

Friends of the GTM NERR

Minutes of Board Meeting: Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Members Present:

**Bill Coleman, Irene Kaufman, Nancy Schachnovsky,
Carl Hampp, Frank Pixler, Jonathan Katzen, Craig O'Neal, Chris Rich**

Staff Present:

Teri Webley, Marty Healy, Joe Burgess

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

September Meeting Minutes Approval by Bill Coleman

Bill called for approval of the September Friends of the GTMNERR Board meeting minutes.

Jonathan made the motion to approve the September minutes.

Frank seconded, all were in favor, and the September Friends of the GTMNERR Board meeting minutes were approved.

Executive Committee Report by Bill Coleman

Bill explained that there were two main topics at the Executive Committee meeting.

The first topic was Committees. Everyone present received a copy of the Committees list. Bill invited all Committee members to resign from any Committee they did not feel they could effectively serve on. Committee members were instructed to see any Executive Committee member about matters concerning committee assignment.

Bill encouraged Board members to invite Friends of the GTMNERR members to join committees even if they are not Board members.

The second item from the Executive Committee Bill discussed was the Business to Business portion of the Development Committee's budget for 07-08.

Bill explained that the Executive Committee agreed that it would recommend that instead of doing a mass Business to Business mailing a more targeted approach should be considered. David Drisdale at the Alligator Farm or someone at Tree of Life was given as examples of individuals that a more targeted campaign would approach. Bill added that Chris Rich had suggested this approach on several occasions. To summarize Bill stated that rather than go full Business to Business that from a budget stand point a targeted approach made better sense.

Speaking about current Chamber activities that the Friends of the GTMNERR are involved in Bill said the recommendation would be to continue those.

Development Committee Update by Frank Pixler and Jonathan Katzen

Frank informed the Board that the Development will come in under budget on their latest mail campaign. Frank and Jonathan have dug deeply into available databases and are nearly ready to go to press with the 2007 mass mailing campaign.

Jonathan is working on getting a reprint of the article in the Florida Times Union about National Estuaries Day at the GTM Research Reserve 9/29/07. If he is successful they will provide 20,000 copies free.

Frank said he will need two things from the Board to proceed with the direct mail campaign.

The first thing Frank needs is a revised copy of the renewal letter used in the 2006 mass mailing campaign. Frank and Jonathan need that revised letter within the next 10 days.

Frank suggested that the renewal letter take priority over the inactive letter right now so Barb and Teri can begin with their part of the project.

The letter Frank used as an example was not the 2006 letter. Bill asked Teri to find the 2006 letter.

Bill said that the existing letter is seasonal and that if the mailings are going to be monthly the letter needs to be revised to reflect the change. Bill suggested that a generic monthly format be used in future renewal letters to make the process smoother.

Frank agreed with Bill and said that the renewal mailing could be held up for a couple of weeks to get the revised letter ready. Frank said that a 2 week hold on the project would also give Jonathan a chance to get the newspaper reprint and that could be added to the mailing.

Bill and Frank discussed whose signature should be on the renewal letter and agreed that as the newly elected President of the Board Pierre's signature should be on the letter.

The second item for discussion that Frank brought up was the Friends of the GTMNERR brochure. Frank reminded the board that he handed out the brochure at the last meeting on 9/11 and asked for feedback as to content and layout. Unless any of the Board has comments on the text of the brochure it will be used as is. An insert will be added to the mailing to update or add to the information and next year a new brochure could be developed. Frank pointed out that a lot of the people on the mailing list this year have not seen the brochure so it will be fine. Frank suggested that anyone with comments about the brochure should email Frank or Jonathan in the next week with those comments. The goal for the mass mailing is to be ready to mail in the next 2 to 2 1/2 weeks.

Frank informed the Board that as a result of the 2007 inactive list mailing over \$800 in renewals was raised and the cost of the mailing was about \$350.

Frank told the Board that members on the inactive list that renewed as a result of this mailing were deleted from the inactive list and would not get another letter in the next round of mailings.

Development cont

The inactive list is members of the Friends of the GTMNERR who have not renewed their membership in 2 years.

Jonathan informed the Board that he was in touch with Holly at the Times Union about a reprint of the article about National Estuaries Day at the GTM Research Reserve. Holly is working on the Times Union donating the reprint. The article appeared in Shorelines. Frank provided a copy of the Shorelines article and passed it around for anyone who had not seen it.

Frank said that even if the Times Union won't donate the reprints the cost of doing it ourselves is about \$500 and with that amount the project is still under budget.

Jonathan explained that the mailing would not go to Flagler County due to low response last year. Instead there would be more focus on Ponte Vedra. In terms of St. Augustine households with incomes over \$100,000 were looked at. Palencia, Pelican Point, and up to Atlantic Beach and Neptune Beach will be included in the mailing. The expanded area will add 5,000 new households to the mailing. People in these areas go by Guana signs every day so the name should be familiar. Also looked at were the households on both sides of the inter coastal in Jax Beach. These households are surrounded by water and are impacted by what we do here. All new areas total added around 18,000 new names to the mailing list.

Frank reminded the Board about the discussion at previous meetings concerning looking north right now for membership and look south after more of a presence has been established in those areas.

Bill suggested that information about the GTM Research Reserve and the Friends of the GTMNERR be provided to the Nocatee development. Possibly to their marketing people so when people look at Nocatee they see our material too.

Frank said they could develop a packet for that use.

Joe asked about population projections for the Nocatee development. Bill said it is about 14,000 people and pointed out that by partnering with them we could get more support when things like the High School issue arise in the future. When they want to take Research Reserve land these people could come to our defense.

Frank said taking information to the sales office was a good idea. Chris attended a meeting of the Park Group last week. Some parks and related sites are expected to open in 2008. Chris suggested that the Park Group would be a good place to partner. Chris felt that the Park Group is looking for things to interest people outside of what they have there.

Development cont

Joe pointed out that a lot of the TV commercial for Nocatee was shot on Research Reserve property.

Frank said that the Development Committee is excited about where they are and that Jonathan has had great success with the data base. Once the changes in the letter are done it is full steam ahead.

Frank said that in about 2 weeks the Development Committee will need a postage check. Jonathan will get the information together and invoice the Friends of the GTMNERR with the exact amount needed.

Teri had a couple of questions from Barb about the mailing. First was if the list of Brick purchasers would be used in the renewal mailing.

Frank said that the Brick purchasers would be included in the mailing.

Frank explained that anyone that contributed to the Friends of the GTMNERR over the last 14 months would be included in the mailing except those contributing to a memorial.

The second question was about the letter and was already answered.

Invitation to Participate in Party on the Pier by Irene Kaufman

Irene announced that the Vilano Town Center Group has invited community 501 3 cs to have a table at their event on Nov. 16 from 5-8pm. It is called Party on the Pier. It will be held on the Vilano Pier. There is no charge for a table and Irene feels it is a good community outreach opportunity for the Friends of the GTMNERR. The event will be advertised all over St Augustine and Ponte Vedra.

Frank said that the Friends of the GTMNERR would participate and man a table at the event. Joe asked if a staff NERR staff member would be needed for the event. Joe suggested that Tina Bouse would be a good candidate for the event. Jonathan agreed that Tina could probably speak to some things with a lot more depth. The Board agreed that a staff member would be helpful at the table. After group discussion on the event the touch tank was suggested as a draw to the Friends of the GTMNERR table. Joe said he would have Tina contact Irene about the event.

National Estuaries Day Report by Teri Webley

Teri handed out the numbers from National Estuaries Day 2007 to all Board members present. Teri pointed out the paragraph at the bottom of the page. It was an excerpt from a report by Diana Eissing about the event. It said that there were nearly 500 visitors (double last year's attendance). Exit surveys indicated that approximately half were first time visitors. Frank asked if we got contact information for the 500 visitors on NED.

NED cont

Teri said she was not sure what information was captured. All visitors have the opportunity to sign up for the email newsletter that Janet does. Frank asked if the Friends Group got any new members on NED. Teri told him that one new member signed up to be a Friends of the GTMNERR member. There was discussion about the many Friends brochures that were handed out during the NED event at the Friends table. Teri suggested that in the future the brochures at this and other events should have an identifying mark. This would make tracking possible.

Funds Requests for Research Reserve by Teri Webley for Janet Zimmerman

Teri explained that Janet was not able to attend the Board meeting due to illness and that Janet had a couple of funds requests for the Board. The first request is one the Friends of the GTMNERR Board has provided for before. Money is needed for the SEIT Whale Conference food. It amounts to a loan. The group will repay the full amount following the event on Thursday 10/25. The reason for the loan is that the group is not permitted to pay for food so they pay it as a fee for the facility use. The amount requested is \$425.

The other item is from Katie concerning the Turtle Patrol thank you dinner. The turtle season has wrapped up. This was their last season as permit holders for the southern section. Katie would like to say thank you to the group for all their hard work with a dinner and a book. The dinner for 25 – 30 people will run about \$300 and the book (Florida's Living Beaches) will run about \$230 for a total request of \$530.

Bill as a side note requested that in the future all dinner requests include a breakdown of where the money is being spent. There have been dinners in the past that should not have cost what they did. The Friends of the GTMNERR Board should have the opportunity to provide feedback on the choices.

Teri explained that one of the things that Janet was scheduled to cover at this meeting was the new procedure for funds requests to the Friends of the GTMNERR. The new procedure would require more information and more lead time than in the past.

Bill asked when the funds for the Turtle Patrol dinner were needed. Teri told him the date would be October 26 or 27.

Bill commented that properly done this request should have gone to the Research Committee first.

Bill added that since there is no time for committee and on the basis that the Friends of the GTMNERR paid for last years party it would be considered at this meeting. But he strongly suggested that all future requests for funds go through the appropriate committee first. If a Friends of the GTMNERR committee feels a request has merit they will put it

Funds Request cont.

before the Board. Bill requested that Teri let everyone know that this would be the procedure from now on.

Bill called for a motion concerning the Turtle Patrol dinner and gift funds request.

Nancy motioned to approve \$530 for the Turtle Patrol dinner and gift, Craig seconded, all were in favor, approved.

Frank asked if a Friends of the GTMNERR Board member should be present at the Turtle Patrol dinner.

Bill said that he realized at the volunteer dinner that most people don't know what the Friends of the GTMNERR Board of Directors does and a presence at functions like this would help educate them.

Joe stated that he did not know the Boards function until he attended the social in July.

Teri said that when she gets the date of the dinner she will send it to the Friends of the GTMNERR Board members.

Bill asked what the first funds request was.

Teri told him it was for \$425 for the SEIT lunch.

Bill said that since the \$425 would be reimbursed a vote was not needed for that issue. It is approved.

Other Business

Frank requested 2 free annual passes for the Ponte Vedra Chamber of Commerce annual silent auction. The P V Chamber requested that the Friends of the GTMNERR provide two annual passes for that silent auction.

Joe said that he felt that Mike would be fine with the donation.

Bill said that formal approval from Mike was needed for the passes.

Joe said that the GTM Research Reserve controls its own revenue so Mike will have not problem with the request. Joe stated that it would not be a problem and that he would speak to Mike about the passes. And get them to Frank.

Craig acting on behalf of the Research Committee presented the Right Whale Project request of \$5000 to the Board. He stated that the Research Committee recommends approval of the request.

A copy of the request was handed out to all Board members present.

Craig added that last year the Board approved identical funding for the project.

Bill called for questions.

Other Business cont.

Frank reminded the Board that at the September 11 meeting they decided not to approve new large expenditures until a clearer budget could be developed.

Bill explained that since this is not a new item it was eligible for consideration.

Frank added that he is not opposed to the request but just wanted to clarify the point made at the September 11 meeting concerning large expenditures.

Nancy said that it looked like the \$5000 was not paid until February of this year.

The amount was approved in January of this year.

Bill asked when the funds were needed.

Craig said he believed the project starts in December 07 so the funds would be needed by then.

There was discussion about the funds being needed because the Army Corps of Engineers cut funding of the project.

Bill called for a motion on the funds request for the Right Whale Project.

Frank motioned to approve the \$5000 request, Irene seconded, all in favor, approved.

*Carl Hampp did not vote on the Right Whale request due to his wife's involvement in the project.

Marty handed out information about the Coastal Habitat Restoration Workshop.

Marty apologized for the short notice for the funds request.

Marty requested funds to provide lunch for approximately 60 attendees to the workshop. He explained that the workshop fits into the new management plan and the NOAH priorities.

Marty explained that even though there was no charge for this workshop there have been vendor charges in recent workshops. The vendor charges raised just over \$400 and this helps to offset the funds needed for this workshop. The vendor charges were paid to the Friends of the GTMNERR.

The plan is to develop the program to a point that it is self sustaining.

Bill asked if \$585 is what Marty asked for.

Frank asked for clarification on the offset.

Marty explained that the vendor charges collected at the last workshop were the offset he was referring to. Marty added that in N/E Florida there is a gap in requests in grants. The purpose of these workshops is to fill that gap and get the information out to groups that would benefit from these grants.

Jonathan asked what communities signed up for this workshop.

Marty said that several city, state, and county representatives as well as local homeowners associations, and groups have signed up.

Mike will speak about sites here that qualify for restoration.

Other Business cont.

Marty mentioned the Tolomato archeological site as an example.

Bill recognized Nancy's motion to approve the \$585 for the workshop, Jonathan seconded, all in favor, approved.

Bill reminded Marty to present his requests to the appropriate committee in the future.

It was suggested that Marty put together a budget for approval.

Chris requested a budget update from Nancy.

Nancy explained that Bill will speak to Bonnie about getting records back that she is believed to be in possession of. Nancy added that she is working the numbers at her disposal to make some sense of the budget. Once Nancy gets some numbers that make sense she will email them to all Board members.

Frank asked if there is a hard copy of what Bonnie did last year.

Nancy said that is what she is trying to recreate.

Bill said he will speak to Bonnie about getting whatever information she has.

Nancy added that the Friends of the GTMNERR is in the black.

Financially the Friends of the GTMNERR is in the same position it was in this time last year.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:40 by Bill Coleman

The next monthly board meeting will be Tuesday, November 14.