

FOMNRR Board of Directors Meeting
November 13, 2019 1:00 PM
NPS Conference Room, Yankton, SD

Chair Tim Cowman called the meeting to order at 1:02 pm. The meeting began with introductions of attendees, including the introduction of Nick Mauro (Ponca Tribe of Nebraska) as our newest board member, replacing Shannon Wright as a Tribal board representative. Fourteen BOD members were present. BOD attendees were: Shane Bertsch, Tim Cowman, Jeff Fields, Bob Foley, Kasi Haberman, Pat James, Terry Julesgard, Tony Kellar, Nick Mauro, Dennis Menke, Don Nelson, Marshall Pritchard, Dave Swanson, and Barbara Yelverton. Rick Clark, Dugan Smith, and Daniel Peterson (via phone) attended as National Park Service representatives from the MNRR. Visitors included Jaron Condley from the South Dakota Geological Survey and Jake Manning from South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks.

Minutes – Minutes of the last BOD meeting on 4 September 2019, which were posted online prior to the meeting, were approved unanimously.

MNRR Superintendent's Update – Superintendent Rick Clark provided updates on recent happenings for the MNRR. These included official approval of the Goat Island Management Plan in August of 2019, potential purchase of James River Island through NPS land acquisition funds (pending approval of the federal budget), and plans to upgrade and standardize highway and entrance signage for river access sites along both 39- and 59-mile reaches of the MNRR. Rick provided additional details for each of these topics and some discussion followed.

Reports

1. *Financial and Membership* – Bob Foley provided the report.
 - The FOMNRR fiscal year ended 30 September so membership renewals are now due.
 - The balance in the FOMNRR budget is currently \$ 11,599.30, of which \$ 2,541.43 is designated for MRE expenditures and \$ 750 is restricted in the Howard Coker memorial.
 - Total paid membership since the inception of the FOMNRR is 151. Of this total, 67 are current paid members.
2. *3rd Thursday Events* – Dennis Menke provided the report.
 - 3rd Thursday events were held March through September in 2019. Some of these events were coupled with a showing of the new MNRR film *Rivers of Change*.
 - Some brainstorming of ideas for activities for the next year, with the intention of helping to stimulate membership, followed the report.
3. *Landowner Communications Group* – Pat James and Barbara Yelverton gave the report.
 - The most recent landowner meeting occurred last week.
 - Currently this group has lost some momentum, partly because of confusion about: (1) the overarching purpose for the group and (2) next steps for the group.
 - A discussion of potential options for enhancing communications between the MNRR, FOMNRR and landowners followed the report.

Old Business

1. *Friends Alliance Meeting* – Dan Peterson and Barbara Yelverton both attended this meeting in Jackson, Wyoming, from 24-26 September 2019. Dan thanked the FOMNRR for supporting his travel to this meeting.
 - The meeting providing good opportunities for networking with other Friends groups and some meeting highlights were summarized.
 - The topic of a potential FOMNRR Board retreat to summarize and review ideas from the meeting that are pertinent to the FOMNRR and discuss how the FOMNRR might implement some of these

ideas was brought up. The current plan is to identify a date (by Doodle poll) and place for such a retreat.

2. *Niobrara Area Initiative* – Rick Clark reviewed recent discussions with state and local government agency representatives regarding this initiative. These meetings were supervised by Rich Burns. Rick mentioned that providing access to the lower Niobrara and Missouri rivers was an important target activity identified through these discussions. Developing access to the lower Niobrara River near the Mormon Canal bridge could possibly meet this need and this option is being pursued currently.
3. *MRE Assistance* – A larger role for the FOMNRR in carrying out these events is a priority for the board. Dates for the Missouri River Watershed Festival (30 April 2020) and Missouri River Cleanup (2 May 2020) were provided. An agenda item for the next BOD meeting will be to discuss strategies for increasing FOMNRR volunteer participation in these events.
4. *North Alabama Bend Trail Site* – Tim Cowman mentioned that he and Shane Bertsch met with Linda Filo of the USACE for a tour of the Alabama Bend property. The USACE is on board with the development of a low impact trail system (i.e., signage at the trailhead only). The FOMNRR role would be to help maintain the trail system, which would consist of vegetation clearing initially followed by keeping the trails mowed. Tim circulated a map of potential trail siting on the property, which included current two-track vehicle access trails as part of the projected trail system. Some discussion followed.
5. *Center for Great Plains Studies Event* – Don Nelson mentioned that this event would take place in Lincoln, Nebraska, on 21 November. Dan Peterson and Jarett Bies will present the program. Don encouraged as many FOMNRR members as possible to attend.

New Business

1. *Winter 2020 Newsletter* – Dan Peterson mentioned that the Winter 2020 Newsletter target release date is 1 January 2020. The newsletter will include a membership renewal notice and dates for upcoming spring 2020 Missouri River events. The issue will be 4 pages in length. Dan requested submission of 500- to 800-word articles on MNRR-related topics by 24 December 2019 for inclusion in the newsletter.
2. *Election of Officers* – Tim Cowman presented a slate of officers for all positions except Chair and noted that the by-laws stated that officers will serve 2-year terms, although in practice officers can step down at any time. Tim mentioned that he is stepping down from the Chair position after this year, but is still working on identifying a replacement, so action on the election of a Chair will be deferred until a later date. A motion for a unanimous ballot was approved for the following officers for 2-year terms – Vice Chair: Barbara Yelverton; Treasurer: Bob Foley; Secretary: Dave Swanson; At-Large Member: Paul Lepisto.

Announcements

1. Rick Clark mentioned that the Department of the Interior, which houses the National Park Service, had undergone a recent reorganization so that all agencies under the DOI umbrella now operate under standard regional geographic divisions. A new NPS Midwest Regional Director, Bert Frost, has recently been appointed and operates out of the Omaha Regional Office.
2. Dave Swanson mentioned that the Missouri River Institute annual symposium will occur on Thursday, 21 November 2019, at the University of South Dakota campus. The schedule is posted at: <https://www.usd.edu/-/media/files/missouri-river-institute/mrisymposiumschedule.ashx?la=en>.
3. A Doodle poll will be circulated in the near future to identify a date and time for the next FOMNRR board meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:04 pm.