

## **Friends of the GTM NERR**

### **Minutes of Board Meeting: Tuesday, August 12, 2008**

#### **Members Present:**

**Pierre Pierce, Anita Pierce, Carl Hampp, Jonathan Katzen, Chris Rich, Triss Padget, Peter Difatta, Nancy Schachovsky**

#### **Staff Present:**

Teri Webley, Harry Odom, Angel Gonzales, Angie G.

#### **Guests:**

Wendy Thompson

#### **Excused Absence:**

Frank Pixler, Bill Coleman, Craig Oneal, Irene Kaufman, Mike Timpane

#### **Meeting called to order at 5:00 pm by Pierre Pierce at the EEC**

#### **July Meeting Minutes Approval by Pierre Pierce**

Peter motioned to approve the July meeting minutes

Anita seconded, all approved none objected, July meeting minutes approved.

#### **DMIS Satellite Proposal by Pierre Pierce**

Pierre explained the handout that all in attendance received. Pierre said that the project would cost \$200,000 and that corporate funding is the direction to go. The satellite would provide information not currently available. A light plane would fly over the area of interest and use a camera linked to the satellite. The satellite would then adjust to the coordinates provided by the camera and take detailed pictures. Because it is a polar orbiting satellite the pictures could be taken daily enabling researchers to track a variety of conditions and changes and even animals such as the Right Whale. The information could be transmitted live over the Internet.

Pierre explained that the reason for the handout and the presentation at this meeting is to ask the Board members to invite any corporations they think appropriate to participate in this project.

Discussion about what type of corporation would be interested, initial and ongoing costs, and the value to the GTM Research Reserve followed.

#### **Development Committee Update by Jonathan Katzen**

Jonathan said that the Development Committee intended to present the proposed budget to the Board at this meeting. However the budget would need to be seen by the Finance Committee first.

Nancy (chair of the Finance Committee) agreed.

Jonathan explained that fundraising was down last year from previous years. For this reason the Development Committee is looking for ways to reduce the budget. The expectation is to come in at 60% of last year's budget.

Development cont.

All Board members and key GTM Research Reserve staff were given 2 of the packages used last year. Jonathan explained that the Development Committee is looking for suggestions about ways to make the information more effective while reducing costs. The Development Committee asks that all suggestions be provided within 2 weeks.

Jonathan said that moving forward the mass mailings would be targeted to areas where there has been success in the past.

Pierre asked about the Chamber of Commerce part of the Development Committee plan. Specifically whether the Friends get any benefit from these memberships.

Jonathan explained that the potential is there for benefit if representatives from the Friends attend all or most of the functions. But that has not been the case so the benefit the Friends are getting is not great.

Pierre asked if the Chambers were in essence and extended arm of local developers.

Jonathan said that in his experience that while there are developers attached to the Chambers they are made up of small business for the most part.

The need for a Friends member specific newsletter was discussed. The idea of adding a Friends member section to the newsletter that is currently produced was the most popular option. The Friends member section could appear quarterly. Angel said that if the Board would provide the information they want included he would see that it gets in the newsletter.

The need to reach the volunteers was discussed and the low crossover of volunteers to Friends members.

Jonathan said that he would add the need to reach volunteers as a separate item on his to do list.

Wendy said that as a new Friends member she needed more information about how to get more involved.

Jonathan was in agreement with Wendy that more information needs to be made easier to access for Friends members.

Pierre brought up the Conflict of Interest Policy. All of the Board members will receive the Conflict of Interest Policy and for review. Teri will email copies to all.

Nancy brought up the bylaws. She has 3 copies and after discussing it with Carl they found what appears to be the most recent. Teri will get a copy of the most current bylaws and distribute a cleaned up copy to all Board members. The Board will vote on the bylaws at the next meeting.

Nancy will meet with Peter and the Governance Committee and put together all of the policies for review and create a permanent file.

Pierre told the Board that he has been attending the St Johns County Civic Association Roundtable meetings and that the group could be beneficial to the mission of the Friends. If Pierre is going to represent the interests of the Friends at these meetings should the Friends pay the dues?

Development cont.

There was discussion about the benefits of membership in the St Johns County Civic Association Roundtable.

Nancy moved to approve \$100 for dues to the St Johns County Civic Association Roundtable.

Carl seconded, all in favor, none opposed.

**Education and Communications Committee Update by Chris Rich**

Chris read the report Mike T wrote about the Education and Communications Committee meeting. A copy of that report was passed out to all Board members present in a packet that also contained the funds requests from the education dept at the EEC.

The items covered were the new sign and banner, the need for a permanent display inside the EEC, and the funds requests submitted by Angie.

The first funds request was for two items to be used at the National Estuaries Day event on 9/27/08.

The Education and Communications Committee voted 4 to 0 in favor of granting the revised request of \$200. for tee shirts for the fish print booth and \$600. for food for volunteers and exhibitors. The Friends will get most of both requests back through payment for fish print shirts by guests at the event and through reimbursement for food for volunteers and exhibitors by the state.

The second funds request was for the LIFE program. Due to the large amount of the request Angie was invited to present the request to the Board in person.

Angie gave a brief description of the LIFE program. Learning In Florida Environment. A DEP program throughout the state of Florida that targets at risk students that would otherwise not be given this kind of learning experience. The school chosen in St Johns County is Sebastian Middle. It is the only local school that fits all the criteria for the program.

Angie explained that due to budget issues the schools are strained financially and the program needs more money from outside sources this year.

The teachers have been able to raise some of the funds but it still leaves a sizeable shortfall.

The Friends have helped every year so far and this year the amount of the request is significantly more.

Mike T and the Education and Communications Committee suggest that the full amount of the request not be voted on until the option of corporate sponsorship has been explored.

Angie added that funding may be found later but that is not something that can be counted on for the program.

There was some discussion about how to reduce the load on the Friends and corporate sponsorship was the most popular.

Angel, having some experience in this area will help look for corporate sponsorship.

Angie is networking with her sources to find more funding.

Jonathan asked who would spearhead the search for corporate funding.

Angie said that she was told that traditionally the Executive Committee takes the lead.

Angel said he will help if he is given the go ahead from the Executive Committee.

Education cont.

Chris said that the Education and Communications Committee's recommendation is to approve the fall request of \$800. and wait to see what develops for spring. Angie will provide the Executive Committee with program information. Peter asked that all Board members get a copy of the letter that will be used to ask for corporate sponsorship so they can use it if they know someone that may be able to help.

Chris said the last item is concerning the Stewardship Coordinator Meeting that will be held at the GTM Research Reserve this year. The Education and Communications Committee voted 4 to 0 in favor of bidding to provide event services. The bidding will take place in the next few weeks and it has been proven to be a revenue generator.

There was discussion about the success of past experience with providing these services and how they were provided.

Nancy motioned to approve bidding to provide event services.

Carl Seconded, all approved, none opposed.

**Other Business**

Angel requested written policy concerning petty cash. Harry Odom will oversee the petty cash moving forward.

Nancy said that she has a history of petty cash transactions.

A written policy will be provided.

Pierre adjourned the meeting at 6:15pm

Nancy motioned to adjourn

Jonathan seconded, all in favor, none opposed

The next Friends of the GTM Reserve Board meeting will be September 9, 2008