

Minutes
Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge
Board of Directors Meeting
March 21, 2011

The meeting of the board of directors of the Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge was called to order by Peg Hall, President, at 10:00 a.m. on March 21, 2011, at Refuge Headquarters.

Board Members Present: Peg Hall, Jay Bushnell, Richard Herman, Marci Wilcox, Bob Hudson, Michelle Pearson, John McPherson, Jerry Salamon, Ron Black, John Thalacker, Russ Hall, Ed DeHaan.

Also Present: John Kasbohm, Refuge Manager; Pam Darty, Refuge Ranger

Discussion of Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting was discussed in detail, including feedback from the breakout discussion sessions. It was discussed in the context of how this feedback should influence our thinking about what the Friends Group can be. During discussion by the board it was noted that the member comments were affirming of Friends Group activities and direction, and pointed out the importance of getting members involved and helping them feel needed. Ron Black discussed the efforts of volunteers at Shell Mound and how it has gotten them involved. A positive sign from the Annual Meeting was the number of new members, including several life members and two new life members who contributed \$1000 each for a lifetime membership.

- There was general agreement by the board to continue to seek ways to get members involved, help them to feel needed, and recognize their contributions.
- It was also noted that we need a better sound system for speakers in future meetings.

Minutes: It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2011, annual membership meeting and, the minutes of the board meeting on January 10, 2011. Motion carried.

Bylaws Review Committee: Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to approve Peg Hall's recommendation to establish an Ad Hoc Bylaws Review Committee consisting of Peg Hall, Jay Bushnell, John McPherson and Bob Hudson. The purpose of the Ad Hoc Committee will be to review the Bylaws and other board practices and policies and make recommendations to the board for modification if appropriate. Motion carried.

Financial Review Committee: Peg Hall reviewed the purpose and requirements of the Financial Review Committee as described in the Bylaws. Jay Bushnell and Jerry Salamon reported that the Committee had met last fall and had met the spirit and intent of the review. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to receive the report of the Financial Review Committee. Motion carried.

Check Signature Authorization: Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to change approval for check signature for the Friends Group to Peg Hall, Jerry Salamon and Jay Bushnell. Motion carried.

Authorization for Reimbursement: Several reimbursements for expenditures on behalf of the Friends Group were discussed. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to approve the following reimbursements and expenditures on behalf of the Friends Group:

- Reimburse Kenny McCain for purchase of food items for the Friends Group Annual Meeting in the amount of \$427.00
- Reimburse Peg Hall for purchase of a piece of art depicting the Refuge that was presented to Jay Bushnell at the Annual Meeting recognizing his leadership as President of the Friends of the Refuges for the past four years, in the amount of \$115.00.
- Reimburse Bob Hudson for purchase of tables and chairs donated to the Refuge by the Friends Group in the amount of \$625.74. It was noted that Bob has already received reimbursement for these items pursuant to prior board approval by email, and by this action the board is ratifying the amount.
- Reimburse Ed DeHaan for tick removal kits to be sold in Friends Group booths at upcoming events in the amount of \$100.13.
- Reimburse John Thalacker for purchase of tree identification signs in the amount of \$135.76.
- In recognition of the donation of the Vista property to the Refuge, and the opportunity it offers for public use of the property in the future, reimburse John Kasbohm for the recognition gift consisting of a framed collage of old photographs of the Vista property presented to the individuals representing the donor family at the Annual Meeting in the amount of \$302.82.
- Expenditure of \$25.00 to have a Friends Group booth in the Cedar Key Old Florida Celebration of the Arts on April 2-3.
- Expenditure of \$56.00 for a post office box.

Motion carried.

Posting of Board Meeting Minutes: Discussion ensued whether the Friends Group should post board meeting minutes on its website. Following discussion it was agreed that the board minutes should be posted on the website in the spirit of transparency and to provide information to members.

Date of Next Board Meeting: It was agreed that the next meeting of the board of directors will be at 10:00 a.m. on April 18 at Refuge headquarters.

Lead Board Members for Upcoming Festivals:

Cedar Key Old Florida Celebration of the Arts on April 2 & 3 – Marci Wilcox volunteered to take the lead on arranging staffing of the Friends Group booth at the Arts Festival.

Suwannee Stone Crab Festival on April 30 – Richard Herman volunteered to be the lead person for the Stone Crab Festival.

Honorarium for Dawn Miller, DVM: It was noted that the board has previously approved a policy to offer an honorarium of \$100 for speakers, and the Treasurer will send a check to Dr. Miller in this amount for her presentation at the Annual Meeting.

Mini-Refuge Experiences at Festivals: The board discussed the possibility of including mini-Refuge experiences at events where the Friends Group has a booth. Some ideas discussed were talks on paddling trails in the Refuge, butterfly identification, fish identification, tree identification, etc. The concept was discussed in detail and the board agreed to move toward providing a more formal educational experience at future community events.

News from John Kasbohm, Refuge Manager: John Kasbohm provided an update on the Refuge, including approval of funding for upgrade of restrooms at Shell Mound and Shired Island, bird census recording program, and other activities in the Refuge. He reported that Daryl has accepted the position of Deputy Manager at the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge in Arizona and will be leaving. The board asked John to express its appreciation to Daryl for his good work on behalf of the Refuge during his time here, and to wish him and his family the very best in the future.

Pam Darty, Refuge Ranger, reported on programs at Shell Mound and Career Day at Chiefland High School.

Membership Database: Peg Hall reported that she is working with Joan Stephens, Membership Chairman, to have the membership database available to each board member so that members with special interests can be contacted for volunteer opportunities in the Refuge.

Friends Group Website and Facebook: Peg Hall reported that Michelle Pearson has volunteered to assume responsibility for the Friends Group website and Facebook account. Michelle reported that she is working on setting up a link whereby members can post photographs taken in the Refuge to a common site.

Friends Group Activities:

The board discussed and agreed to the idea of having a designated lead person for each Friends Group activity.

There was discussion as to future program ideas and responsibilities of the various board members. Jay Bushnell and John Thalacker agreed to continue to work on enhancing Friends group educational and outreach programs.

Jay Bushnell discussed the idea of having a bird walk for blind persons in the Refuge during National Bird Week in May. Following discussion, the board agreed in principle that this would be a good program to offer. Jay will follow-up with the appropriate agencies for the blind in this region to discuss it.

The board agreed that the Tick Removal Kits should be sold for \$5. Russ Hall will prepare labels for each kit identifying the Friends Group.

Peg Hall reminded the board of the Three Sisters Festival sponsored by the Friends of the Chassahowitzka NWR on April 9.

The volunteer opportunity for sturgeon sampling by the USGS was discussed. Peg Hall will put a notice in the electronic newsletter next week.

Old Business:

Jay Bushnell discussed the Duck Stamp program. He reported that the teddy bears ordered last year were still on order and we do not have a delivery date at this time.

The Vista property was discussed, noting that the donors have the use of the property for their lifetimes so it is not open to the public. However, Refuge staff can schedule organized events there.

Treasurer's Report: Jerry Salamon reported that the bank balance, prior to expenditures and reimbursements approved above, was \$11,135.62. The silent auction at the Annual Meeting made \$1,314.50.

New Business:

The idea of converting the house on the Vista property to a visitor's center in the future when the Refuge has use of the property, and establishing a capital fund for this future purpose, was discussed.

It was moved and seconded to appoint an Ad Hoc Committee to work on updating the Friends Group "Story Boards." A committee of Ron Black, Jay Bushnell, Peg Hall and John Kasbohm was appointed. The Committee will review the story boards and make recommendations to the board for updating them.

Items for Next Friends Group Board Meeting:

It was agreed to discuss significant projects and activities of the Friends Group for the remainder of 2011 and 2012, and to build it into the budget process.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.