

## **Friends of GTM NERR**

### ***Minutes of Board Meeting: Tuesday, January 9, 2007***

***Members present:*** Bill Coleman, Carl Hampp, Sheryl Aycock-Anderson, Joe Hutnan, Frank Pixler, Bonnie Goldsmith, Triss Padgett, Anita Pierce, Pierre Pierce, Peter Difatta, and Carol Travis.

***Staff Present:*** Janet Zimmerman, Katie Flynn and Mike Shirley

Meeting called to order at 5:03 p.m. by Bill Coleman at the EEC

Bill introduced Dr. Mike Shirley. Mike said a few words. He indicated that the challenges they face with the new management plan is to link the plan to real issues and that these issues will be important to the Friends group because in that way they can find activities for the Friends group that will be compatible with the management plan and that he welcomes input from the Friends group with their involvement.

December's minutes were brought to the floor. Motion to approve by Triss, seconded by Frank and passed by the board.

#### Treasurer's Report by Bonnie Goldsmith

No current balances available. In general, checking account has gone up \$26,000 much of this amount as a result of our recent mailing. Generally she felt it was a good mailing. The cost of the mailing was around \$12,500. Good bit of material left over from this.

Bonnie indicated the Finance Committee reviewed the financial statements ending September 30, 2006 and copies were passed out to the board. Profit and Loss statements were broken up into Nature Store and Friends. Bonnie briefly reviewed the various items on the statement. (Secretary Note: copies of statements attached to minutes)

Based on these statements the Finance Committee drew up the preliminary budget for 06-07. Copies of this budget were also passed out to the board. She indicated that new items were included in the budget such as the administrative assistant salary.

She indicated we are estimating increased membership and are considering a second mailing in mid year.

There appears to be a net income after all the expenses will be taken out.

Bill indicated he had a meeting with Brad (Friend's accountant) and there will be an adjustment down for his charge. We also have some IRS rule changes for 501 C3 organizations for donors and donees and that will be discussed in committee and then brought to the board.

#### Executive Committee Report by Bill Coleman

Bill indicated the Executive Committee met after the Finance Committee and talked about the Administrative Assistant position and have an interview with a person tonight. We also talked about the medallions we received that we had made that were to be given to people for special occasions and a medallion and a plaque will be given to Agnes Danciger. A general discussion on what dates of service would be used on the plaque and weather to include her service with Frog. The agreement was that it would. Also talked about Committees and the need to update these and get people assigned to Committees with goals and objectives.

#### Development Committee and Membership Update Report by Frank Pixler

Frank indicated the direct mail campaign has gone very well. There were some problems with the data base. Barb related to Frank the she thinks Bonnie has a good grasp of what money goes to what account, whether a new membership, renewal or bricks but a more defined structure needs to be in place and the Finance and Development Committees will meet to iron this out as well as problems with letters getting out to donors. Barb has passed on to Frank the following: \$25,500 came in from renewals and a result of the direct mail campaign. This was 398 checks of which 154 were new members and 244 were renewals.

Frank went over the brick orders but indicated some question on the numbers but thinks it's around 44, and Janet indicated we're pretty close to having a more accurate result.

Bill indicated that since the Development Committee controls such a large portion of our budget, in order to get a more accurate picture going forward, we need to get an agenda from Frank regarding what money will be spent at what time and what supplies we have and what future mailings and expenditures we will have. Frank said he would get that.

#### Bricks Report by Peter Difatta

Peter indicated that he, Barb and Janet met with Agnes who previously coordinated the brick program to go over the procedure for the bricks. First they discussed the original intended length of the program and Agnes indicated it was open ended with the idea it would continue until it no longer paid for itself. A cursory review indicated there were approximately 50 donors who had bought bricks that were not yet in place and some have been waiting as long as a year and a half. The group that met felt we should proceed to install these bricks and based on the layout of the walkway, there were an adequate number of bricks that would work with minimal expense in the laying process. We are calling this the end of phase II. Peter recommended that we hold off on taking more orders until a determination that the program was still making money. A general discussion ensued. No decision was made. Bill indicated that we did not have a brick drive since original brick drive and maybe we should have another, but Frank pointed out that brick flyers were included in the new mailings at a cost of approximately \$300.

Janet indicated the difficulty of getting a brick layer to lay only 50 bricks. Carl indicated

that the brick company had put aside a certain number of bricks of our dye lot for Friends but he did not know how many. Janet said she will review the contract and get back to us. Frank suggested getting the business community involved with corporate bricks and a separate campaign and this should be investigated through the Development Committee.

Peter indicated Janet was seeking volunteer help to put the rest of the donors into the brick database and Barb was looking at the Friends database to include a separate relational data file for brick donors. Present procedure is to send out a thank you to brick donors with tax information and later when the phase is to be closed out, to send a letter asking for confirmation of the wording. In the next phase we will try to combine this all in one letter. Peter indicated that we worked out a suitable design plan for laying the bricks in a symmetrical pattern in case the brick program was terminated, rather than having names only on one side of walkway. Also, the brick folder was gotten from Agnes and will be in the Friends office.

Bill suggested that for that letter we have a statement that bricks are put down in lots of 50 so there may be a significant delay before they appear on the sidewalk.

Pierre asked if there were any future plans for benches, flagpoles, etc. "in memory of. . ." and we do not, but everyone agreed it was a good idea.

#### Nature Store Update by Katie Flynn

We had pretty good month in December with books and consignments being the best sellers with clothing and plush toys next. Total accumulated sales in December of \$2,611 of which \$1,106 was expense and with taking consignment out we had a profit roughly of \$1,500. Didn't have a big increase in December compared to other months partly because we didn't have volunteers to cover all days. We now have volunteers for Saturday and at least Sunday afternoons. Cost of goods includes the purchase price and freight but not the banking fees which would be credit card expenses.

#### Research Committee Report by Pierre Pierce

Pierre indicated that since the last request for funding for the whale project was sent back, he had received more detailed information which did not get to the committee to review and he passed this out to the board. He indicated Janet had indicated they really needed the money since they had lost funding from other sources.

Bill said he learned of a \$20,000 grant from the Army Corps of Engineers they had received for the last 5 years and that had been cut out completely. Pierre asked if this should be carried through committee or to discuss it now and the general agreement was to make a decision now. Bill suggested approving it subject to Pierre's final okay. A general discussion ensued. We discussed giving money to something specific. Janet mentioned we could possibly get more recognition as a "program supporter" as opposed to a specific "equipment purchaser". Anita mentioned it's important to communicate to the whale project our need for recognition and Mike reiterated this. Peter made a motion

to approve the requested \$5,000 and it was seconded. The vote would be contingent on the committee approval and would not specify distinct usage of the funds but would request recognition. Carl recused himself from voting since his wife is involved in the project and the motion was passed. This money would come out of the Research Committee budget.

#### Upcoming Events and NERR Update by Janet Zimmerman

Janet indicated the radio show would be this Saturday 7-9 a.m. on AM 690 and it is a call-in program on fishing.

The Management Advisory Group will meet on January 24 at 6 PM in the Marineland Office and all are invited. Janet reminded us we have a voting seat on that. There will not be a draft of the Management Plan ready for that meeting since with Mike Shirley coming on board they've extended the deadline for the draft to March with the intent to make the plan more issue responsive. Pierre is our MAG representative and has been sent a draft agenda. Mike Shirley will be there.

Mike said he was excited that the commissioners here were involved in the management of this site and that isn't always the case in other areas.

In February, Janet reported, they will be doing a coastal training program for law enforcement giving them skills they need to do enforcement on our coastal resource protection and will be looking at Friends group for sponsoring their luncheon.

Janet received an interesting email from the estate of Valerie Newman, an artist who did studies of tortoise and we will be receiving 10 artist reproductions to sell in the Nature Store. They sell unframed anywhere from \$50 to \$100 dollars. She suggested the possibility of having them framed to sell them for more. It is something for the board to decide what to do with them. Katie mentioned that more unframed items sell than framed.

#### Other Business

Frank mentioned the sports show on Saturday that Rick Riles with Florida Sportsman's agreed to come to and Frank donated \$200 for equipment rental. Frank requested a donation from Friends of baseball caps for the gentlemen who will be coming and all agreed to that which would be a maximum of 3 or 4 caps. The show is on 9:30 a.m. on 690 AM.

Cheryl, who works at Glenmore at World Golf Village spoke that next month Glenmore will be sponsoring the happy hour to all the neighborhoods at World Golf Village and that this is a lot of neighborhoods. They are looking for sites to do this monthly happy hour and she was wondering about the possibility of inviting them out to the GTM NERR. They do charge for drinks and occasionally they will charge for food.

Carl mentioned that at the Executive Committee we discussed using the facilities for such events and had mentioned it to Mike Shirley as a means for raising public awareness. Peter also mentioned it as a means of fund raising by asking for donations for use of the facility.

The question of providing alcohol on state properties came up and Mike Shirley said it was permissible if handled by a volunteer group. The question of selling alcohol was mentioned or seeking donations and Mike said he would check with other reserve sites with their experience. Mike would also discuss this with the staff to cover all bases.

Katie mentioned there are two volunteer training sessions this month. One is on the 20th on enviroscape, educating people on what they do in their yards and how it effects pollution in our water systems, 10-noon. The other is on Monday the 22nd which is general volunteer training starting at 9-12. Then optional history of Guana from 1-2 PM.

Also, a gentleman has donated walking sticks and birdhouses to the Nature Store. The walking sticks have sold. We can purchase more.

Bonnie mentioned we have had a specific donation for a microscope which we have purchased.

Meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.