

Friends Board Meeting- 2-15-2017

Members present: Ed DeHaan, Jay Bushnell, Russ Hall, Libby Cagle, Doug Maples, Debbie Meeks, Peg Hall, Kit Lane, Maria Sgambati, Margy VanLandingham, John McPherson, Greg Lang

Refuge Staff: Andrew Gude

Bill Dummitt moved, second by Peg Hall to accept the agenda, passed by acclamation.

Peg Hall moved, second by Debbie Meeks to accept the minutes of the previous meeting with a few spelling corrections, passed by acclamation.

Refuge update from Andrew:

At least three refuge staff will be missing from the annual meeting. Presentations will still be given. There was a short discussion of how to arrange speakers and topics.

Dan is attending Landscape Conservation Design for Big Bend.

The Landscape Protection Plan will allow the refuge to expand its boundary. Planning may change with the new administration. The refuge is still seeking conservation easements. \$3 million is available to do conservation easements in Dixie. Grants are coming from Gulf money.

2 staff have been lost, including the equipment operator.

On Monday there will be a work day at Seahorse Key. Volunteers will be accepted. Mendy is organizing. The group will leave CK at app. 9 am.

There was a discussion regarding access to Dennis Creek from the road. It is ripped now on all 4 sides. The refuge was not involved with the county or state on the road. Greg Lang will work on this issue.

Will the Seahorse Key closure be moved to Snake? This is not a reality yet.

Jay mentioned hearing a rumor that the refuge could close. Andrew had not heard anything about a closure.

There will be an Open House at Seahorse later this month on Feb 25.

Finance: We are currently paying \$5 per month to get paper statements from Drummond. We will switch to electronic.

Membership: there are 140 current members. An email will be sent to lapsed members and email readers who are not members. The complete membership report is attached.

Margy agreed to take over some of the inventory job.

Pepper busting: Rattlesnake Key was checked, moved on to Candy Island.

Advocacy: Bill Nelson has introduced a bill to protect scientists from Congressional harassment. A fracking bill is in the Florida Senate. The FL-GA lawsuit was not just about water. Overharvesting of oysters was also partly to blame for the issues in Appalachicola. Jay recommended a book called Rancher, Farmer, Fisherman.

There was discussion about hosting an International Migratory Bird Day with Cedar Key Audubon. Libby and Doug agreed to work on it.

Annual meeting: Ed will work on tables and chairs. Volunteers should arrive at 8 am. It may be possible to prep on Friday. Dan Frisk will attend the meeting. John McPherson was empowered to source food in Kenny's absence.

There was a discussion of the Friends partnership agreement. Some provisions of the standard agreement are not favored by the membership, such as one that gives the national organization all funds if the Friends group dissolves. No action was taken. For now we remain an independent 501c3 organization.

Communications Team Report February 2017

Brochures

- Lock/Shingle in hand
- Dennis Creek at the printer
- Distribution in Cedar Key and Suwannee

News Briefs

January News Brief

- Sent January 17 to 494 email addresses. Opened 567 times by 200 email addresses (40.5%).
- Linked on our Facebook page, homepage and newsletters page of our website
- Readers clicked to the story **85 times. Most clicked –**
 - Slate of Nominations
 - Bioblitz
 - Refuge update
 - Big Bend Science Symposium
 - Membership renewal form

Special News Brief: Annual Meeting

- Sent February 7 to 494 email addresses. Opened 497 times by 195 email addresses (39.5%).
- Linked on our Facebook page, homepage and newsletters page of our website
- Readers clicked to the story **24 times. Most clicked –**
 - Photo Contest
 - Slate of Officers
 - Membership renewal form

February News Brief

- Sent February 13 to 494 email addresses. Opened 371 times by 189 email addresses (38.5%).
- Linked on our Facebook page, homepage and newsletters page of our website
- Readers clicked to the story **55 times. Most clicked –**
 - Hunters and Anglers Stop Bad Public Lands Bill (from our advocacy and info links)
 - Photo Contest
 - Sabal Pipeline article in the Gainesville Sun

Facebook Page, 1 new fan this month. We have 446.

17 Posts and 9 Shares, by Maria, Bob, Libby, Debbie, and Peg

1400 Number of people to whom our posts were “served” by Facebook in the last 28 days. The number was the same last month.

Friends Website

- 9 posts in the past month
- About 1855 visitors in the past month. About 1500 the previous month.
- About 9000 pageviews in the past month, 7800 last month.

Team members - Peg, Debbie, Kit, Jaime, Paul