recently completed. This is not only an indication how important recreational infrastructure and cycling is to St. Tammany Parish and its citizens, it will also be an important safety feature on the future Ring Around the Lake Bike Trail.

#### NEXT MEETING

Tentatively scheduled for 2:00, Thursday, July 28, 2022 @ the Turtle Cove Office, 87 Alligator Lane, Akers, LA