

KFriends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges

December Board Meeting Minutes

12/19/2023

Recorded by Pete Tirrell

Present:

GiNESSA Mahar, Debbie Meeks, Boyd Kimball, Linda Kimball, Peg Hall, John Thalacker, Dan Kline, John McPherson, Ron Kamzelski, Denise Feiber, Paul Ramey, Jeri Treat, Debbie Jordan, Peter Tirrell

Representing the Refuge: John Stark

Meeting called to order 10:09 am 2023.12.19

Approval Items

- Accept or modify the agenda

Vote: Motion to approve agenda by Debbie M, seconded by Dan K, approved by all

- Approve Minutes from previous Board Meeting
 - [Link to November board minutes](#)

Peg H request to add nominating committee members and budget committee members to current minutes.

Nomination committee: Debbie M, Peg H, GiNESSA M, Ann Kamzelski, Denise F

Budget committee: Linda K, Peg H, Denise F, Ron K

Vote: Motion to approve minutes by Peg H, second by Denise F, approved by all

- Treasurer's Report
 - [Link to Dropbox folder for December financials](#)

Checking balance: \$3311, Money market balance: \$53853

Submit outstanding invoices to Linda by end of year

Linda will withdraw \$30 in \$5 bills for Solstice

Vote: Motion to approve treasurer's report by John T, second by Ron K, approved by all

Refuge Update

- John Stark

Shell mound dock replacement underway all good news, old dock removed, pilings to be installed today Dec 19. Contractors asked for an extension to complete in May, better than expected.

Ryan, a law enforcement officer from another refuge has stopped in a few times to keep an eye on things. More law enforcement visits in last month than in entire prior year.

Planting pine trees this week.

Ginessa: Andrew sent out forms for volunteers to complete in near future

Discussion Items

- Governance (Ginessa)
 - Nominating Committee (Peg/Denise/Debbie M/Ginessa/Ann Kamzelski)

- **VOTE** on [proposed slate](#)

Three leaving board: John M, Barbara W, Peg H.

Proposed new board members Robin Gallup, Chuck Adams, Jeremy Geiger

Proposed President elect: Ron K, president Denise F, Ginessa past president

Proposed Secretary: Pete T.

Linda K will remain as treasurer, looking for deputy treasurer to train in role. Linda will be leaving role in one year.

John T ? what will happen with tasks performed by departing board members. Debbie M mentioned that these members will continue as Core Volunteers (section added to website) and keep responsibilities.

Vote: Motion to approve proposed board slate by Denise, second by Ginessa, approved by all

- Vote reports
 - Updates? (Dan K.)

Dan is compiling votes collected from prior meeting minutes 2023 complete, requested tracking voting motions and summary in minutes. Older meeting minutes 2008-2022 more challenging. Earlier years meetings did not occur monthly.

- Conflict of Interest forms to be filled out and returned by email or added to [this Dropbox folder](#).

No questions

- 2-year planning meeting- January 11-12
 - Retreat details and discussion (Denise)

Retreat in Crystal River, stay at Plantation Inn, reserve soon mention Friends of Refuges to get discount rate. Partners welcome to come.

Agenda

Thursday, January 11

11:00 Tour Friends of Crystal River Visitor's Center

12 :00-2 Lunch (location TBD)

2 :30 – 3:30 Scenic Boat Tour launched at Plantation Inn \$20 person

3:30 Check-in to rooms

4:00 – 5:00 Preliminary discussion of meeting agenda (location TBD)

5:00 – Social hour and dinner at hotel

Friday, January 12

Breakfast on your own

9:00 Meeting begins in Veranda room

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee break and snacks in meeting room and check out of hotel room (unless they give us a late checkout option)

11:00 – 1:00 Meeting resumes and adjourns around 1pm

Committee to form agenda for meeting Denise volunteered to be on committee, survey priorities for Friends, submit ideas to Debbie M. John T: Use a framework based on mission statement for ideas.

Possible Zoom option for meeting.

- Form the Financial Review committee
 - External member necessary

Similar to Budget committee: Peg, Ron, Denise, Linda but needs an external member with accounting qualifications.

Recruit an external auditor for formal review. Mac Cox is a possible candidate, Ginessa will contact him. Timeframe for review is Feb/Mar.

- Draft 2024 Budget Presentation (Budget Committee)
 - Discussion

Peg walked through the 2024 budget spreadsheet provided for meeting to review numbers and where they came from. Data well explained by Peg.

John T asked about access for mobility scooters to gated trails, do we need to budget funds? May be a Refuge staff task/expense.

John M and Debbie K insurance for trailer not cost effective

The vote by board to adopt budget to occur in Jan 2024

Most excess funds kept in money market fund to earn interest

Well done all!

- Outreach
 - [Meeting summary](#) and welcome table and trailer schedule (Denise and Jeri)

Debbie M:

Debbie M, Jeri, Bill D, Denise, Barbara, Robin met on outreach plans

Mobile outreach trailer

Plan to partner with Manatee Springs and Fanning Springs state park

Denise:

Dec 21 Solstice in Cedar Key

Dec 29 Cedar Key museum parking lot

Jan 6 Fanning Spring for park birthday celebration

Jan 27 Shell mound Barbara and Bill? Work booth, Robin and Rick to help

Jeri:

Welcome desk

Slow last 2 Saturdays, Sat 10-12 in town volunteers requested contact Jeri

Chuck Adams helping a lot, easy setup

Consider adding Sunday

Robin will try to keep track of trailer schedule, and rick and Robin available to tow trailer

- **VOTE** to buy a Dell laptop using the Bushnell's \$500 donation (Debbie)

Debbie M looking at laptops, Paul R will assist in purchasing appropriate computer

Will be used offline mostly at annual meeting

Peg: Don't under spend

John T donated \$500 for computer

Vote: Motion to spend up to \$600 to purchase laptop by Peg, second by Guinness, all approve.

- VOTE to purchase battery system for the trailer (Bill)

Bill not available, table until next meeting

- Discuss trailer insurance

Already discussed - not worth it.

- Merchandise (Boyd)
 - Actionables?

Made profit on merch, passport books refreshed most active item

Insect repellent to be added as merch Dan K helping to select

New design hat looking for another quote.

To be kept in trailer: Shirts, hats, butterfly books? What sells in person?

- Things to sell at the Solstice event - earrings, notes, cards, other?

Shirts, earrings, books, notecards for sale.

- Vista

John Stark noted that refuge staff has added dehumidifier to main house.

- Roof estimates - discuss re-roofing the garage vs. tearing it down

Debbie suggested that we could consider tearing down the garage to avoid reroofing it. After discussion it was decided that we need storage so don't tear it down.

Garage reroofing \$4400. Peg: \$20000 for roofs for main and garage, we need storage

- Is Vista still eligible to be a historic site with fewer buildings?

John M thinks we are eligible even if we only have the main house. Still awaiting for approval of plans

- Annual Meeting (February 24)
 - Focus group in January for planning
 - Cynthia Barnett is confirmed as speaker
 - Contact Kenny McCain to reserve (John M?)
 - Need vegetarian option - Kenny or we do it

BBQ very popular. Friends provide small vegetarian options

John M will contact Kenny about providing BBQ, John M will tell Kenny to provide about \$1500 worth of food.

Reports

Debbie M ID for board members and volunteers for events. Badges, hang tags, stick on.

Paul R suggested name badges using magnets to attach.

Keep some in trailer and at welcome center. To be discussed in email.

"Friends volunteer" for text of ID

- Outreach and Jr. Ranger (Debbie) [Report in Dropbox](#)
 - Solstice December 21 in Cedar Key Park, 4-7pm, Sassaman speaker

Denise will get cookies, Peg tea. Shirts, earrings, books, notecards for sale. Rick and Robin to tow trailer.

- Someone to do sound check on new system?

Power at gazebo in Cedar Key park? Needed for speaker microphone. John T and Denise to check.

- Communications (Peg)

News brief out yesterday readers like notes from Refuge Manager, all online communications doing well.

- Membership (Debbie) [Report in Dropbox](#)

Open Discussion

- [Wish List Spreadsheet Link](#)

To be added to with specific item name, specs, and cost (i.e. direct shopping link)

Bob Hudson not doing well cards or notes to

Box 578

Cedar Key 32625

Vote summary

Vote: Motion to approve agenda by Debbie M, seconded by Dan K, approved by all

Vote: Motion to approve minutes by Peg H, second by Denise F, approved by all

Vote: Motion to approve treasurer's report by John T, second by Ron K, approved by all

Vote: Motion to approve proposed board slate by Denise, second by GiNESSA, approved by all

Vote: Motion to spend up to \$600 to purchase laptop by Peg, second by GiNESSA, approved by all.

Meeting adjourned 12/19 12:07pm