

Friends of the GTM NERR

Minutes of Board Meeting: Tuesday, November 18, 2008

Members Present:

Pierre Pierce, Carl Hampp, Anita Pierce, Peter Difatta, Nancy Schachnovsky, Triss Padgett, Chris Rich, Mike Timpane, Irene Kaufman, Jonathan Katzen, Kay Henderson

Staff Present:

Teri Webley, Angel Gonzalez, Nicole Evans, Linda Krepp

Excused Absence:

Bill Coleman

Guests

Joy Hampp

Meeting called to order at 5:30pm by Pierre Pierce following the Friends of the GTM Reserve annual member meeting

October Meeting Minutes Approval by Pierre Pierce

Nancy motioned to approve the October meeting minutes
Chris seconded, all approved none objected, October meeting minutes approved.

Nominating Committee Recommendation by Carl Hampp

Carl welcomed Kay Henderson to her first meeting as a Board member. Carl then introduced Kevin Faver and Rob Mathews and invited them to tell the Board members present something about themselves and their qualifications to serve on the Board.

Kevin Faver started by saying that he is a 4th generation local resident. He explained that his family acted as caretakers of a portion of the property included in the Research Reserve. Kevin said that he does fishing related television and radio shows. Kevin also mentioned his family as part of the reason he is interested in working with the Board. As a professional fisherman and charter Captain he sees and is concerned with what goes on around the estuary.

Rob Mathews is not from the area originally but has been here with his family for about 8 years. Rob is a local business man interested in helping preserve the estuary.

Nominating cont.

The Nominating Committee has interviewed Kevin Faver and Rob Mathews and recommends that they be added to the Board of Directors of the Friends of the GTM Reserve.

Mike T motioned to approve Kevin Faver and Rob Mathews as members of the Board of Directors of the Friends of the GTM Reserve.

Triss seconded, all approved, none opposed, Kevin Faver and Rob Mathews are voted in as Board members.

Education and Communications Committee by Mike Timpane

Bid for Joint Sector Conference

Mike T explained that through miscommunication the bid to provide services for the Joint Sector Conference was not placed on time.

Mike T explained that a bid from another source had been placed but may not be accepted and this could open another opportunity to bid.

Mike T asked for a process to handle bidding. He suggested that the Governance Committee create the process.

Chris purchased a new sign for the Nature Store to replace the paper one on the door.

There are not requests for funds from the Education and Communications Committee at this time.

Marineland Right Whale Project by Joy Hampp

The request for funds and information packet was passed out to all Board members present.

Joy described what the Marineland Right Whale program does and how they gather information.

Joy said that the numbers of right Whales has increased slightly.

Due to budget cuts the part of the critical habitat that the Marineland Right Whale Project covers is not federally funded that is concentrated on port areas.

The area that the Marineland Right Whale Project covers is the calving area and therefore needs coverage to track how many calves are born. There have been instances where previously undiscovered mothers and calves were seen by members of the Marineland Right Whale Project.

A benefit to the GTM Research Reserve is that the Marineland Right Whale Project has been in existence long enough (8 years) to be published. Due to the proximity of the Whales path to the shore the Marineland Right Whale Project group has been able to gather information unavailable to other groups in a benign manner.

Joy referred to the budget page of the handout to show the need for the Friends of the GTM Reserve as a funding source.

The amount requested is \$5,000. This is the amount provided by the Friends of the GTM Reserve in the past.

Marineland cont.

Mike T asked if there were any budget constraints that would prevent the Friends from providing the requested funds.

Nancy said that the Committee responsible would have to look at their budget but that she would vote yes to provide the funds.

After discussion the Board found that no other projects asking this amount of funds were currently on the table or expected.

Triss motioned to approve \$5,000. for the Marineland Right Whale Project.

Anita seconded, all approved none objected, \$5,000. Requested by the Marineland Right Whale Project will be paid.

*Carl Hampp excused himself from the vote due to his relationship to Joy Hampp.

Mike T motioned to provide the Friends of the GTM Reserve membership with an announcement of the donation to the Marineland Right Whale Project and an invitation to participate as volunteers.

Triss seconded, all approved, none objected.

An invitation will be sent to Friends of the GTM Reserve membership announcing that the Friends are sponsors of the Marineland Right Whale Project including the amount of sponsorship and an invitation to participate as volunteers in the project via email by Teri.

Discussion About Connection Between Board and Membership/Volunteers

Recommendations by Carl

Executive Committee create a disclosure of finances report

Development Committee addresses involving membership in more activities and provides a Friends newsletter separate from the one written by Janet.

Both committees present a report at December's meeting.

After discussion about the issues the Board agreed to form an adhoc committee with representation from the Executive, Finance, and Development committees. Peter will chair the committee.

The committee will address the issues raised by the Friends members, GTM volunteers, and staff at the annual meeting immediately preceding this Board meeting.

Anyone interested in serving on the committee please email Peter.

Mike T motioned to provide an annual report to the Friends of the GTM Reserve membership.

Jonathan seconded, all approved, none opposed.

The structure, content, and method of release of the report to be determined by the adhoc committee chaired by Peter and presented to the Board for a vote.

Nancy will not prepare the financial report until the tax return is done.

GTM / Board update by Teri Webley

Carl informed the 3 newest Board members that Teri will send them an email to set up their Board orientation.

Teri asked if the annual 25% holiday discount for GTM staff, volunteers, and Board members would be approved this year.

Carl motioned to offer the discount as done in the past.

Pierre seconded, none opposed, the Nature Store will offer GTM staff, volunteers and Board members a 25% discount excluding commission items for approximately 4 weeks in December.

The Holiday Artist Showcase is on December 6 and 7 with the reception on December 5th. Teri asked the Board for volunteers to work the event.

The volunteer needs will be bartenders on December 5th and Board members to work the Friends table for the duration of the event and a Board member to do the drawing on December 5th.

Irene, Carl, Peter, Chris, Mike T volunteered for the event. Pierre volunteered Bills services as bartender.

Teri is currently planning the menu for the reception and asked if any Board members want to participate in that. Triss and Chris volunteered to work with Teri on the menu. A meeting for next week will be arranged.

Research Staff Update by Angel Gonzalez

Mike S was unable to attend tonight's meeting so Angel will speak for him. Some GTM staff members will attend Chamber of Commerce meetings and events as proxies for the Board.

The EEC will be closed during the Birding and Foto Fest in 2009. Do the friends of the GTM Reserve still intend to bid to provide meals for the event? After reading the new requirements for vendors providing food for the event and because the event will not be held at the GTM Research Reserve the Board decided by consensus not to bid to provide meals for the event.

Chamber of Commerce membership for St John's county. The Board clarified for Teri that the dues will be paid immediately.

Contact names need to be added to the Chamber memberships Teri will work with Jonathan.

The GTM staff that attends chamber meetings and events will report to the Board when they have information.

Petty cash funds will pay for any fees associated with attendance of chamber meetings and events outside of membership dues.

Wendy Thomson volunteered her services as a representative of the Friends of the GTM Reserve for Chamber of Commerce events.

Because Wendy is not a Board member or GTM staff the matter will be looked into and Wendy will be contacted with the result.

Development Committee by Jonathan Katzen

Jonathan announced that due to Frank Pixler's resignation from the Board he will chair the Development Committee for the time being.

The annual mass mailing will be sent out the Friday after Thanksgiving.

Kay will work with Teri to better organize the membership database.

Other Business

Pierre showed pictures that the Rutgers experiment provided of the offshore underwater environment in St Augustine.

Nancy spoke about the request by Harry Odom for the Friends to purchase software updates for the POS systems at the reception desk and in the Nature Store and in exchange the GTM would upgrade the Nature Store computer to one with more memory.

The Finance Committee will investigate the matter further before making a recommendation to the Board.

Nancy recommended that the Board approve the concept of the request which would be about \$1000 for the upgrades in exchange for the computer.

The Friends of the GTM Reserve own the licenses on both POS systems to be updated.

Carl motioned to approve up to \$1000 for the requested software upgrade.

Peter seconded, all approved, none opposed.

The subject of a thank you to Frank Pixler for dedicated service was discussed.

Triss suggested that instead of a plaque Frank be given an inscribed letter opener or candy dish. Teri will look at her catalogs for a suitable gift.

Pierre spoke about the plaque for the Brian Tuten memorial bench. The cost will be \$150 and the Tuten family will be contacted concerning their desire for the text of the plaque.

Mike T speaking about some questions raised at the annual meeting. The request that was made concerning having social events following the Board meetings, possibly quarterly a presentation could be arranged.

Angel mentioned that there have been requests for evening presentations by people that are not available for the monthly brown bag lunches that are held during the day.

Carl said that Mike S would have to approve any evening event due to staffing requirements (a GTM staff member must be present whenever the EEC is occupied by the public) and that there may be a problem providing that staffing due to budget cuts.

Other cont.

Mike T suggested that February would be a good time to do the first evening event following a Board meeting.

The EEC may not be open to the public in February due to building repairs.

Public events are not being scheduled from January through April of 2009.

Mike T suggested that the date be moved to May.

Chris spoke about her experience attending an evening event at the EEC recently.

An Artist Reception that was attended primarily by the Artists friends and few Friends members or volunteers attended. She did add that a speaker may have a different draw.

Pierre adjourned the meeting at 7pm

Jonathan motioned to adjourn

Peter seconded all approved none opposed, meeting adjourned

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