

FRIENDS of the MANCHAC GREENWAY (FMG) MEETING MINUTES

2:00, Thursday, July 28, 2022 @ the Turtle Cove Office, 87 Alligator Ln., Galva, LA

IN ATTENDANCE:

Galen Schum, Frank Neelis (FMG Contractor), Ben Taylor, Tara Lambeth (St. John Parish Planning), Terri Abadi (St. John Parish Economic Development), Greg Za Maurin, Tom Dumas, Lisa Williams and Dwight Williams (Pontchartrain Conservancy).

MEETING MINUTES OF 6/24/22 APPROVED

FINANCIAL REPORT - Galen Schum:

- Galen reported a donation of \$116.00 from Gnarly Barley Brewing for a "beer & yoga" event dedicated to FMG. He also reported expenditures for Frank Neelis' travel expenses and future contract obligations as well as for Philip Hextall's website assistance. Current operational funds stand at \$7,888.95.

- Galen reported he is still working on the onerous SAM (System for Awards Management) registration renewal for FMG. As it likely the Greenway will ultimately enjoy funding from sources other than FMG, this registration may not be vitally important.

CONTRACTOR REPORT - Frank Neelis:

- The Louisiana Dept. Transportation and Development has informed Frank there is no record of anyone owning the old New Orleans-Hammond Hwy. (formerly LA Hwy. 30). Once the St. John Parish Assessor has reached this same conclusion, FMG will seek a responsible party that can assist in making this old roadway a safe, off-road cycling and pedestrian path as part of the Manchac Greenway/Ring Around the Lake/LA Bootlace Trail system.

- Frank has inquired if there are any more unallocated federal Submerged Road Funds so the resurfacing the Manchac Greenway's road shoulders can be continued from Ruddock to Pass Manchac.

- Frank and Ben recently attended a LA Bootlace Trail Workshop in Mandeville to learn about linking a Ring Around Lake Pontchartrain and a Ring Around Lake Maurepas with bike trail networks in Metro New Orleans, Metro Baton Rouge, the Florida Parishes, the River Parishes to the Manchac Greenway. The meeting was attended by an impressive and highly engaged assortment of state, regional and local planners and government officials who provided much information on programs and funding opportunities.

GREENWAY MASTER PLAN(S) / FUNDING

- St. John Parish - Ms. Lambeth reported that as her office awaits a response on their application for a Louisiana Scenic Byways grant to pay of a Master Plan for the Greenway, they continue to search for other funding opportunities.

- Tangipahoa Parish - Ben and Frank reported meeting Tangipahoa Parish Planner Bridget Bailey during the above mentioned LA Bootlace Workshop. Given the considerable amount of attention to this program by federal, state, regional and parish officials, they asked her to inquire how Tangipahoa Parish will be moving forward with this program.

- Ben reported his inquiry with the Greater New Orleans Regional Planning Commission about the possibility of an annual pedestrian/cycling monitoring program at the choke-point where US 51 Business meets the on and off ramps of Interstate-55 south of Ponchatoula. As competition for federal infrastructure funding is intense, property on federal lands is favored and this area is where I-55 overlaps US 51 without any accommodation for pedestrians or cyclists. The goal of the survey is to get an idea of the number of pedestrians and cyclists traversing past this point each year so an argument can be made for public safety improvements between the Manchac Greenway and Ponchatoula.

INFRASTRUCTURE:

- Sunset Park - Some of the cypress trees planted by FMG on the Lake Maurepas shore have succumbed to drought, some have been wiped out by mowers. Za will inquire with Kelly Brignac, parish contractor for the park. Galen proposed we should sponsor a pavilion or two and Ben asked if the Laplace Lions Club will resume adoption of the park; Za will make appropriate inquiries.

OUTREACH

- FMG Plans to provide refreshments and diversions for the NOMA to NOMA (New Orleans Museum of Art to New Orleans Museum of Art) Race Oct. 2, 2022 @ the Gator's Den in Galva.

- The Go Daddy website hosting platform used for the FMG website has turned into a terrible disappointment, especially since we just put it up four months ago. They have made their web-builder program obsolete (it was pretty clunky) and we are now actually obliged to rebuild a new site. We are exploring using a different platform.

NEXT MEETING

- August 25, 2022, location: TBA