

Board Meeting Minutes
Friends of the Lower Suwanee and Cedar Keys Wildlife Refuges
2/18/2016

Board Members Present: Maria Sgambati, Greg Lang, Peg Hall, Debbie Meeks, Ed DeHaan, Libby Cagle, Bob McKinstry, Jamie Jerrels, Richard Herman, Bob Hudson, John Thalacker

Members and Guests: Jennifer Kolinck, Russ Hall, Jay Bushnell, Bob Knight, Debbie Sigel, Ryan?

Refuge Staff: Daniel Baron

The meeting was called to order by Greg Lang and Maria Sgambati. A Motion was made by John Thalacker, seconded by Greg Lang to approve the agenda circulated before the meeting, passed by acclamation.

A motion by Jamie Jerrels, seconded by John Thalacker to accept the minutes of the previous meeting was passed by acclamation.

Greg Lang reported that someone was so impressed by our website that they asked what company produced it.

Maria Sgambati was thanked by the group for braving the blizzard to advocate for Friends. Jay Bushnell was thanked for his work on the Ibis.

Forester Daniel Baron described activity on the refuge, including:

Several burns, including a helicopter aerial burn in Dixie county.
15000 longleaf pine seedlings planted near the South Nature Drive entrance.
The refuge is still missing Pam's position, with no chance of replacement in the near term.

The refuge will be part of a complex including Lower Suwanee, Crystal River, Chassahowitzka, St. Vincent, and St. Marks. Two complex managers will be hired. Timeline for hiring is unknown.

Daniel also gave a short explanation of the difficulties in operating with uncertain budgets.

Daniel is also the IT person for the refuge and described the startup of the new WiFi system, coming soon. The refuge paid for the equipment and the Friends organization will cover the monthly cost.

A discussion of Annual Meeting Planning followed. Key points included:

Area newspapers will be contacted.
John Thalacker will manage registration.
Bill Dummitt will contact Marci Wilcox to get an updated list of members to minimize confusion in the registration booth.
Board members should have badges to identify themselves and circulate among the guests.
The meeting will be open to non-members, but they will need to pay the registration fee of \$10 to stay for lunch.

Kenny McCain will be providing meats and swamp cabbage- the group will buy the other sides. Members are encouraged to bring desserts.

Non-board members will be encouraged to participate.

John and Donna Thalacker offered to lead walks on the river and tram trails.

Jay Bushnell offered to lead a group paddle if there is interest. Bill Dummitt offered to assist.

The photo contest honoring Bill Killborn will be anonymous. Entrants will provide 8x10 photos in 11x14 mats.

Jay Bushnell noted the importance of inviting stakeholders, and mentioned Manley Fuller and Lily Rooks.

Maria Sgambati will ask if Yoho, Rubio, or Nelson want to send a staffer.

The floor will not be open for political speeches. Fortunately, the meeting is after the Florida primary.

Committee Reports:

Treasurer: Libby Cagle reported that there were no surprises in the treasurer's report (attached). More and more payments are coming in via PayPal, which are periodically transferred to the Drummond account. \$1000 was allocated to the Horseshoe Crab project.

Communications: Peg Hall reported that Tram Trail panels were finalized. The CK kiosk will be used to highlight things to do in the refuge. QR codes instead of paper handouts will be used. There are also plans to partner with Dixie County organizations. More than 500 Dixie County cycling panels have been distributed. Peg and Maria spent a day at Shell Mound with a reporter planning to write about vandalism and neglect on the refuge. They hoped they had convinced her to write something positive. The new logo is finalized and was applauded by all attendees.

Invasive Species- no report

Membership- no report, although it was noted that there was an epidemic of life members.

Nominating:

We have a complete slate of officer candidates except for treasurer.

Initiatives:

Benches for Tram Trail: Joe Hand has agreed to make benches for the cost of materials, about \$36 each. Photos were provided. Motion by Bob Hudson, second by John Thalacker to purchase 6 benches, passed by acclamation. There was a short discussion of earmarking photo contest proceeds for this purpose and place a plaque honoring Bill Killborn on the benches. No action was taken at this time.

Advocacy:

Maria gave a description of her trip to the Friends Fly-in in Washington. She met the director of the Fish and Wildlife Service. She also met many representatives of Friends groups in Florida. A Florida Friends Facebook page exists.

The Gulf Coast was mentioned as one of three top priorities. Maria attempted to point the gap between funding and this priority to those concerned.

Maria also was able to spend some time with the director of the Malthur refuge, site of the recent illegal occupation.

Science:

Maria gave an update on progress on the Horseshoe Crab initiative.

Barnett and Turkey Foot Trails:

John Thalacker noted that both these trails needed to be reblazed and that a volunteer was needed. He also noted that gates in the refuge could use scraping and painting.

The final 15 minutes of the meeting were turned over to Bob Knight, author of Silent Springs and founder of the Howard T. Odum Florida Springs Institute. He gave a talk focused on problems facing springs in the state and how nitrates and other contaminants have a major effect, not just on the springs but the rivers and estuaries that they feed. Laws and regulations exist to protect springs but they are not being enforced. Jamie Jerrels pointed out the difficult position that farmers and ranchers are in with their needs to fertilize their crops.

The meeting was adjourned after Dr. Knight's talk.

Friends of Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys NWR Transactions 2016

Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refugees Transaction 2016										
Date	type trans	payee	Membership (P)	Membership (D)	Donations (D)	Sales	Debit (D)	Debit (P)	MO Total	Balance
12/31/15		Carry forward Drummond (D)								\$28,042.94
12/31/15		Carry Forward Paypal (P)								1683.30
1/4/16	Xler	from PP to D	-1,000.00	1,000.00						
1/11/16	DEP	memberships		570.00						
1/13/16	DEP	Donations			120.00					
1/7/16		271 Florida Department of Revenue (sales tax)					-30.03			
1/20/16		272 Debbie Meeks (scanned photos)					-22.00			
1/20/16		273 Peg Hall (domain name)					-18.17			
1/20/16		274 Debbie Meeks (display holders)					-181.54			
1/22/16	PPDC	FL Dept of State, (Div of Corp)						-81.25		
1/27/16		275 Bake My Day (Big Bend Sym dinner)					-535.00			
1/28/16	DEP	memberships			100.00					
1/31/16	PP	Transaction fees						-28.44		
1-31 Jan 2016	PP	memberships	1,070.00							
Jan totals			70.00	1,070.00	220.00		-788.74	-89.88	983.57	30,719.81
			28042.94	Drummond						
			1683.3	PP						
			29736.24	Total						
			983.57	Net this month						
			30719.81	Total						
			-7330	Vista set aside						
			23389.81	Available						