

FOMNRR Board Meeting Minutes - 11/14/23

The meeting was called to order by Paul Lepisto, filling in as chair, at 10:42

Attending: Tom Downs, Curt Dimmick, Shane Bertsch, Lynn Scroggins*, Pat James, Amber Margheim*, W. Don Nelson, Kelley Ashby, Bob Foley, Tony Keller, Rick Spellman, & Paul Lepisto.

* denotes new members

The draft agenda was approved when two items were added, membership in Southeast SD Tourism, and updates from the NPS. The board welcomed the new members.

Lepisto reminded the group about the 2024 Missouri River events in Yankton:

- The Missouri River Watershed School Festival – Thursday, May 2 - 8-12
- The Missouri River Cleanup – Saturday, May 4 – 8-12
- Homestead Day – Saturday, June 8 – start time TBD

Please put these dates on your calendar. FOMNRR plays a major role in organizing and coordinating these events with NPS and other organizations. Many volunteers are needed for each event and your help is needed. More details on each event will come next year.

FOMNRR officer positions

Chair - Lynn Scroggins was nominated to be Chair of the FOMNRR Board (James/Nelson). Scroggins was approved by unanimous vote. Scroggins is new to FOMNRR, but she has extensive experience with other friends' groups and with organizational planning. We thank her for stepping into this important position and all members are urged to help her in the role.

Treasurer - Pat James has been FOMNRR's temporary treasurer after Bob Foley stepped away following years of dedicated service. A motion was made (Spellman/Nelson) to authorize Ashby to temporarily assume some of the responsibilities of treasurer for a limited time (ending by May 2024). Ashby agreed to handle writing checks, reading FOMNRR's mail, and electronically depositing checks and donations into the FOMNRR account. This should allow FOMNRR to find someone to take the treasurer position and fulfill all its responsibilities in the coming months. The motion received unanimous approval.

Lepisto will send a letter to Scroggins to be updated for the transfer of authority to the FOMNRR account at First Dakota Bank from James to Ashby. Ashby and James will meet in Yankton to forward FOMNRR's mail to Ashby's address and complete the account transfer. We need someone for the bookkeeping part of the treasurer's position. Foley indicated this does not require a lot of time each month. James agreed to continue to monitor the FOMNRR website and the Square account for new memberships, renewals, and donations until a treasurer is found.

Committees

We discussed ways to move FOMNRR forward. Various committees were established several years ago but they have not been active. Lepisto will ask Secretary Dave Swanson to see who

volunteered to be on the committees and then determine if those members want to continue to be involved on that committee. Ashby suggested that FOMNRR consider making committee work an expectation of FOMNRR Board membership, which will be discussed at a future meeting.

Future committee work will include:

- Membership/recruitment - seek people who are involved with the river and recognize the importance of the river to the area this should include people on Lewis and Clark Lake and who paddle the two MNRR water trails. New member Amber Margheim asked if there is a paddling/kayaking group that could be tapped for new FOMNRR members or board members. Amber said a lot of kayakers from Sioux Falls come to the river. She mentioned the benefit of coordinating some events could bring some more people into the mix.
- Volunteers - for events & activities - we need hundreds of volunteers annually
- Fundraising - renew work with area businesses in Yankton, Vermillion, Crofton, Springfield, Clay County and/or develop grant applications for needed funding
- Strategic Planning - to develop long range projects and annual work plans in coordination with NPS staff

Future FOMNRR activities may include restarting the NPS' ROSCOE program. Restarting the NPS' Junior Ranger Academy. Development of an MNRR Visitor Center in Yankton. Possible Green Island Trail and Access Project. More details on these potential activities to come.

SESD Tourism Membership

FOMNRR's Membership with Southeast South Dakota Tourism was discussed. Our membership runs through June 2024. Discussion focused on the need for FOMNRR recruitment from the SESD Tourism Membership if we renew and how to engage new volunteers for our events & activities. SESD Tourism Membership and an MNRR advertisement in their magazine would cost \$385 yearly. We can also access the list of SESD Tourism members if we join. We need to do more with the resources available in an intentional and strategic way. The deadline for getting into the 2024 book is coming.

James and Bertsch are collaborating with Kasi Haberman to view the proof of the ad. Don Nelson requested to see the list of benefits before committing the money. Shane asked Kasi for a timeline for when we need to finalize a decision and the ad. Membership costs \$265 (good through June 2024). An advertisement in the state vacation guide costs \$385. SESD Tourism has connections with all the chamber of commerce organizations.

NPS Updates

The Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) was discussed. Clay and Yankton county commissions are working on a grant application looking for funds to conduct a feasibility study for a multi-use trail system in the area. They are asking FOMNRR for a letter of support for the project. The letter can be developed from the one we submitted for the RAISE grant application. The previous letter will be revised so Scroggins can sign and submit it.

Economic Impact Analysis

FOMNRR can apply for a \$50K grant for this. FOMNRR would need to submit the grant application, NPS cannot. If FOMNRR decides to work on the grant we will need to make decisions quickly. If approved this grant could be especially useful for the work on the proposed visitor center. This study could also benefit future fundraising and programming efforts.

Green Island Project

The City of Yankton is preparing an application for a trail system and access project on Green Island, pending the sale of the land. This would be a long-term project that would provide new public access to areas along the river. More details to follow.

Chair Scroggins will look at dates for the next FOMNRR board meeting. A Doodle will be sent to determine the date and time of the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:17.

Minutes respectfully compiled and submitted by Paul Lepisto and Kelley Ashby for Secretary David Swanson