

Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys NWR  
December 16, 2020 Monthly Board Meeting Minutes  
Prepared by: Debbie Meeks

Present: none

By phone: John McPherson, Matt Chatowsky, Bill Dummitt, Denise Feiber, Peg Hall, Joe Hand, Debbie Jordan, Boyd Kimball, Linda Kimball, Dan Kline, GiNESSA Mahar, Debbie Meeks, John Thalacker, Travis Thomas, Barbara Woodmanssee

Guests by phone: Andrew Gude

10am- call to order

- 1- The agenda was adopted by consensus.
- 2- November's amended minutes were accepted.
- 3- The treasurer's report was approved. A question was asked about how the value of the inventory is determined, Linda will find out. A request was made to ask for an accounting of how the donations to both libraries are spent, Linda will follow up.
- 4- Budget
  - a. John M, Peg and Linda worked on the budget. It is lower this year because we are not having an in-person annual meeting but it was agreed to put \$500 back in the budget for a speaker or other annual meeting expense.
- 5- Refuge report
  - a. George and Jason are cutting overhanging trees.
  - b. Daniel quarantining.
  - c. Shell Mound pier reconstruction on track for spring.
  - d. NCBS is working on a new material for oyster reef restorations- formed jute mats.
  - e. Waiting for go-ahead to release thrips in spring. A pilot release is scheduled for tomorrow on water department land.
  - f. Still trying to get approval for non-lethal field trials for racoon hunts.
  - g. Jim Hoy's wife's legacy left two entomological scholarships focused on the Refuge.
- 6- FWS Partnership Agreement
  - a. Peg emailed a report.
  - b. Friends of St. Vincent's signed, Peg will reach out to them.
  - c. There is a CORFA Zoom meeting this afternoon to discuss the upcoming call for public comment.
  - d. Linda and Peg attended a webinar about the kinds of reports we might have to produce if we sign the agreement.
  - e. One of the Friends groups has better wording about what happens to their funds should they disband. Andrew noted that FWS has to treat all Friends groups the same.
  - f. Andrew stated that we can sign a SUP to work on the refuge but still could not raise money on the refuge.
- 7- Annual Meeting
  - a. GiNESSA will host the meeting on her work Zoom account. It will handle up to 300 participants, questions will be via email or chat box, a moderator will collate the questions. GiNESSA, Peg, Denise, John M, and Dan will work on planning.
  - b. John M suggested not having a nominating committee this year due to the pandemic. It was raised that the bylaws require it but we will try to keep the existing board as much as possible.
- 8- Project Reports and Discussions

- a. Visitor Contact
  - i. Bill had nothing to report.
- b. Interpretive Media and Membership
  - i. Debbie M. reported that she and Peg attended a Little Green Light webinar. There could be big savings if we give up some of the functionality we currently have. She and Peg are considering what we must have and what we can live without.
- c. Online Communications
  - i. Peg emailed a report.
  - ii. To answer Denise's question, Peg said the News Brief is published by the Cedar Key News and by CORFA on Facebook
- d. Inventory and Sales
  - i. Debbie J is taking over inventory.
  - ii. Bill and Debbie J are finalizing an order with Wild Cotton to replenish supplies.
  - iii. Barbara's design has too many colors for Wild Cotton to print, she will get prices from VistaPrint and others.
  - iv. Debbie J reported on a call she and Debbie M had with Rita LeBlanc of the Friends of St. Marks. Their store has been running since May and is very successful, raising \$56,000 in profits. T-shirts are their biggest seller. They have a celebrity author who wrote a book based on their refuge and his items sell very well. If anyone can think of a local celebrity who might partner with us, suggestions are welcome.
  - v. \$3000 is needed for online store inventory. A vote was passed to increase the budget for inventory.
  - vi. Debbie M recommended upgrading Weebly \$25/mo to gain the ability to track inventory levels and print postage. There was consent, it part of the software budget which is already large enough.
  - vii. John T suggested that if we are offering free shipping we should state that it is only within the continental US.
  - viii. Debbie M asked Andrew if we could put posters up on the refuge advertising the new store but it is not allowed because that would be solicitation.
- e. Kite Project
  - i. Debbie J. reported that there is no update.
- f. Pepper Busting
  - i. John T. reported that Busting is getting good turnouts, they met at Plantation last week.
- g. Trails
  - i. John T. emailed a report.
  - ii. John T and Barbara walked the Tram Trail and they propose new signage focusing on ecosystems.
- h. Advocacy
  - i. John M. commented that opposition to the toll road appears to have been successful.
- i. Vista
  - i. Nothing to report.
  - ii. Peg asked if a presentation about the Bender report might be good for the annual meeting.

9- Open Discussion

- a. John Thalacker is helping plan the Cedar Key library presentations which will be virtual this year. That format opens the possibility of getting national or well-known speakers who wouldn't travel to Cedar Key. Suggestions welcome.
- b. Joe brought up that there are so many email attachments prior to meetings they are hard to keep track of. John M and Debbie M suggested using Dropbox. John M and Joe, who are less familiar with Dropbox, will try it and report back.
- c. John M stated that this is a great board to work with and happy holidays!

Adjourned at 11:47 am.