

Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys NWR  
January 20, 2021 Monthly Board Meeting Minutes  
Prepared by: Debbie Meeks, John McPherson and Peg Hall

Present: none

By phone: John McPherson, Ed Dehaan, Bill Dummitt, Denise Feiber, Peg Hall, Joe Hand, Debbie Jordan, Boyd Kimball, Linda Kimball, Dan Kline, Ginessa Mahar, Debbie Meeks, John Thalacker, Barbara Woodmanssee

Guests by phone: none

10am- call to order

- 1- The agenda was adopted by consensus.
- 2- December's amended minutes were presented for review. Motion by Peg Hall to accept the minutes as presented. Second by Dan Kline. Approved unanimously.
- 3- The treasurer's report, including the revised budget for 2021, was presented by Linda Kimball and accepted by consensus.
- 4- Refuge Update. Andrew was unable to participate in the meeting. He provided an update by way of a phone call on which Peg reported at the meeting.
  - Dixie Mainline closure will be extended until Feb. 5, 2021 to continue maintenance of the overstory by heavy equipment
  - Prescribed burns will be occurring along SR 349 in Dixie County
  - 968 hunt permits for the Lower Suwannee refuge have been issued by the State. This is on par with previous years
  - Small game hunt will occur Jan 30 through Feb 14
  - The refuge would appreciate the public's help with a possible issue with wild birds. Two birds have been found dead for no apparent cause. If the public find dead birds, they are requested to double bag and freeze them, doing as little damage to them as possible. Call the refuge and someone will come pick them up to be examined for possible pathological cause of death.
  - Sterling is in Washington DC on law enforcement duty related to the inauguration.
- 5- Partnership Agreement Update. Peg Hall provided the following update:
  - At the end of December, Friends of Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWRs received a letter from FWS stating that:

Since your organization has decided not to sign the Agreement, the partnership, heretofore, existing between the Friends and Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge is officially dissolved by mutual consent.
  - We responded that:

To the best of our knowledge our Friends group has never had a formal agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, nor agreed to participate in the Service's internal Friends program. Thus, there is no mutually agreed upon partnership to dissolve by mutual consent.

All board members received copies of both letters.

Also, since the last board meeting, John T, Dan, Debbie M, Peg, and Jay participated in a second Zoom-webinar with Friends members and officers from around the country. Its purpose was to discuss the new reporting requirements proposed by FWS for Friends groups. Peg sent an email summary of that meeting and others added email comments.

- 6- Annual Meeting
  - a. Peg met with Karina Branson of ConverSketch and showed Karina's sketch of their meeting. She is considering using her services to liven up the presentation.
  - b. There was discussion about how the Zoom will be organized— webinar vs. meeting. The planning committee will discuss it and bring a recommendation.
  - c. Ginessa will be the guest speaker and present about ancient native fishing ceremonies.
  - d. Peg summarized the nominating committee's work during the meeting, her written report is attached to these minutes.
- 7- Project Reports and Discussions
  - a. Visitor Contact
    - i. Bill had nothing to report.
  - b. Interpretive Media and Membership
    - i. Debbie M. reported that membership renewals are coming in this time of year.
  - c. Online Communications
    - i. Peg released a NewsBrief just before the meeting.
  - d. Inventory and Sales
    - i. Debbie J inventoried 264 shirts including the Atlas order.
    - ii. Debbie J cleaned all the merchandise out of Refuge headquarters at Andrew's request.
    - iii. The online store is live.
    - iv. Barbara got some prices on her new shirt, she will email them to the board.
    - v. Debbie M reported that the committee decided to let the software charge tax when appropriate but we will offer free shipping by adding \$5 to the shirt cost.
  - e. Kite Project
    - i. Debbie J. reported that there is no update.
  - f. Pepper Busting
    - i. Ed reported that Busting is running out of chemicals faster than peppers.
    - ii. The thrips were released but there is no report yet.
  - g. Trails
    - i. John T. reported that the river trail was damaged by a falling limb. Andrew is taking care of it.
  - h. Advocacy
    - i. John M. commented that we will continue to be part of the No Roads to Ruin coalition, and that the road issue is coming up in the next legislative session.
  - i. Vista
    - i. John M. asked some print shops about better options for the printed Bender report but they did not have any. He will make copies in a binder format and distribute them to stakeholders.
    - ii. There was discussion about the best way to post the report on the website. Debbie M will work on it.
- 8- Open Discussion
  - a. John T said he read that Senator Bradley is in favor of the M-Cores project.
  - b. There will be a meeting in February.

Adjourned at 11:05 am.

Nominating Committee Report  
January 2021

Committee Members: Greg Lang, Boyd Kimball, Peg Hall

The committee discussed and decided **to recommend** that the Bylaws specify that terms of board service begin and end with the date of the Annual Meeting.

*At the board meeting, this recommendation was discussed briefly and accepted by consensus.*

The committee discussed and decided **not to recommend** that all board directors and officers be elected two years, with a second vote that the president, president-elect, and immediate past president be elected to those specific terms for only one year.

*At the board meeting, this recommendation was discussed. The consensus was to put off a decision until next year.*

The following directors were elected for two-year terms at the 2020 Annual Meeting. Their terms continue until the annual meeting in 2022: Matt, Denise, Boyd, Ginessa, Travis, Barbara, and Margy. Because Margy had not been able to participate in any meetings this year, the committee contacted her. She told the committee that she preferred not to continue on the board for the coming year.

The following slate was presented for election this year:

Officers

Peg	President (until 2022)
Debbie M	President-elect (until 2022)
John M	Immediate Past President (until 2022)
Linda	Treasurer (until 2023)
Bill	Secretary (until 2023)

Directors – all these terms are until 2023

Ed  
Joe  
Debbie J  
Dan  
Paul Ramey  
John T

Paul is the only new director on the slate. He is the former director of marketing for the Florida Museum of Natural History and is an associate representative at Thrivent, a Fortune-500 financial services company.

*At the meeting, the slate was discussed and accepted by consensus.*