

**Friends of Refuges Board Meeting
Refuge Headquarters
December 5, 2011**

Board Members Present: Ron Black, Jay Bushnell, Ed DeHaan, Mark Gluckman, Peg Hall, Russ Hall, Bob Hudson, Richard Herman, John McPherson, John Thalacker.

Also Present: Andrew Gude, Refuge Manager, Pam Darty, Refuge Ranger, Donna Thalacker, Member, and Kirby Alexander, Member.

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. at Refuge Headquarters.

Minutes of meeting of November 7, 2011 – It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the board of directors meeting of November 7, 2011. Motion carried.

Date of next board meeting – Following discussion, it was agreed that the next board meeting will be Monday, January 9, at 10:00 at Refuge Headquarters.

Chassahowitzka NWR Holiday Party – Peg Hall reminded the board of the party and recorded the number of people planning to attend.

Introduction – Kirby Alexander, Member, was introduced.

2012 Planning – Andrew Gude discussed Refuge planning for 2012. He reported that the Deputy Refuge Manager will arrive December 6. Full planning with each department of the Refuge is underway. Plans are being developed for invasive species control, tree planting, controlled burn plans with greater emphasis on small plot burns, trail maintenance, outreach programs including emphasis on youth events, and other planning areas. Andrew stated that the team is taking a strategic approach to planning for 2012. An area being assessed is the pros and cons of contracting with the State of Florida to manage the hunting program as a Wildlife Management Area.

Peg Hall engaged the board in a discussion of Friends group initiatives in 2012. One area discussed in detail was connectivity with members and the public, and electronic versus printed communications. Following extensive discussion, it was agreed that Peg will appoint a special committee of the board to assess and make recommendations to the board on methods of communications with members and the public.

Budget Committee – Mark Gluckman, Chairman, presented the attached recommendations from the Budget Committee that includes Assumptions, Purposes and Controls of Short and Long Term Reserve Funds, Revenue and Expense budgets. Several modifications to the draft budget were made, including addition of \$300 to the communication category, and an increase of \$200 to the Interagency Luncheon line item. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to approve the 2012 Operating Budget, and Short and Long Term Reserve Funds, with modifications as noted above. Motion carried. The approved 2012 Operating Budget is made a part of these minutes.

The importance of tracking of volunteer hours was discussed. Following extensive discussion, it was agreed that Peg Hall will prepare a template and distribute it to board members for their use in reporting their volunteer hours.

Nominating Committee Report – Peg Hall reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee, whose membership is Marci Wilcox, Donna Thalacker (non-board member position on the Committee) and Peg Hall. She reported that there is one opening on the board and Kirby Alexander has expressed potential interest in serving. The work of the Committee is still in process.

River Trail Enhancement Project – John Thalacker reported on two potential grant opportunities. The Florida Trails program which is part of Florida D.E.P and a grant by Toyota titled the Everyday Grant. John will follow-up with appropriate individuals to assess these potential grants.

Membership Renewal and Retention – Peg Hall reported that a Membership Renewal Reminder Card is in process of being developed.

Great Suwannee River Cleanup – Jay Bushnell, Chairman, reported that the Great Suwannee River Cleanup was held on December and was a great success. He reported that 3,945 pounds of trash was collected and removed, twenty-three boats participated, and ninety-one volunteers participated with an estimated three-hundred sixty-four volunteer hours not counting travel time. Board members were asked to submit any “lessons learned” and suggestions for next year’s event to Jay Bushnell.

Refuge Update – Pam Darty reported on the Seahorse Key Lighthouse open house, the Master Naturalist program potential offering, and the Refuge hunting season.

Paddling Project Update – Mark Gluckman and Russ Hall reported that the Cat Island had been postponed until December 6 due to inclement weather. It is expected that all paddling panels will be completed and submitted to Andrew Gude by mid-December and will go to printing in January.

Inventory Review Committee – Jay Bushnell, Chairman, reported that a physical inventory had been made of remaining Friends group sale items. It was noted that the Committee membership appointed at the November 7 board meeting includes Jay Bushnell (Chairman), Bob Hudson, John McPherson, Joan Stephens, John Thalacker and Marci Wilcox. Jay asked that anyone else having an interest in updating our sale items to contact him. Jay will schedule a meeting of the Committee to develop recommendations to the board for types of sale items.

Email newsletter and Internet Report – Peg Hall distributed a chart of email and internet activity.

Kiosk Project Update – Jay Bushnell reported on the Kiosk update project. It was noted that the Cedar Key Arts Center has chosen the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge for an art theme of multi-media art. Peg Hall said she would meet with the Arts Center to see how the Friends group can participate.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Key NWRs

Treasurer Report, November 30, 2011

	During November	Year to date
Cash Receipts		
Memberships	30.00	4,115.00
Donations	7.00	1,928.50
Sales	117.00	935.00
Total cash receipts	<u>154.00</u>	<u>6,978.50</u>
Cash Disbursements		
support for lower suwanne & cedar key nwr		
Postmaster & print shop		438.66
Food for annual meeting		426.96
Awards & honorariums		215.00
Festival fees		50.00
Projects-tree markers		135.76
Projects-butterfly garden		35.00
sub-total		<u>1,301.38</u>
support refuge-initiated activities		
Refuge summer program (advance)		200.00
Vista pictures		302.82
Equipment (tables, chairs, player)		707.57
sub-total		<u>1,210.39</u>
support for wildlife refuges across the US		
National Wildlife Refuge Association		<u>250.00</u>
administrative & fundraising support		
Florida Department of Revenue		134.13
Tick removal tools		100.13
Miscellaneous	5.00	5.00
sub-total	<u>5.00</u>	<u>239.26</u>
Total cash disbursements	<u>5.00</u>	<u>3,001.03</u>
Excess of receipts over disbursements	149.00	3,977.47
Cash Balance beginning of period	<u>10,360.29</u>	<u>6,531.82</u>
Cash Balance 10/31/2011	<u>10,509.29</u>	<u>10,509.29</u>

Budget Planning 2012
Friends of Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWRs

Assumptions

1. The Operating Budget shall not project more expenditures for a year than it projects in revenues for that year through its regular sources: Memberships, donations, sales, and events.
2. The Operating Budget shall give preference to expenditures for activities that engage Friends members and members of our communities, over expenditures for capital purchases.
3. Monies budgeted for expenditures in one year's Operating Budget but not used in that year will carry over and be placed in a Short-Term Reserve Fund. (See purpose statement on page 2.)
4. Friends shall establish a Long-Term Reserve Fund. (See purpose statement on page 2.)
5. Matching money for grants shall be provided, when permitted by the granting agency, in the form of contributed volunteer work rather than from reserve funds.
6. Friends shall establish a procedure to place a value on human assets in addition to fiscal assets. The procedure will track volunteer work as a measurable revenue and as a measurable expenditure in order to demonstrate quantifiable public support for the refuge.

Short-Term Reserve Fund

Purpose: To provide a source of funding for unbudgeted short-term opportunities or issues that may arise during the year.

Authority to Spend: Money in the Short-Term Reserve Fund may only be spent upon majority affirmative vote of the board of directors.

Accounting: The Fund will be shown separately as a separate line item in periodic Treasurer's reports.

Long-Term Reserve Fund

Purpose: To recognize the work that has gone into accumulating monies currently held by the Friends Group and build on them to enable support for significant future projects.

Authority to Spend: Money in the Long-Term Reserve Fund may only be spent upon 2/3 affirmative vote of the board of directors.

Accounting: The Long-Term Reserve Fund shall be accounted for separately, and dollars in the fund shall be placed into a fixed-income interest bearing account.

Projected Revenues

Category

Memberships 2000.00

Donations 2000.00

Sales 1000.00

Total Cash Receipts 5000.00

Note:

Revenues from Sales for 2012 will almost surely decrease unless we increase our now-diminished inventory

Projected Expenditures

Category

Building Public & Political Support for the Refuges **3550**

Allocated: (This amount is allocated as noted for the following specific activities.) **1850**

Annual Meeting 500

Communications 800

Great Suwannee River Cleanup 150

River Trail enhancements 100

Butterfly Garden maintenance 50

Meet the Refuge Manager events 150

Festival Fees 100

Unallocated: (This amount will be allocated by the Board among the following activities and other opportunities that arise during the year as specifics become known.) **1700**

Membership renewal & recruitment

Talks at Library

Paddling Project

Shell Mound initiatives

Information Kiosk updates

Florida Friends group meeting

Young Naturalist Initiative

Supporting Refuge-Initiated Activities **1100.00**

Allocated: (This amount is allocated as noted for the following specific activities.) **600**

Interagency event 400

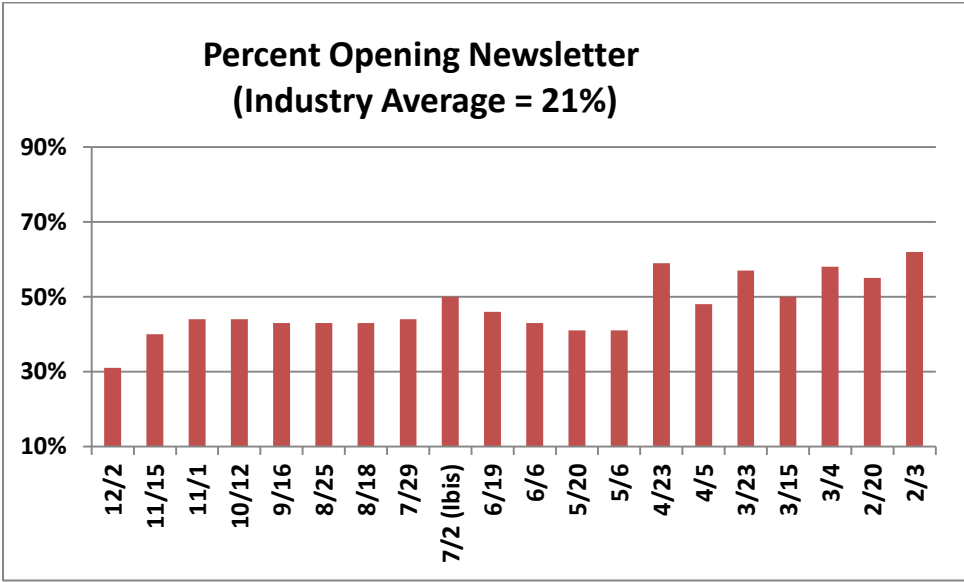
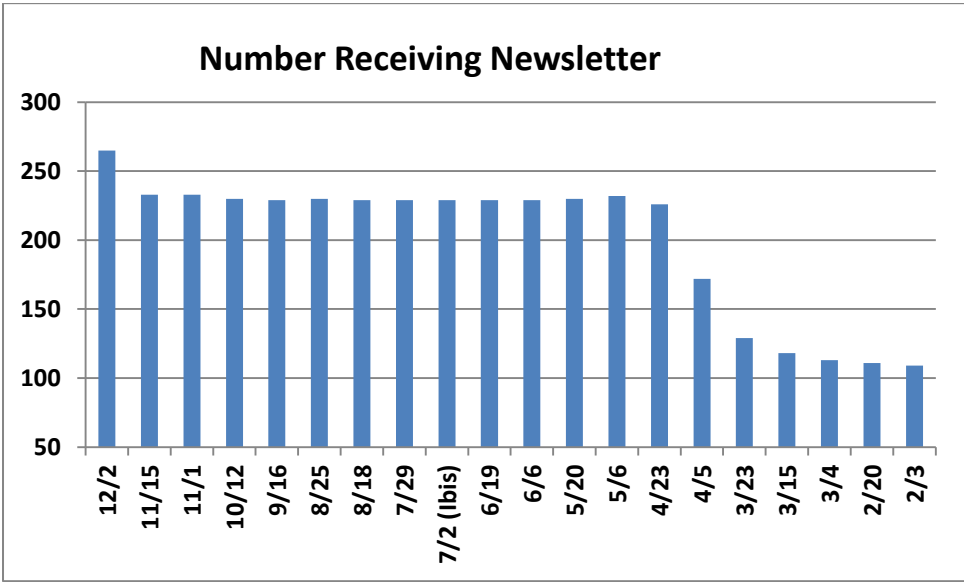
Refuge Summer Youth Program	200
<i>Unallocated: (This amount will be allocated by the Board among the following activities and other opportunities that arise during the year as specifics become known.)</i>	500
Supporting the National Wildlife Refuge System	150
<i>Allocated:</i>	
Participation in NWR Association	150
Administration & Fund-raising	200
<i>Allocated:</i>	
FL Department of Revenue taxes & fees	100
Annual FL Registration fee	100
Board-Designated Reserves	
Short-Term *	± 1900
Long-Term **	± 8600

*In July when we passed the revised 2011 budget, we agreed that at the end of the year we would place into Short-Term Reserve any budgeted funds that we had not spent. We budgeted for expenditures of up to \$2,000. Thus the amount for the Short-Term Reserve will be \$2,000 less the actual expenditures between July 1 and December 31 plus any actual revenues during the same time period.

**In July we also agreed to put all remaining cash balance at the EOY into the Long-Term Reserve. Thus the amount for the Long-Term Reserve should be the cash balance at EOY, less whatever is placed in the Short-Term Reserve

Electronic Communications Update for December 5, 2011 Board Meeting

Email Newsletter



Website

Pageviews in November = 1168

Pageviews in October = 1040

Facebook

Fans as of November 30= 119

Fans as of October 31 = 115