

## **Minutes**

Friends of the Missouri National Recreational River (FOMNRR)

Board of Directors (BOD) Meeting

**3 February 2023**

Chair Burns called the meeting to order at 2:35 pm in the MNRR Offices in Yankton.

Attendance: Rich Burns, Luke Hummel, Pat James, Tony Kellar, Paul Lepisto, Don Nelson, Marshall Prichard, David Swanson, and Barbara Yelverton. MNRR Staff attending the meeting included Tom Downs and Harrison Freund.

### **A. Reports/Updates**

1. MNRR Superintendent's Report – The report was given by Tom Downs, as Superintendent Dimmick could not attend the meeting. The transfer of a 34-acre parcel of land on the Nebraska side of the Meridian Bridge, donated to the MNRR from the City of Yankton, is in process. Discussions are underway with the City of Yankton on the construction of a Visitor's Center for the MNRR by renovating the old Water Treatment Plant facilities. The MNRR will probably looking for a minimum of \$1M for renovation of the building to fit the needs of a Visitor's Center. FOMNRR would be involved with the fund-raising.
2. Finance/Membership - Bob Foley circulated a hard-copy report to the BOD prior to the meeting. This report received and was accepted unanimously.
3. The minutes of the FOMNRR BOD meeting on 24 October 2022 were approved unanimously.

### **B. Old Business**

**FOMNRR Communications Team** - During the previous BOD meeting, a FOMNRR Communications Team was established with responsibility for outreach efforts (newsletter, social media outreach, website information, and welcome email to members). BOD members on the Team are Pat James, Tony Kellar, Barbara Yelverton, Rich Burns, and Tom Downs. The most recent FOMNRR newsletter is posted online. Pat James reviewed how the online newsletter worked for generating memberships and renewals. Response to the online newsletter was relatively poor. The Communications Team will meet again soon to determine outreach strategies for 2023. Chair Burns mentioned that he will work on developing a standardized welcome letter email for all FOMNRR memberships, whether they are new, or renewals.

**FOMNRR Board of Directors (BOD) Appointments** – Chair Burns mentioned that current recruitment efforts have not been successful for filling Executive Committee positions (Chair and Treasurer/Membership). Some discussion for strategies to fill these vacant positions occurred.

### **C. New Business**

**Motus Wildlife Tracking System** - Motus is an international collaborative research network that uses coordinated automated radio telemetry to facilitate research and education on the ecology and conservation of migratory animals (<https://motus.org/>). David Swanson provided a summary of the international Motus network and the types of data that can be provided by this network, as well as the efforts toward seeking grant money with the SDGFP to develop a series of Motus towers in South Dakota along the Missouri River six to ten Motus Stations in along the Missouri River in South Dakota

from Dakota Dunes to Pierre. The project would be funded by the State Wildlife Grant program, which receives federal pass-through money to work on conservation-related research and other activities by state wildlife department. These grants require a 25% non-federal match. FOMNRR has been asked about a monetary pledge supporting the project, which would be due by February 10, 2023. MNRR staff fully support such a project, including placement of towers along both sections of the MNRR.

Don Nelson proposed an idea for discussion, which was that FOMNRR be involved as a participant in the proposal if it moves forward for up to \$10,000, with \$1,000 provided by FOMNRR with the remainder generated from fund-raising activities. Discussion followed. A motion (Yelverton, James) to pledge \$2,500 to the Motus project. Additional discussion followed. The motion passed unanimously, with one abstention.

**Friends Group Meeting Interval:** The bylaws stipulate that BOD meetings should occur six times per year. We have not been meeting this often. Chair Burns asked whether the BOD should establish a fixed meeting time and date for meetings occurring every other month, or whether the BOD should continue to schedule meetings via Doodle polls. Discussion followed with no real consensus on a meeting scheduling strategy moving forward.

**Attendance at Meetings of Other Organizations:** Tony Kellar suggested that a couple of FOMNRR members could attend meetings of other conservation-minded organizations in Yankton to tell people about who we are and what we do for the purpose of generating more interest and more participation in FOMNRR. The general consensus was that this was a great idea, so Chair Burns will begin looking for opportunities for FOMNRR to do this.

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 pm.