

MINUTES

Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys NWR

Board Meeting

September 16, 2009

The Board of Directors of the Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges, met at the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters on September 16, 2009. Jay Bushnell, President, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. A quorum of the Board of Directors was present.

The following board members were present:

Jay Bushnell, President

Pam Darty

Sean Dowie

Mark Gluckman

Bob Hudson

Rod Hunt

John Kasbohm

Tom Liebert

Joan Stephens

Marci Wilcox

Others present included:

Daryl Magnuson

Jim Wilcox

Introductions – Following introductions of all present, John Kasbohm, Refuge Manager, introduced Daryl Magnuson, new Deputy Refuge Manager. He noted Daryl's extensive experience in other NWR's, including Texas and Alaska. The Board welcomed Daryl to the Refuge. Mark Gluckman was introduced and welcomed as a new member of the board of the Friends Group.

Jay Bushnell reviewed several topics of environmental interest, including ratings by the American Association of Philanthropy and a number of publications and articles on environmental issues. Jay reviewed significant accomplishments of the Friends Group including revised Bylaws, Code of Ethics, and successful Friends Group events.

Jay Bushnell offered to give a copy of Lester Brown's book, Plan B: 3.0 Mobilizing to Save Civilization to anyone who agrees to pass the book on after reading it. Jay reported that the book is filled with positive solutions that are being implemented.

Ratification of Actions Taken Since Last Board Meeting – The board reviewed actions taken since the last board meeting by email or telephone conference. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to ratify the actions taken by the full board via email or telephone conference since the last board meeting which included:

- 1) Election of new board member, Mark Gluckman
- 2) Adoption of Code of Ethics
- 3) Letter of support for grant proposal from Susan Jacobson for study of the resilience of Florida coastal counties, and
- 4) Expenditure of \$300 for Friends Group ad on the website of the Pure Water Wilderness.

Motion Carried.

April 14, 2009, Board of Director Meeting Minutes - It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting on April 14, 2009. Motion carried.

Treasurers Report – Joan Stephens, Treasurer, provided a Treasurers Report to the board of directors, noting that the Friends Group bank balance is currently \$4, 684.79.

Membership Report – Joan Stephens, Membership Chairman, reported that the Friends Group currently has 154 paid members, which is a significant increase from prior years.

Bank Signature Cards

Jay Bushnell reported that he and Joan Stephens had worked with Drummond Bank to bring the Friends Group bank signature cards up to date. He and Joan have signature authority on the account.

Clamerica Festival – Marci Wilcox reported that the Friends Group had a successful booth at the Cedar Key Clamerica Festival on July 4 that included donations and T-shirt sales. A total of \$734 was received by the Treasurer from the weekend, including donations. It was reported that a request for ten percent commission on all sales at the Festival was received from the Mayor of Cedar Key, and, that this fee is paid by all participants as a fundraising vehicle for the Aquaculture Association. This requirement was unknown until the Mayor made the request. Marci Wilcox reported that the commission had been paid on T-shirt sales but not on donations. The Mayor also indicated that cash sale of T-shirts was not allowed, and tickets would have to be purchased and used for T-shirt sales. There was discussion of the logistical problems associated with requiring tickets for T-shirt sales and the probable decline in sales. Sean Dowie volunteered to follow up with the Mayor and other officials to discuss the issue of requiring tickets for T-shirts. It was agreed that the board will wait for the outcome of these discussions before deciding whether to have a booth at the 2010 Clamerica Festival.

Contribution To The National Wildlife Refuge Association – The value of the National Wildlife Refuge Association was discussed. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to provide a contribution of \$150.00 to the National Wildlife Refuge Association. Motion carried.

Audit Committee – Jay Bushnell discussed an Audit Committee, as required by the Friends Group Bylaws and State of Florida. He distributed a proposed Audit Committee Plan (attached to these minutes). He reported that, subject to board approval, he and Bob Hudson had agreed to serve on the Committee and asked for another volunteer. Marci Wilcox volunteered. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to approve the Audit Committee Plan and to appoint Bob Hudson (Chairman), Jay Bushnell and Marci Wilcox as members of the 2009 Audit Committee.

Refuge Update – John Kasbohm, Refuge Manager, provided a Refuge update including information on new equipment, controlled burn of 3,000 acres, timber sales, observation deck construction status, three stimulus projects (solar system at Refuge HQ, maintenance yard repairs, and replacement signage throughout the Refuge). He also discussed road improvements at Shell Mound, and the Landscape Conservation Cooperative, a cooperative effort between agencies. He reported that a UF professor had received a grant and may conduct a significant archeological study in the Refuge on Native American cultures. He also reported the need for significant structural repairs to the Seahorse Key Lighthouse in the near future, and, the meeting he held with hunters in the Refuge.

Pam Darty reported she had conducted ten library programs over the summer, two Kids with Cameras workshops and several Discover Shell Mound and Discover Shired Island workshops.

Action Planning for Fall of 2009 and Spring of 2010 – The board reviewed the list of events planned for fall of 2009 and spring of 2010, which is extensive. Jay asked for input and will update and distribute the schedule to the board. He asked that board members think of topics and speakers for future events.

- The board discussed the Cedar Key Seafood Festival and agreed to have a Friends Group booth. Marci Wilcox volunteered to take the lead on staffing, setup and location of the booth.
- Coastal Cleanup day was discussed. It was moved and seconded to contribute \$100.00 to support Coastal Cleanup Day, noting that it will be used for food and T-shirts. Motion Carried.

- John Kasbohm reported on several upcoming events at the Refuge. The Inter-Agency Luncheon will again be held at the Refuge in early December. Following discussion: It was moved and seconded that the Friends Group provides funding for the food at the luncheon. Motion carried. It was noted that members will be asked to bring desserts.
- John discussed several volunteer opportunities to assist with installation of signage, planting of Longleaf Pines and Wiregrass, cleanups and other types of volunteer assistance. It was agreed that Jay Bushnell will include an article in the Ibis publication asking for interested volunteers and providing contact information.
- Jay Bushnell discussed the Holiday Luncheon that the board has traditionally provided for Refuge staff. It was agreed to invite all members of the Friends Group to participate.
- Annual meeting – Jay asked for board members to send him suggested dates for the Annual Membership Meeting in first quarter 2009.

Grant Opportunities – It was reported that the Coca Cola grant application had been denied. Donna Bushnell and Pam Darty were commended for their hard work in preparation of the grant application.

Ibis Publication – The upcoming end of September issue of the Ibis publication was discussed. Ideas for inclusion in Ibis were reviewed, including a description of upcoming events, and, featuring a particular animal in the Refuge. Joan Stephens agreed to prepare an article on gopher tortoises for inclusion.

Old Business – The following items of old business were discussed:

- Sean Dowie is in process of updating the Friends Group webpage.
- Marci Wilcox reported on the butterfly garden and requested funds for sign holders. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to spend up to \$50 for sign holders for the butterfly garden. Motion carried.
- Florida Master Naturalist Program – Jay reported that timing and location of the program is undecided due to relocation of involved staff.
- Florida Friends Alliance Network – Jay updated the board on the January 7 - 8 meeting of the Alliance at Loxahatchee. He and Joan Stephens plan to attend.

New Business – The following items of new business were discussed:

- Suwannee River Wilderness Trail – Mark Gluckman provided an overview of the Suwannee River Wilderness Trail program. Following extensive discussion, Jay Bushnell appointed a committee to review the program, including a review of its compatibility with the Refuge mission, and provide recommendations to the board on whether the Friends Group should participate, and if so, in what fashion. Members of the committee include Mark Gluckman, Jay Bushnell, Rod Hunt, Tom Liebert, and John Kasbohm.
- Board meeting frequency – The pros and cons of meeting as a board only four times a year were discussed. Jay Bushnell asked for input from the board on the number of board meetings annually. The need for a mechanism for conducting business between meetings was discussed. It was suggested that we consider meeting every other month, or more frequently if needed, except in the summer months. Board members will give Jay their input for discussion at the next board meeting.
- Florida Springs Initiative – Following discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Friends Group endorses the Florida Springs Initiative mission and purpose. Motion carried.
- Nominating Committee – Jay Bushnell appointed Joan Stephens and Sean Dowie, board members, and Donna Bushnell, non-board member (subject to her acceptance), to the 2009-2010 Nominating Committee. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to approve the Nominating Committee as appointed by the President.

Next Board Meeting – It was agreed to hold the next board meeting on November 18 at 9:00 a.m. at the Refuge headquarters.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.