

Friends of the Missouri National Recreational River (FOMNRR) Board Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, May 28th, 2024, 1-2:30 pm

Call to order by Chair Scroggins at 1:02 pm.

Kelley Ashby, Shane Bertsch, Bob Foley, Paul Lepisto, Don Nelson, Lynn Scroggins, Dave Swanson, Barbara Yelverton. Guests: Curt Dimmick, Abby Schauer, Caroline VerMulm.

Minutes of February 27th meeting (Dave Swanson). Approved unanimously.

Financial report (Kelley Ashby): Current balance is \$14,663.64. The annual financial report has been submitted.

Membership/Communication report – Chair Scroggins noted that Constant Contact newsletters have been posted since March and a couple of new Facebook posts have been added recently.

Old Business

- MRE/NPS activities – Abby Schauer, Caroline Ver Mulm, and Paul Lepisto reviewed these activities. A total of 385 students attended Missouri River Watershed Education Festival (46 volunteers) – numerous good comments were received from teachers. A successful river clean-up event (100 volunteers) removed 1.7 tons of trash. A private landowner along the river saw the clean-up activities and provided an unsolicited donation. A total of 584 volunteer hours were generated for the MNRR between these two events.
- Interviews – Chair Scroggins mentioned that she interviewed 13 BOD members and several MNRR staff from January through April with same six questions about vision, reasons for joining FOMNRR, how do you see yourself contributing, and the relationship between MRE and FOMNRR. Chair Scroggins provided a brief summary of what she found out during these interviews. Hiring an Executive Director and staff was a consensus vision for FOMNRR leadership moving forward. Some frustration was expressed regarding what was considered a somewhat ill-defined relationship between FOMNRR and the MNRR. The MRE and FOMNRR relationship was also considered rather ill-defined and was not very well understood as the non-profit fund-raising arm for the MRE.

New Business

- Future of FOMNRR letter by ad-hoc group of Lynn, Kelley, Pat, Paul, Harry Freeman – Kelly Ashby facilitated the conversation about the Future of the FOMNRR letter.
 - Curt Dimmick mentioned that the MNRR strongly supported a relationship with FOMNRR as a fund-raising/philanthropic organization that partners with the MNRR in furthering the development of the park and its activities, including assisting with raising funds for Capital Assets (e.g., a Visitor's Center) and other activities, internships, or research and management infrastructure. Significant growth in FOMNRR would be required to fulfill such a vision; an Executive Director and staff would help.
 - Lots of comments and discussion were raised by members about the rather vague role of FOMNRR. Some resistance to being involved if the organization is primarily a fund-raising organization was expressed. Some members mentioned minimal additional bandwidth to promote the growth required for FOMNRR to fulfill the mission desired by the MNRR. Frustration was also expressed with trying to recruit new members to build FOMNRR to a point where it

could meet the vision laid out by Curt Dimmick. Park Service staff mentioned that Friends groups provide substantial value to Park Service units, including the MNRR.

A motion was made (Swanson/Ashby) for FOMNRR to go dormant but still maintain the 501(c)(3) designation needed for NPS and MRE fundraising. Some discussion followed regarding officer requirements and whether we would be in violation of the bylaws.

A substitute motion (Lepisto/Ashby) for maintaining a minimal group of officers and to eventually recruit independent, and/or nonprofit-based volunteers for fundraising and help that NPS is not allowed to perform as a government agency (e.g., completing certain purchases or obtaining donations). The motion passed 5 Yes to 1 No, with 1 abstention.

Kelly Ashby volunteered to continue paying FOMNRR bills until the end of June. Bob Foley agreed to take over as Treasurer after that date. Paul Lepisto will take over as interim chair once Chair Scroggins retires at the end of May 2024. Dave will remain as secretary.

A motion to approve of Bob Foley as Treasurer (Kelly, Barbara) passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:43 pm.