

F O W
MINUTES OF MEETING

September 21, 2009

Present: Alma M. (Secretary), Jane G. (Treasurer), Sandy C. (Membership), Jim R. (Historian), Eric O. (Landmine Director), Carl C., Pam J., Steve G. (Park Supervisor), Sue Winakur, John Winakur, Priscilla Andrews (new members), Jerry Geribo (visitor), Tyler Euston, Vicki Schow (webmistress), Mark Schow, Kevin C. (Bike Barn)

Number Present: 16

1) Opening Remarks

Our President and Vice-President were absent so Alma, as Secretary, Chaired the meeting. Everyone was introduced.

2) Treasurer's Report (Jane)

Jane reported on the Landmine and noted that we have about \$14,000 in the checking account. She thanked Priscilla Andrews, who was visiting today. Her husband passed away and, in his memory, she sent a monetary donation to the FOW. Something will be done in his name in the park. Steve G. noted that her husband was born, in a house, in Wompatuck.

Jane also noted that we have \$180 unclaimed in prize money that has not been deposited. The bill for the EMT's has not arrived yet, so that amount has not been included. We made a net income of a little over \$6000 for the race, with about \$7000 in expenses.

3) Membership Report (Sandy C.)

Sandy reported that seven new members were recently added, and he guesses that we have about 70 members. He needs to send snail mail renewal letters as a final reminder. Anyone not renewing will be taken off the membership list.

4) Webpage Report (Vicki)

Vicki didn't have anything new to say about the webpage.

5) Old Business

- Steve said that every fall at Wompatuck, a couple of people with a nature type organization go to 4 different locations throughout the year doing nature programs. They offered the programs last year, but the schools couldn't afford to send the students to the park. He proposed that FOW

put up \$500 to pay for school buses so students would be able to attend the programs. Weymouth and Hull were the only schools to show an interest. The motion was passed to have FOW pay \$500 towards this program and look towards having a matching program from those in charge of the program. Steve will put them in charge with Jane.

6) New Business (Landmine Race Discussion)

- Eric, Landmine Race Director for the past 4 years, discussed the recent Landmine Race. This year's race had a little over 400 bikers, which was an increase of about 100 riders. The monies generated from the race goes back into the park. Mark and Vick Schow will take over as Race Directors for next year's race, along with a team of helpers. Eric thanked everyone for their part in helping to keep the race running over the years. He also thanked Pam Johnson for her work with Registration this year, and all those who helped him with the "behind the scenes" work.
- Eric passed out copies of a document he had sent to those who will be involved with the race next year summarizing what tasks need to be accomplished for the race to run smoothly. The document delineates different categories and sub-categories within the tasks, along with a rough timeline. The main lesson in the experience as Race Director for him was that more of the race responsibility needs to fall upon FOW. He stressed that when organizing the race, someone needs to be in charge of the various categories, because the Race Director can't be in charge of everything.
- Sunday's event had only a few minor incidents with riders going off course, mostly due to riders not paying attention. Mark added that getting lost off course is the same as getting a flat; you can get mad at the rock, but sometimes it happens. Rider errors occur by riding with your head down or following a road biker instead of someone from the race. However, Eric noted that this is something that needs to be looked at for next year, with a couple of tweaks. He noted that sometimes the transition from bike to road will cause a rider to get lost.
- Pam reported that we had 214 pre-registered racers with about 13 no-shows, while approximately 200 registered on the day of the race. Some recommendations for next year were to have a "day of" sign in sheet for volunteers, to have fanny packs to hold the money and to have more \$5's in the bank. Some other suggestions were to charge an even amount of \$10 or \$20 for t-shirts.
- A suggestion for the race was to have a "first time" loop of about 5 miles. Mark added an "adopt a trail" program idea, where FOW members adopt a trail and try to "hit the trail" to clip it, take care of it, check for arrows, let Steve know of problems on it, etc. It was noted that Eric worked hard to mark 25 miles of the course with caution tape, and it's a lot of work to do this, even with the help he had this year. The tape was put up higher to have riders not knock it down as they rode through the trails.

- Jane asked a question: “before we talk about trail maintenance, is the race going to stay the same?” This comment led to Carl describing an idea of having a flower petal race course design, consisting of 4 loops with 5 miles per loop, using South Field to go around. He said that this would give us a spectator sport, and suggested having berms and other things to make it interesting. It was noted that having a lap race may cause elite racers to lap others, and Steve said it would “beat up” the trail. Vicki thought that routing a couple of trails closer to the spectators would lend itself to the feeling of a spectator sport without causing too much trail damage or lapping problems.
- Mark noted that past races he’d competed in began with a prologue. The experts did a couple of loops beforehand, with the beginners and novices watching, then shot off into the course. He thought something like this might be possible in a future race.
- Eric mentioned that there were timing issues this year, and the timer couldn’t handle having over 300 people coming off the starting line at the same time. As a result, numbers were missed coming across the line. Mark wondered if staggering start times by about 10 minutes would make a difference. Eric suggested he discuss this with the starter, as it seems that she wants to have about an hour between classes, such as 9:45 for beginners, 10:45 for pros and 11:45 for sport. Mark also wondered if having a larger group of timers would be helpful. Jane wondered if perhaps having the racers use a chip would be helpful. Eric noted that the timers brought the metals, podium and other items for free to the race, and usually charge about \$400. This year, they needed a spotter to help them write down the numbers. Jane suggested having timeframes for the volunteers to spread the work out among this larger timeframe.
- Kevin thought it would be possible to look into the use of a computer chip and we should find out how much it costs. Jane asked what the ideal way to run a race is, and Mark said it’s good to have all racers competing near each other so that they can see each other and also not have to wait so long between categories. Eric noted that it’s important to pick a good company if they decide to go that route, as not all companies are the same. Alma mentioned that bikers who do not turn in their chips will cause FOW to be liable monetarily for those lost chips, as this is what happens when chips are used in running races. Sometimes chips could cost \$50 each if not returned, which would cost FOW a lot of money if enough are not returned.
- Alma suggested having chutes for the bikers and having spotters write down the numbers as they came through the chute, with chutes being closed as they filled and new ones opened. This would allow for enough time to see the biker’s numbers as they finished, instead of having a mass finish across the finish line, and would also keep the numbers in order based on the chute closures.
- Jane asked how many racers the course could hold without becoming too burdensome and challenging for the volunteers. Mark noted that we had about 500 on a 5 mile loop in the past, and he didn’t think there was a significant bottleneck. Carl said we could fit about 500 cars comfortably into South Field. Mark asked if South Field could be cut back, and Steve said it’s only about 2/3 the size that it used to be, so can definitely be expanded in the future. He noted

that it's a big body of work to do, along with managing the race.

- Carl proposed getting a bob trailer to put in items to clean the bridges, and noted there were a lot of bridge complaints this year. Vicki said that she and Mark have one.
- Vicki noted that a thank you and a feedback form will be sent out to the racers. Questions will be included such as: Was there any part of the course you would like to see removed? Did you pre-ride the course? Did you get lost? Was course congestion an issue? Were you able to pass when needed? Were you here to race, or ride? Was there sufficient food/drinks at the feed zone?, How did you find out about the race, etc.
- Mark asked what we did for advertising, and Eric said he personally contacted all the newspapers and GT did other advertisements.
- Eric suggested having an afternoon shift because he was struggling to have people out on the course later in the day, especially on Union Street when the runners go in two different directions. Vicki noted that we had too many people in the morning. Alma suggested having some sort of online signups, with different sign up times and places throughout the day, for helping to spread out the volunteers. Alma also noted that her running club puts on one large race every year consisting of over 2000 runners and has the motto "We run it, we don't run in it." The club members volunteer to put on the race, and run in other races throughout the year so they can help on race day. She said that if FOW wants to really "own" the race then it's members should think about a similar policy and not race it, but volunteer throughout the day, and bike in other races throughout the year. This would help with issues of not having enough volunteers.
- Carl asked how the course is, and Eric said it is clean.
- Pam presented Eric with a card from FOW signed by various members, thanking him for all of his help with the race over the years. We also gave him a gift certificate to take his wife out to dinner, with some babysitting money.

Jim said that Bare Cove Park wants to have a get-together on Sunday October 25th at 1 pm to have a "rock" dedication, as well as a veteran's reunion. They will put up a tent with refreshments.

Future Meeting date

The next meeting is set for Monday, October 19th. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Submitted by,

Alma Ramos-McDermott, Secretary