

# Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges

February Board Meeting Minutes

2/20/2024

Recorded by Pete Tirrell

Present:

Debbie Meeks, Boyd Kimball, Linda Kimball, John Thalacker, Dan Kline, John McPherson, Jeri Treat, Ron Kamzelski, Barbara Woodmansee, Scott Wright, Peter Tirrell

Representing the Refuge: Andrew Gude

Guests: Chuck Adams, Jay Bushnell

Start 10:02 Debbie M leading meeting. Guinnessa and Denise absent

## Approval Items

- Accept or modify the agenda

**Vote: Motion to approve agenda by Ron K, seconded by Jeri T, approved by all**

- Approve Minutes from previous Board Meeting

- [Link to January board minutes](#)

**Vote: Motion to approve minutes by John T, seconded by Boyd, approved by all**

- Approve [2023 annual meeting minutes](#)

**Vote: Motion to approve 2023 annual meeting minutes by Scott W, seconded by Jeri, approved by all**

- Treasurer's Report

- [Link to review Financials](#)

**Checking: \$6302, MMA: \$54279**

**Chairs purchased Debbie M to be reimbursed**

**Changes to the financial report balance sheet by the financial committee for more clarity. Reviewed by Linda.**

**Vote: Motion to approve treasurer's report by Ron K, seconded by Scott, approved by all**

## Refuge Update

- Andrew

**No reply yet on trailer insurance**

**Congressional followup, guidance and feedback coming from the Cammack meeting**

Vista: George to work on developing the camper volunteer program ,George is working on developing the camper volunteer infrastructure- sewage, water, electric, concrete pad, pole barn, wash house. Rex and Claudette are not coming back, it was hoped that Claudette would take on the volunteer coordinator position. Rex and Claudette not coming back. Need to recruit new camper volunteers for next season, this should simplify the volunteer coordinator position job description

Butterfly garden: need a resource for soil. Andrew and Barbara investigating  
Abandoned boat in marsh off Cabin road. Pontoon boat with 115 Yamaha engine. Ron K and friend maybe able to tow with airboat or refuge staff could drag to road. There was confusion about who would remove the boat but Ron clarified that George Foster, the owner of the boat, will do it.

Refuge staff will be at annual meeting setup Thursday and Friday.

River trail repair on hold due to bad condition

Signs for Snake Key and Cedar point to advise people to stay away during nesting season.

Chairs to be delivered today (2/20) will be stored in shop until the annual meeting

More tables will come from Fowlers Bluff fire station, Jay and Andrew will pickup and deliver Fri

#### Discussion Items

- Annual Meeting

**Dan K will pickup and deliver Annual Meeting vegetarian option**

- [Setup Map](#)
- [Checklist](#)
- Chair discussion - accept email chain as a board vote?

**Thanks to Bill D for \$ for chairs**

- Table discussion - do we want to purchase for future events? What quality?  
\$172.66 of Bill's earmarked donation remains after the chair purchase.

- Debbie borrowed 5 from her family's camp to take pressure off this event

**Jay B bringing table for silent auction**

**Chairs will be stored in shed long term**

- Presentation Schedule and MC - **need assistance**
  - **Time keeper, intro C. Barnett, board business, presentations**  
**Ron will takeover presentation, Barbara and Scott will be time keepers**  
**Andrew will gather AV equipment**
- Dog Print Discussion (to retain or hand off, prior donation, vote?)

**Donate to dog walk event?**

**Vote to donate dog prints to dog walk event, all in in favor of donating**

Jeri additional leftover prints will review with Linda for auction

Tour of Vista main house, Debbie, Robin, Jay docents

**Board members can bring desserts**

**John M suggests \$100 tip for total of \$1600 for for BBQ**

**Vote: John M motion to give \$100 tip to Kenny for BBQ, all approved**

- River Trail Boardwalk Updates (John T.)  
**Proposal to have river overlook at Vista instead of old River trail.**  
**Add spur to big bald cypress.**  
**Andrew is willing to explore Vista option, possibly rebuild Vista dock. How open does Vista need to be, walk in to dock only. John M: dock may not be necessary, benches to sit by river.**  
**Vista house boat damage extensive may be very expensive too repair**
- Name our Trailer
  - Vote between these tied names: Refuge Rambler, Refuge Rover, Rollin' Refuge, or Wildlife Wagon.  
**Votes**  
**Refuge Rambler: 3**  
**Refuge Rover: 5**  
**Rollin' Refuge: 1**  
**Wildlife Wagon: 1**

**Vote for trailer name: Refuge Rover**
- Vista Pollinator Garden Proposals (Barbara)  
**Barbara showed plans for a pollinator garden.**  
**25 feet by 25 feet star pattern. Includes low 4 foot trellises to be built by Barbara's husband with climbing vines**  
**No irrigation system, simple watering process**  
**Establish in Fall, Barbara will donate 50 plants and collecting more**  
**Signage with commonly seen butterflies. May create brochure/sign with QR codes of plants.**  
**Possibly picnic tables and benches or chairs nearby**  
**Refuge will buy soil, friends plants and signs**  
**Water source possible**  
**Claudia designed garden at Micanopy post office**
- Review of Mission Statement (can hold on this till next meeting if necessary)
  - [Link to review proposed edits](#)  
**Scott the shorter the statement the better, first sentence of the old statement. Consensus is for short.**  
**Table until Peg available.**

## Subcommittee Reports

- Advocacy (Jay, Peg, Scott, Ron)  
**Meeting with Kat Cammack, Peg did most of the talking, Jay sent an invite to Ruth Clark for someone to visit. Stressed no law enforcement, prehistoric indigenous**

materials continue to be looted. Refuge staff working on the Dixie side not feeling safe: "bad as we thought it was". Refuge cannot fulfill mission due to lack of law enforcement and lack of safety.

**Ron:** Positive meeting and followup meeting, need more pressure on more people in power

**Scott:** Talked with Crystal River officer. Action list from Kat Cammack, possible documentary film

**Barbara:** collecting trash when doing surveys on Dixie side and gathering a huge bag every time which is another indication of the problems in Dixie.

- Merchandise (Boyd, Dan, Barbara, Bill, Jeri, John, Peg, Denise, Debbie M)  
For sale on porch, hats, insect repellent, passport books, earrings, tree shirts will be discounted. Jeri will bring Jr Ranger books and badges for trailer.
- Vista (Debbie, John, Denise, Peg, GiNESSA, etc.)
  - Pollinator Garden, windows, RFP, Duck Boats!

**Vista RFP:** John M sent out to 5 roofing contractors, publication of RFP on website confirmation from state that it is sufficient. March 22 deadline.

State gave approval for Vista windows work, Debbie M and John M removed windows and covered with plastic.

**Robin and Michael** found duck boats in attic of boat house, need to move to a safe location

## Reports

- Governance (GiNESSA)
- Outreach and Jr. Ranger (Debbie)- [Report link](#)
- Communications (Peg)
- Membership (Debbie)- [Report link](#)
- Refuge Support (Scott)

## Open Discussion

- [Wish List Spreadsheet Link](#)
  - To be added to with specific item name, specs, and cost (i.e. direct shopping link)
- [Actionables Spreadsheet Link](#)
  - Update status of tasks

## Action Items

- Upcoming Events
  - CK Dog Walk- March 1 Ron, Jeri, Boyd
  - Suwannee Art Festival- March 9
  - CK Art Festival- April 5

- Fanning Springs Earth Day- April 20

**Welcome to Chuck, ready to help**

**Jeri: Is there a better location for trailer? Scott maybe give location another try, perhaps a couple of other locations to try. Perhaps park trailer overnight for weekend. We have permission from police to leave trailer overnight.**

**Trailer at CK Museum March 16, Barbara will man weather permitting**

**Adjourn at 11:51**

**Votes:**

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