

Minutes
Board Meeting
Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges
Thursday, December 15, 2016

Present:

Board Members: Peg Hall, Russ Hall, Kit Lane, Maria Sgambati, Libby Cagle, Roger McDaniels, John McPherson, John Thalacker, Debbie Meeks.

Refuge Staff: Larry Woodward.

Guests: Jay Bushnell, Debbie Jordan, Dan Klein, Sue Mullins.

1. The meeting was convened at 10:00 a.m. by Maria Sgambati, President.
2. Approval of Minutes: **Motion** made by Peg Hall to approved the minutes of the Board Meeting of November 17, 2016, with correction that Russ Hall did brochures for tram ridge trail. **Second** by Debbie Meeks. Passed by a unanimous vote.
3. Refuge update: Larry Woodward reported as follows:
 - a. Interns: Sam has left as intern; the new intern is Daton Pelt.
 - b. Seahorse Key: There is an article in the Audubon magazine about the bird rookery. There was an open house last Saturday with about 30 enthusiastic people attending.
 - c. Pepper Busting: Training has been scheduled.
 - d. New Kiosk Panel: John Thalacker will work on Friends kiosk panel. There was a discussion on what the panel should include.
 - e. Loxahatchee Refuge: There is a lot of pressure on removing Loxahatchee from the Refuge system. One reason is that FWS did not meet objectives for exotics removal. Water management is a big issue, and Jay Bushnell stated that the State wants to get control to reduce pollution regulations.
 - f. Atsena Otie: The focus of FWS is to get a nesting colony on the dock platform. John Thalacker stated that he was not in favor of the idea of placing an observation tower on the island because it would attract too many people and motor boats to the island.

4. Committee Reports:
 - a. Treasurer's Report. John McPherson presented Balance Sheet, attached, and stated that more complete financial reports would be provided starting in 2017.
 - b. Communications. Peg Hall presented a written report, attached, and summarized the highlights.
 - c. Inventory. Maria Sgambati will be ordering a few items in Carmelo Echevarria's absence.
 - d. Invasive Species. Roger McDaniels reported that the group will be going out to the islands for removal work. Also, the cemetery area will be addressed on December 20, and the Marine Lab area on December 27. Libby Cagle suggested that people report Brazilian Pepper that is spotted around Cedar Key.
 - e. Membership. The membership committee met and reports as follows:
 - Will report on meeting of goals in the future.
 - Thirty percent of members have created a log-on with Neon.
 - Renewal reminders will go out 12 months after dues last paid, with a reminder two weeks later if don't renew.
 - Special thanks to Debbie Meeks for all her dedicated and excellent work on getting Neon set up.
 - f. Advocacy. Jay Bushnell reported as follows:
 - Conservation Fund: No word from Lauren Day on grant yet.
 - Invite: Handout provided re invitation to other Friends groups.
 - Important Issues: Handout and books provided.
 - Loxahatchee: Issue of what Board should do. Jay suggested letters from individuals would be helpful, and letter from Board would also be good.
 - g. Nominating: Maria Sgambati reported that there is a full slate to be presented at the annual meeting.
 - h. Science Initiative: Russ Hall reported that there has been one field outing with others planned. I-Naturalist will show what has been identified.
5. Planning of Priorities: Maria Sgambati reported that a report from the committee will be circulated for comment and for creating this year's budget.
6. Larry Woodward brought up the issue whether Friends would be supporting the science symposium this year. He said he would check and let the Board know what the status is.

7. Annual Trip: Peg Hall said she will be suggesting options for a trip this year.
8. Guest Speaker: Sue Mullins, lobbyist for the National Wildlife Refuge Association, spoke about the importance of effective participation by Friends in the political process.

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Friends of Refuges

Balance Sheet

As of December 13, 2016

	<u>Dec 13, 16</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Petty Cash	110.00
Regular Checking	20,432.62
Savings	10,002.96
Total Checking/Savings	<u>30,545.58</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>30,545.58</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>30,545.58</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Sales Tax Payable	31.66
Total Other Current Liabilit...	<u>31.66</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>31.66</u>
Total Liabilities	31.66
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	28,042.94
Net Income	2,470.98
Total Equity	<u>30,513.92</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>30,545.58</u>

Communications Team Report December 2016

News Briefs

December News Brief

- Sent on Dec. 11 to 497 email addresses. 39% (190 addresses) **opened it 411 times**. Many of our email addresses are shared by a household. When both household members open it, we have more readers than the number of “opens” indicates.
- Stories
 - Board Meeting and Bioblitz
 - Refuge Updates
 - Audubon story re Seahorse Key Rookery
 - Membership database and renewal
 - Pepper Bustoing
 - Nature Walks
 - FL Friends meeting
 - Advocacy links
- Readers clicked through to the story on the website **46 times**, rather than just reading the short introductory narrative. **Most popular membership list, Audubon, bioblitz, nature walks**
- **November News Brief**
 - Sent on Nov. 14th to 492 email addresses. 37% (179) **opened it 329 times** before the last report.
 - Now it has been opened by 40% (194) 398 times. Most open it immediately apparently.

Facebook Page

- 3 New fans. Total now is 445.
- 9 Posts and 5 Shares, by Maria, Bob, Libby, Roger, Russ, and Peg
- 3579 Number of people to whom our posts were “served” by Facebook in the last 28 days. The number was 2956 last month. (Audubon story)

Friends Website

- 1 post in the past month
- About 1700 visitors in the past month. About 1600 the previous month.
- About 7800 pageviews in the past month. About 8300 the previous month.

Team members - Peg, Debbie, Kit, Jaime, Paul