

MINUTES
Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys NWR
Board Meeting
April 14, 2009

The Board of Directors of the Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges, met at the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters on April 14, 2009. Jay Bushnell, President, called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. A quorum of the Board of Directors was present.

The following board members were present:

Jay Bushnell, President
Ed DeHaan
Bob Hudson
Rod Hunt
Tom Liebert
Doug Maple
John Thalacker
Marci Wilcox

Others present included:

Donna Bushnell, Member
Richard Herman, Member
Donna Kreft, Member

January 15, 2009, Board of Director Meeting Minutes

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting on January 15, 2009. Motion carried.

March 7 Annual Meeting of the Membership Minutes

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of annual meeting of the membership on March 7, 2009. Motion carried.

Appointment of New Board Member

The Board discussed election of Richard Herman to the Board of Directors to fill a vacant position. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to elect Richard Herman to the Board of Directors. Motion carried.

Bank Signature Cards

Jay Bushnell reported that he and Joan Stephens would go to Drummond Bank in Chiefland and bring the Friends Group bank signature cards up to date.

Repayment of Grant Funds

Jay Bushnell reviewed the background of a past grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and a disbursement from Drummond Bank for the return of \$2,326.50 to the Foundation for unused portions of the grant.

Financial Status of the Friends Group

The Board discussed various ways to raise funds for the Friends group. Several ideas were agreed upon, including, but not limited to, adding sale items to the Ibis publication, adding sale items to the Friends group website, having a booth at the July 4th Clamerica event in Cedar Key, adding a box on the Friends group membership application for additional donations, etc. It was agreed that Jay Bushnell would follow up with appropriate parties for each of these items.

The dues structure of the Friends group was discussed. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded for Jay Bushnell to appoint a Dues Structure Subcommittee to study the dues structure and make recommendations to the Board of Directors in the fall. Motion carried.

Jay Bushnell appointed Marci Wilcox and Donna Kreft as members of the Dues Structure Subcommittee. They will examine the dues structure after looking at fundraising and expenses throughout the summer and early fall.

Name Change

Bob Hudson reported that a name change request has been filed with the Secretary of State, as approved by the Membership at their annual meeting in March.

Annual Meeting

The positive press coverage of the Annual Meeting was discussed. It was agreed that an acknowledgement would be made in the next issue of Ibis about the positive press coverage. Various operational improvements for the next Annual Meeting were discussed.

Membership

Jay Bushnell distributed a list of current members of the Friends group, and asked the Board to identify errors or omissions in the list. Ways in which to get more exposure for the Friends group were discussed. One idea was to identify other groups websites who are compatible with our mission and to link our website to theirs. Jay Bushnell asked Tom Liebert to head this project, which Tom agreed to do.

Action Planning for Fall of 2009 and Spring of 2010

John Thalacker discussed various types of events for the Friends group for the fall of 2009 and spring of 2010. He noted that a wide range of events for 2009 had been published in the recent Gopher Tortoise and IBIS. He will work with Rod Hunt, Pam Darty, Missy Jackson and others to establish a calendar of four or five events per month.

It was suggested that a list of members willing to volunteer for events be developed. Jay Bushnell asked Marci Wilcox and Donna Kreft to develop a plan for preparing a "Volunteers List."

Setup and staffing for the Friends group booth at the Cedar Key Old Florida Celebration of the Arts was discussed in detail.

Advocacy

The Board discussed its advocacy role for the National Wildlife Refuge system in general and the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges in particular. The manner in which to identify appropriate topics and advocacy was discussed. Following discussion, the Board agreed that it looks to the Refuge Manager to call upon the Friends group for advocacy on appropriate issues.

Friends Association Conference

Marci Wilcox discussed attendance by she and Joan Stephens at the recent Friends Association conference in Washington, D.C. She reported that they had a good meeting with Senator Martinez assistant, and distributed photographs taken at the conference.

Butterfly Garden

Donna Kreft reported that a group of volunteers had planted a butterfly garden of native plants at the Refuge headquarters and invited the board to visit the garden after the meeting. Donna will write an article about the garden for the next issue of Ibis.

Proposed Code of Ethics

Jay Bushnell reviewed a draft Friends group Code of Ethics for members. Following discussion and review of wording of the document, it was agreed to seek input from the Refuge Manager and to take up the Code of Ethics as an action item at a future board meeting.

Florida Master Naturalist Program

Jay Bushnell reported on the Florida Master Naturalist Program. Rod Hunt, Florida Master Naturalist, provided details about the program. The plan is to begin offering the program at the Refuge headquarters in the fall.

Grant for Children's Photography

Donna Bushnell reported that she and Pam Darty are working on a grant application to Coca Cola for a children's photography program. The Friends group would be seeking a grant of approximately \$3000 for the purchase of digital cameras and software to support the children's outdoor initiatives of the National Wildlife Refuge system. The grant, if approved, would be administered by Donna Bushnell. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to approve filing of a grant application with Coca Cola for the children's photography program. Motion carried.

Dawn Miller, DVM

Dr. Dawn Miller's contribution to the Annual Meeting with her birds of prey presentation was discussed. It was noted that Dr. Miller's presentation enhanced the success of the meeting. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to provide a \$100 honorarium to Dr. Miller to help with her expenses for the meeting.

Cedar Key Old Florida Celebration of the Arts

The possibility of the Friends Group participating in the Purchase Awards program for the Cedar Key Arts Celebration at the \$250 level was discussed. It was suggested that we purchase a \$250 piece of art, and auction it at the following year's Membership Annual Meeting. Following discussion, it was agreed to discuss it for the 2010 event. Board members were asked to visit this year's event and consider whether the Friends group would benefit from the exposure of participating in the Purchase Awards program next year.

Other Friends Groups

Jay Bushnell discussed ways to build positive relationships with other Friends groups. One suggestion was to engage in mutual visits and host other Friends groups members in our homes. Jay will look into it further.

Elderhostel

Participating in an Elderhostel tour was discussed. Jay Bushnell will look into the details of such an event.

Next Board Meeting

It was agreed that, due to travel plans over the summer, the next Board meeting would take place in September or early October.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.