

FOMNRR Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
May 14, 2019 10:00 AM
USD Muenster University Center room 216, Vermillion, SD

Chair Tim Cowman called the meeting to order at 10:05 am. Twelve BOD members (or proxies) were present either in person or on conference call. BOD attendees were: Rich Burns, Tim Cowman, Bob Foley, Pat James, Don Nelson (via phone), Marshall Pritchard (via phone), Jarett Bies (via phone), Dave Swanson, Barbara Yelverton, Dennis Menke, and Paul Lepisto. Jake Manning participated as a proxy for Shane Bertsch from South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks. Rick Clark and Daniel Peterson attended as National Park Service representatives from the MNRR. Amber Fertig participated as a visitor from Vermillion.

Introductions – the meeting began with introductions of all attendees.

Approval of Agenda – Two additions to the agenda included: discussing FOMNRR trail status added to Old Business, and discussion on summer newsletter added to New Business. The agenda was approved unanimously.

Minutes – Minutes of last BOD meeting on 26 February 2019, which were posted online prior to the meeting, were approved unanimously.

MNRR Superintendent's Update

1. ***Effects of "Bomb Cyclone"*** – Rick Clark mentioned the March 2019 event took out the abandoned railroad trestle near Niobrara, NE. National Park Service is working in coordination with Nebraska Game, Fish & Parks to remove trestle through a submitted request for an Emergency Relief Package by NPS. It will cost \$2-3 million to remove the trestle. The Emergency Relief Package does not fund a new structure in place and Nebraska Game, Fish & Parks will have to determine if salvageable as fish pier, etc. EPA will remove other hazardous debris (propane tanks, refrigerators, etc.) via airboats within the next 30 days.
2. ***Goat Island*** –The public meeting was held on 30 March 2019. The public comment period on the NPS' proposed management plan saw a total of 173 individual commenters and 376 comments. The vast majority of comments were connected to camping and enforcing primitive camping. Implementing backcountry camping permits may occur in the future. A final record of decision on the plan will occur in July.
3. ***September 2019 Friends Alliance meeting @ Grant Teton NP*** – The event will occur September 23-27, 2019 near Moose, Wyoming which will include opportunities for networking, fundraising, and philanthropy. It may be worthwhile to attend. Let Rick or Tim know if interested and the associated costs to attend.
4. ***Status of James River Island LWCF proposal*** – The MNRR is #2 on the NPS regional priority list and #10 nationally of 418 units for consideration for funding support through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Superintendent Clark estimated knowing by next quarter what the status of funding is.

5. **Preliminary meeting w/ NGPC** -- The meeting will need to be rescheduled with NGPC, Niobrara representatives, and Friends members for projects under Environmental Trust Fund grant proposal. Rich Burns, Don Nelson, and Marshall Pritchard will be heading the group to determine date and time of this meeting and contact Rick Clark with those details. Cut off for fund is early October.

Committee Reports

1. **Financial and Membership** – Treasurer Bob Foley gave the financial report. Highlights included an unrestricted balance of \$5813.90. A total of \$750 (12 donations) were donated in memory of E. Howard Coker. Treasurer Foley also noted that of the 155 members on the list, only 58 of those have current paid memberships. Treasurer Foley also noted that : **Total Contacts by State** included 221 total contacts from SD (168 contacts), NE (35), followed by MO, IA, and others, **Total Contacts by City** included 221 total contacts from Yankton (105), Vermillion (30), Sioux Falls (8), and others, and **Facebook followers by City** was largest out of Omaha/Council Bluffs with 83/777 followers.
2. **3rd Thursday Events** – Dennis Menke reviewed the first meeting where 7 people attended. The second event will occur at Ben’s Copper Room and the NPS movie will show. June meeting will occur in Hartington at the newly renovated Hotel Hartington. A request of \$175 for hor d’oeuvres was motioned by Paul Lepisto, Barbara Yelverton seconded the motion. The July Meeting will occur during the Music on the Meridian in Yankton. A setup group will be visible and the movie will show. More FOMNRR presence was urged at these meetings. Dennis also noted that the MRE would like volunteers for judges, timekeepers, etc. at the cardboard boat races on June 8 at the Lake Yankton Festival. It was also determined that Rick Clark and Tim Cowman will attend a future MRE meeting to discuss the relationship of MRE and the Friends group.
3. **Landowner Communications Group** – The spring meeting was cancelled due to weather and suggested moving the meeting to late summer/early fall. Official time and date has yet to be determined.
4. **Missouri River Events recap**
 - a. **Missouri River Watershed School Festival** – A total of 370 students attended from South Dakota and Nebraska. Twenty presentations and groups rotated with 15 minutes per presentation. Presentations included water safety, natural resources, invasive species, etc.
 - b. **Missouri River Cleanup** – The annual cleanup was cancelled this spring due to high river flows. It was suggested rescheduling this fall, but no official action was taken.
 - c. **Lake Yankton Outdoor Festival and Homestead Day** - The festival will occur in two areas, Pierson Ranch and the Training Dike. The events at the Training Dike include conservation, safety, and natural resources. Raptor’s Keep, previously Royal Gauntlet, will have an event at the Training Dike as well. The events at Pierson Ranch include techniques of churning butter and making taffy and ice cream.
 - d. **Invasive Species Awareness Event** – to be held in June. It has been determined that more awareness needs to be spread to recreational boaters (20-30% aware) opposed to anglers (80-90% aware).

Old Business

1. **Annual Meeting update** – To take place June 8 at Lake Yankton at 11 am. Food for 50 people will be provided by the planning committee for the event. The meeting will occur near the two shelters on the east side of the beach at Lake Yankton. Barb will provide a location map in the future. The BOD unanimously approved an expenditure of \$614 for 200 aluminum water bottles with the FOMNRR logo or message for the event. Only members or those who sign up will get a water bottle. Dennis Menke agreed to go on KYNT at May 21 at 7:30 am to talk about the event.
2. **Center for Great Plains Studies event** – Choices for the event date include 13-14 November 2019 or 20-21 November 2019. Standard times for the event are 3:30-5 pm but the Center would be willing to schedule a presentation at a different time if needed. It was suggested that three 30-minute presentations could fill the 1.5 hour presentation slot including a portion on the Wild and Scenic River, the Friends group itself, and some other topic. Jarett Bies and Dan Peterson have agreed to work on presentations. Tim Cowman will take the lead via email to determine which date FOMNRR should accept.
3. **FOMNRR Trail Status** – Frost Trail: Rick Clark and Tim Cowman have been working with Game, Fish & Parks on changes for the trail. It was previously agreed to a 4-ft wide mowed path along the river. Game, Fish & Parks would now like to break the trail into 2 segments. A northern loop will no longer trail through the wooded area, but part will be along the backwater area. The southern portion will have a small trail from the parking lot straight to the river. Signage in parking lots will still be allowed, but signage along the trail will not. North Alabama Bend: A Section 408 request would need to be submitted in order to build a trail on this land. The FOMNRR group would bear the costs of performing such request. It was agreed that a field trip to the property with Linda Filo from USACE would need to happen this summer before it could be determined if the proposal would be feasible. No official action was taken.

New Business

1. **Replacement of Board Member Susan Heggstad representing VCDC** – Susan Heggstad had suggested Tony Kellar from the VCDC as a possible replacement. Tony would like to know more about the time commitment and what FOMNRR does before he commits. Tim Cowman will contact Nate from the VCDC regarding a replacement.
2. **Appointment of Vice Chair** – Tim Cowman nominated Barbara Yelverton to the Vice Chair position. The BOD unanimously agreed. Barb will serve as Vice Chair until the end of the year.
3. **Participation request for MNRR Teacher Workshop** – Daniel Peterson requested volunteers for the MNRR Teacher Workshop on August 5-6. Dan will send out request emails for volunteers to members in the future.
4. **Supplies request for Junior Ranger Academy** – The Junior Ranger Academy will take place June 10-14. The Vermillion academy was dissolved and “Academy II” was created for graduates of

Academy I due to popular demand. Daniel Peterson requested a total of \$425 for 20 journals and 15 embroidered t-shirts. The BOD unanimously approved the expenditure.

5. **Newsletter** - It was determined that the summer newsletter will come out sometime July and contain 4-6 pages expanding on summer events and other topics. Bob Foley suggested cut members from mailing list who have not renewed within the past years. No official action was taken to determine how many years that would be. Tim Cowman suggested looking at the percentage of people per year who have not renewed.

Comments and Announcements – Jarett Bies listed two upcoming events and mentioned volunteers are needed for both of them.

1. The South Dakota Kayak Challenge – May 24-25 from Riverside Park, Yankton to South Sioux City
2. Fort to Field 50 Paddle Battle – July 12-13 starting at Pickstown and ending at Springfield.

Next meeting date and time – The next regular board meeting will occur sometime in August.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:41 pm.