

**Friends of the St. Joe River Association Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, April 26, 2018—1:00 PM**  
**Three Rivers Public Library—Three Rivers, MI**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

**Directors:** Daragh Deegan, Carolyn Grace, Carol Higgins, Dona Hunter, Bob Jones, Eric Kerney, Danielle Meersman, Ron Niezgodski, Jeff Reece, Kim Sinclair

**Watershed Council:** Ron Johnson, Fabius Township; Tara Lee, Steuben SWCD; Matt Meersman, SJRBC

**Visitors:** Becky Shank

**CALL TO ORDER:**

President Matt Meersman called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM, welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for introductions.

**Minutes** of the March 22, 2018 meeting were reviewed. Jeff Reece moved to accept the minutes as printed, Ron Niezgodski seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

The **Treasurer's Report** was presented by Treasurer, Danielle Meersman. Danielle's report was in two parts, fiscal year April 2017 through March 2018 and April 2018 through April 26, 2018. Fiscal year April 2017 through March 2018 showed Total Income of \$4,262.76 and Total Expenditures of \$4,258.76 leaving a positive Balance of \$4.00. It was noted the Annual Celebration showed a \$920.00 profit. The Total Assets and Equity and Liability Balance was \$68,521.73. For the month of April 2018, we had Total Income of \$225.00 that included a \$50.00 donation from Gene Lightner and membership dues of \$175.00. Expenses were \$5.10 for Bank Service Charges leaving us with a Net Income of \$219.90. Our Total Assets and Liabilities and Equity Balance is \$67,569.13. Kim Sinclair moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as printed, Dona Hunter seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Strategic Planning and Budget Adoption/Discussion**

Matt started discussion of our 2018 – 2019 budget. Danielle provided two sheets of information. One was our yearly income and expenditures each year from fiscal year 2008-2009 through fiscal year 2017-2018 to do some comparisons. The second sheet was a proposed budget for 2018-2019 based on last year's (2017-2018) income and expenses. As we looked at the proposed budget, Strategic Planning items that had been discussed at previous meetings came up. Items included liability insurance for board members, an annual postcard mailing, reinstating the newsletter, membership evaluation, and sponsoring events for the Watershed Council and/or SJRBC. Our projected income for 2018-2019 is \$4,607.00. The proposed expenses came to \$2,348.34. After much discussion, we decide to add \$855.66 to Event Expense, \$500.00 to Insurance, \$300.00 to Marketing, \$103.00 to Postage and Delivery, and \$500.00 to Travel. These additions would bring Total Expenses to \$4,607.00. Kim Sinclair moved to accept the proposed annual budget as amended, Carol Higgins seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

**2018 Meeting Schedule/Locations**

Matt lead a discussion on the location for our monthly meetings and how often we need to meet. We currently meet 10 times a year with July and December off. Suggestions were made to rotate the meetings around the St. Joe watershed for several reasons. One is to acquaint board members with other parts of the St. Joe watershed. Another would be to allow FotSJR members and supporters in the far extremes of the watershed to attend one of our meetings if the meeting was closer to them. We know at times board members may have to travel further for a meeting but at other times it would be closer. Kim Sinclair moved to have 10 meetings a year (no meeting in July and December) and to move some of the meetings around the watershed, Carol Higgins seconded the motion. **Motion carried.** The May meeting will be in Three Rivers, the June meeting at Par-Gil Natural Resources Learning Center in LaGrange, Indiana, and the August meeting in Van Buren County, Michigan at a site determined by Kim Sinclair.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **Election of Officers**

Prior to the election of officers, Bob Jones announced that he is retiring at the end of May and he and his wife will be moving to Muncie, Indiana to be closer to their grandchildren. Thus, effective May 24, 2018, Bob will resign as board member and secretary of the FotSJR. He expressed what a privilege and honor it has been to be part of the Friends and work with such dedicated colleagues. Bob intends on returning for next year's Celebration and hopefully other events.

As there was no slate of officer candidates, Matt opened the floor for nominations by office. Carol Higgins nominated Kim Sinclair for Treasurer, Danielle seconded the motion. Having no other nominations, the **motion carried.**

Ron Niezgodski nominated Jeff Reece for President, Daragh Deegan seconded the motion. Having no other nominations, the **motion carried.**

Kim Sinclair nominated Daragh Deegan for Vice President, Jeff Reece seconded. Having no other nominations, the **motion carried.**

Ron Niezgodski nominated Dona Hunter for Secretary, Carol Higgins seconded. Having no other nominations, the **motion carried.**

Danielle proposed a resolution to expand the financial signature on the FotSJR accounts. It was suggested to keep Danielle on the signature list and add the new treasurer, Kim Sinclair. It was also suggested to keep the same bank, Fifth Third Bank. Bob Jones so moved, Daragh Deegan seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

In looking at updating and using our website more, it was suggested we increase the number of administrators of the Wild Apricot site with board members who will have time to keep items on the website up-to-date. The Executive Board will meet to help determine who should be added as administrators.

### **Other**

- Matt and Danielle have scheduled for their get-away weekend for May 4-6.
- Bruce Howe from the South West Michigan land Conservancy will be on our May agenda as guest speaker
- The SJRBC Symposium will be Friday, May 11, 2018 at Fernwood Botanical Gardens
- The St. Joe River Races will be September 22, 2018. Bob Jones moved to cover the liability insurance premium for the event as we have done in the past, Ron Niezgodski seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**
- Ron Niezgodski will be the Registered Agent for the FotSJR replacing Rudy Kappe. Jeff Reece moved to name Ron as agent, Kim Sinclair seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

### **Announcements:**

- Visitor, Becky Shank, expressed concerns of pollution on the Portage River and throughout the St. Joe River Watershed. The Wolverine Worldwide Tannery issue on the Rogue River in Rockford, Michigan was mentioned by Becky as a reference. She emphasized that whether we live directly on the river or not, we are still part of the watershed. This may be a concern that the FotSJR may want to express to the state of Michigan.
- Jeff Reece informed us of Matt's naming as a Freshwater Hero by Freshwater Future. ***Congrats Matt! Well deserved.***
- Carol Higgins announced that the St. Joe County Michigan river clean-up schedule is posted on their website. The first date is June 2<sup>nd</sup> on the Fawn River.

**Next meeting will be on Thursday, May 24, 2018, at 1:00 PM – Three Rivers, MI.**

**Adjournment:** Jeff Reece moved to adjourn, Ron Niezgodski seconded the motion. **Motion carried.** Meeting adjourned at 3:08 PM.