

Friends of the GTM NERR

Minutes of Board Meeting: Tuesday, September 11, 2007

Members Present:

Bill Coleman, Pierre Pierce, Anita Pierce, Carl Hampp, Irene Kaufman, Peter Difatta, Joe Hutnan, Nancy Schacnovshy, Frank Pixler, Carol Travis, Chris Rich, Jonathan Katzen

Staff Present:

Katie King, Angie Golubovich, Cat Eastman, Mike Shirley, Teri Webley

Meeting called to order at 5:05pm by Bill Coleman at the EEC

August Meeting Minutes Approval by Bill Coleman

Motion to approve the August meeting minutes by Peter. Seconded by Carl and approved

Bill announced that Carol Travis has resigned from the Board of Directors of the Friends of the GTMNERR. This meeting would be her last.

Nominating Committee Report by Carl Hampp

Carl passed the resume of Michael Timpane out to all Board members present. Michael has been interviewed by the Nominating Committee and is being recommended by them for a seat on the Board of Directors of the Friends of the GTMNERR. Carl went on to describe Michael's experience and qualifications for the seat. Michael is well versed in environmental issues. He works for waste management. Michael has worked in the recycling program for 30 years. He heads up the waste management's recycling program nationally.

After discussion among Board members about Michael Timpane's experience and qualifications Bill asked for a motion. Carol motioned to approve Michael for a seat on the Board. Frank seconded. Michael Timpane was approved for a seat on the Board of Directors of the Friends of the GTMNERR.

Bill reminded the Board that there is still room for more Board members and there is a shortage of Board members that live south of Ponte Vedra.

Education Committee Update by Pierre Pierce

Pierre explained that funding was requested for busses to transport students to the EEC from underachieving schools. The Education Committee recommends that the Board approves the funds for the 2007 – 2008 fiscal year. He further explained that he would like to see corporate sponsorship for this program to possibly include lunch for example.

Cat and Angie explained that the program targets low income / low achieving schools that would otherwise miss the opportunity to send students to the EEC.

The amount requested is \$2,400 for two trips to the EEC for Sebastian Middle School, Fall and Spring. Pierre explained that the funds not only pay for busses but also pay for substitute teachers at the school so teachers can accompany students to the EEC.

Pierre asked for a motion. Carl motioned to approve the \$2,400 for the 2007 – 2008 fiscal year to pay for busses and related expenses. Anita seconded and it was approved.

Development Committee update by Frank Pixler

Frank passed a summarized version of the Development budget to all Board members present. He explained the information on the report.

Frank provided a sample of the letter head, inserts, and envelopes that the Development uses in mass mailings.

Frank mentioned the need to revisit the brochure used for these mailings and possibly design an updated version. Not for this mailing; for the next.

Frank explained that \$16,000 to \$17,000 was spent the first year developing and mailing the brochures.

Last year \$10,000 was budgeted with the possibility of needing \$12,000 for the mailing. \$12,500 was actually spent. \$10,000 of that was for the mailing and printed materials. \$33,000 was raised from that mailing.

Frank added that in two years about \$75,000 has been raised through the brick and direct mail campaigns.

Development cont.

Frank raised the question of where the direct mail campaign should focus this time. Should Flagler be dropped this time to concentrate more on the Ponte Vedra and surrounding area?

Last year about 4000 pieces were mailed to the Flagler area and 11 or 12 responses were received by the Friends of the GTMNERR.

The next issue concerning Flagler County is how we create the awareness that we need if we are not ready to commit to a direct mailing campaign in that area.

Frank's suggestion is that the Friends of the GTMNERR redirect the funds spent for direct mailing in Flagler to expand the direct mailing area in Ponte Vedra and north. The Development Committee needs a commitment from the Board as to where the redirected funds should be focused.

Frank explained that on the second part of the budget business to business is addressed. The Chambers of Commerce as well as the business community needs to be contacted.

In contacting the business community we need to remember that they will ask themselves; why do I want to come here (Friends of the GTMNERR) and what is in it for my company, my employees and their families, and what does it do for the community?

If we (The Friends of the GTMNERR) are not able to communicate those things we will not be successful in the business community.

Therefore a brochure directed at the business community addressing those issues should be developed.

In addition Frank pointed out that if the Friends of the GTMNERR are going to get involved with the Chambers of Commerce the Board members need to take turns attending Chamber functions. And hosting a couple of Chamber focused functions at the EEC would help.

Bill asked when the direct mail will go out.

Frank answered that the direct mail will go out the 2nd or 3rd week of October.

Frank said again that without a brochure focused on businesses the response from the business community will not improve over the last mass mailing which was almost nothing from the business community.

Bill suggested that the Board vote on the first section (direct mail) of the budget at this meeting. The Finance Committee can review the rest of the budget for future vote.

Development cont.

Bill asked if the Board can get a breakdown stating how many pieces per zip code are mailed in the direct mail campaign.

Frank said that Jonathan would get that information. It will be emailed to the Executive Committee.

Frank asked for a motion. Peter motioned to approve the \$14,500 for the direct mail campaign. Carl seconded. All in favor, approved.

After discussion about the long wait between brick purchase and installation Teri was asked to find out the cost of bricks without a minimum purchase.

Web Site Update by Irene Kaufman

After viewing the proposed changes for the Friends of the GTMNERR web site and not having heard any negative feedback Irene suggests we proceed with updating the look of the website.

Other suggestions have surfaced concerning the Friends of the GTMNERR web site such as an on line merchant acct. Irene suggests that they be tabled until further study can be done.

Teri passed around the results of her research into adding an on line merchant acct. through QuickBooks.

Irene further explained that she added the pre visit purchase form to the web site. The form is directed at groups with limited time to spend at the EEC. The pre visit purchase form offers a selection of Nature Store Merchandise that can be ordered and paid for before a scheduled group visit. The order would be waiting for the purchaser when they arrive for the visit to the EEC.

Peter suggested adding a web store to the web site without the credit card option. Customers could choose from the web store inventory and call to complete the transaction.

Chris added that a web store would be a benefit to visitors who have gone home and would like a memento of their visit.

Irene will work with a volunteer to update the look of the web site. Carl suggested that if any text is to be changed it be approved by Mike Shirley first. At this point the only changes made will be aesthetic and any pictures used will be the property of GTM Research Reserve.

Friends Annual Report Update by Bill Coleman

The annual meeting will be on September 29 at 3pm at the EEC. There will be a summation of some of the things the Board was able to accomplish this year. The new Officers of the Board of Directors of the Friends of the GTMNERR will be introduced. The Board was directed by Bill to let Teri know if they are not going to attend the annual meeting.

Research Reserve Update by Mike Shirley

Mike announced that the management plan is close to a final draft. Mike went on to explain the process for converting the plan to PDF that results in needed corrections. Mike said that chapter 6 “the issues chapter” is of special interest to the Board. Chapter 6 contains goals, objectives, and strategies laid out. The Friends of the GTMNERR are mentioned in chapter 6 concerning funding among other benefits to the Research Reserve.

Mike passed out copies of a summary of Chapter 6 of the management plan to those present at the meeting.

Mike reminded the Board of the upcoming meetings concerning the management plan beginning with the September 26th meeting at Marineland.

Pierre announced that Mike was volunteered as a guest speaker at the Civic Round Table.

Estuaries Day Update by Katie King

Katie explained that Estuaries Day is Saturday September 29th. There are flyers out that list the events for the day. Katie asked that anyone knowing of an appropriate spot to post a flyer please take some and do so. And to hand out flyers where able. Katie estimated that about 300 people came out for National Estuaries Day last year. This year more are expected. Katie pointed out that there are still volunteer slots that need to be filled for the N E D event.

The Talon Mudd memorial presentation will take place on September 29th at 9:30 am for the touch tank provided by those who donated to the memorial fund.

Estuaries Day cont.

Katie asked for volunteers to man the Friends of the GTMNERR booth at the Marineland location on September 29th.

Frank added that the Florida Sportsman radio show will broadcast from the EEC from 7 to 9 am on September 29th. The Friends of the GTMNERR will be given time to talk about their mission at the GTM Research Reserve. There is a fee of \$200. for equipment for the broadcast that Frank paid last year. The Friends of the GTMNERR agreed to pay it this year.

Vote For Board Officers

Carl reminded the Friends of the GTMNERR Board of Directors of the nominees for office as stated at the August meeting:

President – Pierre Pierce

Vice President – Peter Difatta

Secretary – Irene Kaufman

Treasurer – Nancy Schachnovsky

Carl called for a motion and Bill motioned to approve the nominees, Frank seconded.

All in favor – none opposed – approved.

Carol said goodbye to the Board.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:05 by Bill Coleman

The next monthly board meeting will be Tuesday, October 9th.