

Friends of the St. Joseph River Association Board Meeting
Minutes from September 24, 2020
Virtual Meeting held via Zoom

Call to order 1:07pm

Directors Present: Matt Meersman, Jeff Reece, Jeff Wenzel, Carolyn Grace, Carol Higgins, and Grant Poole

Community Members Present: Matt Diana, MDNR; Nancy Brown, Elkhart River Restoration Association; Lisa Harris, League of Women Voters; Kyle Tryan, Benton Charter Twp Water Plant Superintendent; Gabby Gustafson, Kiezer & Associates; Jan McGowan, LaGrange SWCD; Jennifer Kanine, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi DNR; Kristy Todd, IDEM; and Bob Jones, FotSJR lifetime member.

Minutes from June: Jeff Reece made the motion to accept the June board minutes, Jeff Wenzel supported, motion passed

Treasurer Report: None given.

Old Business:

1. **Board action:** No board action was taken via email since June meeting.
2. **Watershed Celebration:** Nancy Brown accepted the 2020 Stewardship award via zoom and was very pleased to be selected.
3. **Future Meetings:** for the foreseeable future we will be holding our meetings via zoom. The next meeting will occur on Oct 22nd. Discussion was had to keep or change the day and time. Consensus was to keep the 4th Thursday of each month at 1pm.

New Business:

1. **17th Annual St. Joe River Races:** Sept 26th is the annual running and paddling races hosted by Matt and Danielle Meersman. Matt is excited to continue hosting the race as fundraiser and a way to bring awareness of the group and the incredible recreational resource the St. Joe River provides. He wanted to be sure the group was still in favor of hosting the event for insurance purposes. Consensus was to continue the event.
2. **Fiscal Year 2020 Fiscal Report:** Without the treasurer available to explain, Wenzel motioned to table the report until October. Higgins supported. Motion passed

Items from the Floor:

1. Jeff Reece donated \$80.00 to keep the MI Lakes and Streams Basket that was donated for the silent auction.
2. Carol Higgins encouraged Carolyn Grace to discuss the Portage Parkville Dam Removal. Matt Diana shared some pictures from the mussel relocation. The dam will be scheduled to be removed in August 2021. Matt Diana also talked about the Pucker Street Dam removal and the positive comments from the community.
3. Kyle Tryan mentioned that he was happy to be part of the Friends group and hopes to meet us all soon, face to face.

4. Matt Diana, also spoke about Snuff box mussels that are endangered and they happen to find some in the Portage River. He hopes to have a spot to rehabilitate them within the river, but time will tell.
5. Carolyn Grace gave a brief update about the St. Joseph River Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant to inventory invasive species along the mainstem of the river. Her team is collecting some amazing data with the hopes to obtain another grant in the future.

Adjournment 1:50 pm

Next meeting October 22, 2020 via zoom