

20160628 - FOA Board meeting - 6:55 PM - Butte La Rose**Attendees:**

Board: Charles Fryling, Charles Caillouet, Jim Delahoussaye, Willie Fontenot, Ray Brassieur, Carolyn Delahoussaye

Advisors and Guests: Rebecca Triche, Pamela Stacks Caillouet, Donovan Garcia

President Charlie Fryling opened the business meeting at approximately 6:55 PM.

Attendees introduced themselves.

Old Business

The May 24, 2016 **meeting minutes** were approved with no revisions.

The minutes were reviewed and a discussion ensued about the future of the FOA.

Donovan Garcia suggested that FOA should become an umbrella group for other organizations that need insurance. He wants to take people out into the Basin but can't afford the insurance. He said that people join organizations to enable themselves to do more with less. He suggested that we do what we like to do and that will end up selling people on our passions. He also suggested that Wednesdays are a good day to schedule events.

There was a consensus that we need to get a facebook presence in order to reach more people and develop a new following.

Rebecca Triche observed that there need to be short term and long term reasons to join a group. The short term reasons get people to events and if they like what we do and what they hear, they will watch for our efforts in the long term.

Willie reminded us that the Basin touches six Congressional districts in the state and that we need to interest our Congressmen and Senators, local officials and media.

The discussion seemed to produce a consensus that FOA should not take on the role of Friends of the Heritage Area and try to maintain our independent role as a Basin Observer and commenter. The group felt that the ability to take positions without reflecting on the Heritage Area, Trace Commission or Staff is important to the identity of the group. All attendees agreed that we should let the Staff know that we would assist in any way appropriate in getting the new group going, but would not plan to make the new group part of the FOA.

Moving to the second question of what needs to be done to carry on as FOA, the group discussed options.

A review of mission and goals is appropriate. Some suggestions were:

- a focus on kids' events;

- a focus on preservation with able partners;

- pulling together other NGOs and agencies to improve communication and cooperation;
- approaches to public officials to consolidate support;

- someone suggested running ads asking for support but the ensuing discussion led back to facebook as more productive for less money, but it requires diligent volunteers.

Donovan indicated that he can get the word out through several organizations and the Heritage Area has offered to publicize activities on their facebook page, as has LWF.

The current treasurer's report was accepted with no revisions.

current month activity:

6 month web hosting service - \$179.70

2015 Regions Balance of \$1,200.42 + PayPal Balance of \$1,154.15 + \$125 pending deposits = \$2,479.57 Available

As of 6/28/2016: Regions Balance of \$2,018.72 + PayPal Balance of \$264.68 deposits = \$2,283.40 Total

Event reports:

Charles Caillouet reported that he manned a table for one day during Tourism Week at the Atchafalaya Welcome Center with ANHA

Charlie Frying and Charles Caillouet presented a program to a bunch of day camp kids with KidCamCamp of BR and another one was planned for the day after the meeting with Barney Callahan of the LWF.

Upcoming Events

Some ideas for Target Projects for 2016 were discussed; the Acting Secretary agreed to distribute the following list for discussion at the next meeting:

Ongoing projects:

Cypress Preserve project ? - needs a coordinator, public support, and coordination with officials and other organizations; needs to become a public input effort

Mississippi River Commission trip meetings every six months need ?

EA Every Day - Year-Round Events ?

“Ask me” program at visitors center

Experience Atchafalaya Days events throughout the year, coordinated by FOA

New or resurrected ideas for the future:

We could create an Atchafalaya Passport, like the Park Service one; people would get acknowledgement for participating in different types of events.

We could identify outdoor events, as a group or through a partner group.

We should focus on enjoyment of the Basin, not boring meetings.

We should focus on conservation aspects; creating preserves where appropriate.

Floodway restoration should always be a priority of the FOA.

Stimulating Congressional funding for restoration should be an ongoing focus.

We should support the Heritage Area activities and apply under the new grant program to host events.

Outreach to youth needs to be a consistent focus.

We should have a program to stimulate use of Atchafalaya curricula in the schools.

We should partner with schools, universities and other NGOs to promote scientific research, environmental monitoring and class projects in the Basin.

We should promote collection of photographs and video clips of Basin scenes, habitat, flora and fauna, and activities, and display them on our web presence (web site, facebook page, or other locations.)

We should look again at the cost of insurance for events.

ABP R&PB meeting:

Congressional Committees:

WRDA bill is in review

MRC Low Water Trip: TBD, 2016

Next meeting place and time

July 26, 2016

Location: Butte La Rose

Time: 6:30 PM

Subject: Focus on specific target activities

The following meeting would be on August 23 (fourth Tuesday.)

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 PM.