

Friends of Lower Muskingum River Monthly News Roundup May 20, 2014

The following is a slightly shortened version of this month's board meeting minutes, provided to the FLMR membership to keep you up to date with what is going on in FLMR.

The meeting was called to order by vice president Katy Lustofin.

In attendance were board members Katy Lustofin, Kristyn Robinson, Elin Jones, John Lee, Quincy Robe, Dave Blount and Doug Albaugh.

Watershed Coordinator Report:

Jesse was not present because he has accepted a position as Environmental Scientist with Pickering Associates, based in Parkersburg. His last day as Watershed Coordinator was May 16. However, he provided a detailed report for the board.

Sponsorship donations for the Raft Regatta so far total \$1,150.

We have been approved by ACCT to host an AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associate for a 10 week period from June 16 to August 22 for a minimal cost of only \$250, which FLMR will pay out of the Regatta sponsorship funds. The Summer Associate will be Steve Williamson, who worked with Jesse last year as an intern. His main job will be to organize the Regatta.

DOI/Americorps VISTA – This position is no longer called the OSM/VISTA because the Department of the Interior (DOI) has taken over the Office of Surface Mining (OSM). Kenny Sims, who has been hired for this position, is having pre-service orientation in Atlanta, May 19-22, and will begin work May 23, out of the office in the Riecker Building in McConnelsville. Kenny's official title is "Washington Water Solutions Endowed DOI/Americorps VISTA," with thanks for the generous support of WWS in covering FLMR's cost share. Kenny's work cell phone number is 740-336-1146 and his work address is 115 East Main Street, Room 135, McConnelsville, OH 43756.

Future Watershed Coordinator – On April 29, Katy and Jesse met with Ted Lozier, MWCD Chief of Conservation, to request that MWCD support FLMR with a grant to cover salary and benefits for a watershed coordinator for the next three years. Mr. Lozier will present the request to the MWCD board, which probably will make a decision in July. Jesse also spoke with Greg Nageotte, the ODNR director of the current Watershed Coordinator grant, and he said it will be acceptable if we simply did not have a coordinator for a few months until MWCD determines how much they are willing to contribute. There is currently about 9 months left of funds in the current coordinator grant. We will be allowed to take an extension after February, 2015 to utilize the rest of those funds.

Clean Ohio Conservation Fund Projects:

Luke Chute/Cabin Run – Due to continued shoreline erosion, Dave has had to move the trail adjacent to the river, re-locating it behind the first row of sycamore trees.

Marcum Conservation Easement: John is organizing a visit to the property on Wednesday, May 28, to meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Park & Ride at the Barlow walking track.

Old Business:

New board member – the board voted by email on May 2 to elect Jesse Daubert to the board of directors, effective as of his resignation as watershed coordinator. As a board member, Jesse will supervise both VISTA's until a new watershed coordinator is hired. Jesse will attend board meetings as an approved part of his job with Pickering Associates.

FLMR office – Until a new watershed coordinator is hired, Katy will visit the office in Marietta weekly to check for mail and phone messages.

Carryall Bags – Elin is going to put bags in the WASCO store. She has not heard from the Farmers Market, regarding application for a membership.

Quilt Raffle – tickets are selling well.

Rain Barrels – Elin reported that one was sold.

New Business:

Watershed coordinator position – see Jesse's report above.

Raffle sales at Artist Walk, June 13 – Elin and Katy will handle it.

River Sweep – after considerable discussion, the board decided that FLMR will not participate in River Sweep this year. Factors included high water, limited access to river banks, and shortage of people to organize and supervise.

Future Dates:

Potluck Picnic – Thursday June 26, 6:00 p.m., Luke Chute Conservation Area. Bring your own table service and beverage and a dish to share.

6th Annual Mighty Muskingum River Raft Regatta – August 10.

Respectfully submitted,
Doug Albaugh, Secretary