

Minutes of the May 18, 2021 Meeting of Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges

Members present (All by Zoom): Peg Hall, Debbie Meeks, John Thalacker, Travis Thomas, Bill Dummitt, Ed DeHaan, Joe Hand, Jay Bushnell, Denise Feiber, Dan Kline, Matt Chatowski

The meeting was called to order at 10am by President Peg Hall. The agenda and minutes of the previous meeting were accepted by voice vote. It was agreed that the minutes of the March meeting be corrected to show that the minutes of the annual meeting were accepted.

Treasurer's report was tabled because of the absence of the treasurer.

Ginessa Mahar discussed possibilities of a summer solstice event. Florida Public Archaeology Network sponsors an event called Moon over Mounds at Crystal River. Ken Sasseman has new information on solstice gatherings. Perhaps a walking tour followed by talks on the pier would be appropriate? The Archaeology Network could have a booth with information. Perhaps 2 tour times- 9 am and noon? An Archeological kayak tour to Komar (byo kayak) at the end of the day's events could visit Komar- the only nearby site contemporary with Shell Mound. Shell mound continues to be busy, but Ron Black is enthusiastic about the idea. Andrew has submitted a reopening application for Shell Mound.

Food and parking are issues to be decided. June 20 (Sunday) is the solstice date but because it is Father's Day perhaps Saturday the 19th would be a better date.

There was no refuge report because of Andrew's absence.

Denise and Peg did a trial run volunteering at the Cedar Key Chamber of Commerce. As well as people who wanted to visit, they met people who were potential volunteers. For this to become a permanent project, Friends would have to join the CK chamber. (\$35/year). John Thalacker moved, Ginessa seconded to join the chamber. Motion carried by voice vote.

No Vista report without either Andrew or John McPherson.

The switch from Neon to DonorSnap is complete. Debbie Meeks pointed out that these transitions are often difficult because lower priced packages tend to try to be all things to all people. Our debit card has been canceled because we feared Neon might continue charging it. Should we replace it with a credit card? No decision because of treasurer's absence.

Following from that discussion another governance issue was raised. We exceeded \$50,000 in income last year because of the Vista grant. We can still use the postcard 990 form because it was a one time event. We reviewed the regulations for its use and the form itself.

Peg requested that all board members review the items on the long 990 form that boards should approve before it is filed. Assuming we sign that new Partnership agreement when the final version becomes available, Peg suggested the USFWS may want us to file the long form in order to provide additional data on revenues and expenditures. We need to familiarize ourselves with it.

Dan Kline showed excerpts from his virtual biting insect trail. His video showed insect density varying as one goes through different eco zones on Beaver Dam road. One of Dan's assistants has joined Friends. Other potential virtual trails were discussed, including a virtual River Trail.

Boyd is requesting photos of things of interest around the refuge.

Guidestar is a decades-old website for non-profit profiles. Our profile is minimal. Bill Dummitt agreed to study expanding profile.

The Thrivent charity was discussed. Originally a Lutheran-only charity, it has expanded to include secular organizations such as our own. It is possible for us to be included as a possible recipient of Thrivent funds. The board wanted additional information about Thrivent and its philanthropic program before deciding whether to apply to become a possible recipient organization. Paul and Peg will research the issues and discussion will continue at the June meeting.

The updated Partnership Agreement is undergoing legal and ethics review. CORFA says the new administration is pushing it forward. One point that will cause some issues is a requirement that profits from anything sold on refuge property must go into an account controlled by refuge personnel.

Jay discussed the M-Cores toll road briefly. Lily Rooks insisted on being on the DOT study group involved with the project. The bills passed so far do not remove the Suwannee valley from development.

The meeting was adjourned before 12:00.