

Minutes
Board Meeting
Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges
Friday, November 22, 2013

Present:

Board Members: Jay Bushnell, John McPherson, Maria Sgambati, Peg Hall, Russ Hall, Greg Lang, Jerry Salamon, Roger McDaniel, Jane Connors.

Other Friends Members: Craig Grant, Sherry Beauchamp, David Meeks, Debbie Meeks, Mandy Davis, Bill Killborn, Bob McKinstry, Carol McKinstry, Mickie Dougherty, Russ McCallister, Leroy Harmon.

Refuge Staff: Pam Darty, Larry Woodward

1. The meeting was convened at 9:10 a.m. by Jay Bushnell, Chair.
 - A. Welcome to Suwannee by Jane Connors
 - B. Introduction of Attendees
2. Minutes from the October 30, 2013 meeting. **Motion** to accept: Jane Connors. **Second:** Russ Hall. Passed by a unanimous vote.
3. Treasurer's report. (Attached)

Presented by Jerry Salamon who emphasized that, unlike a corporate "budget" document, ours is intended for planning and visioning purposes. It is intended to authorize Friends members to propose and champion projects in these areas of priority interest. It is definitely not intended to constrain activities, but rather to encourage them. **Motion** to accept: Greg Lang. **Second:** Russ Hall. Passed by unanimous vote.

4. Nominating Committee Report. Jay reported on those who have agreed to consider positions, including Greg Lang, Debbie and David Meeks, Bill Killborn, Bob and Carol McKinstry, Maria Sgambati, John McPherson, Peg Hall, John Thalacker, Carmelo Echeveria, Marci Wilcox.
5. Refuge update

Pam Darty: Great Suwannee River Cleanup will be in Fowlers Bluff and possibly Camp Azalea on Saturday, December 7 from 10:00 to 1:00. The refuge will get the dumpster. Pam is recruiting high school and University participants, and sending publicity articles to the papers. Jay is recruiting boats.

Larry Woodward: Headquarters road paving is complete. The contractor caused a significant diesel spill which they will clean up. Roofing project and the pole barn project have been completed within budget by using in-house labor. A former bombing/research range on the refuge has been inspected and found to be safe. The inspection also led to collecting significant historical information on the area. There will be an Open House on Seahorse Key November 23. Deer hunting is now complete, except for a Family hunt from December 14-21 and a Hog Hunt on the first 3 weekends in January, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The Cooperator's Lunch with FWC, UF, Marine Lab, DEP, etc. will be on December 5, and there should be 100 people or so attending. Roger McDaniels is thanked for doing a great job on the Brazilian Pepper project. Refuge staff are working on how to deal with the sequestration budget cuts, with the effort being to work smarter rather than give up a lot. Staff is really coming together to do a good job, but ultimately the budget will be cut 60%. Report on what all staff are doing, including continuing education, etc. The new position for the larger complex has just been advertised and will be open for 6 days. This means that the SR/CK Refuges will be part of the larger complex stretching from Tallahassee to Tampa Bay, and will answer to the new person. This should not be a big change since SR/CK works closely with many of these anyway. The Education Program needs to focus on children developing an appreciation for nature and conservation.

Pam Darty passed out information on and described the new Salt Creek Trail. Discussion ensued about what needs to be done and how Friends can help. It was noted that there are special procedures for volunteers using equipment like bush hogs and mowers.

6. Initiative reports

- A. Kiosks in Suwannee: Jane Connors reported that there is an existing kiosk at the end of the Dixie Mainline, but it needs more information about the Mainline, including possibly some historical information. She would like to see a kiosk in the Town of Suwannee. The Suwannee Chamber is willing to help with \$500, and there is the possibility of using the back side of the County's display which has the same thing on both sides. Another suggested location is at the new seawall next to the bridge, with information about what can be seen out in the Gulf. It was noted that it really helps with cost to provide camera ready materials to the Refuge. Jay Bushnell suggested that it is better to have materials that can be easily changed and updated. The Board supported coming up with a plan and taking advantage of the funds available from Friends.
- B. Seahorse Key Field Trip: Jay Bushnell reported that it was fantastic and summarized what took place. It was a good group of people with good food and the educational opportunities were excellent. The Board agreed that it should be a regular event.

- C. Brazilian Pepper Project: Roger McDaniels reported that the crew works for 3 hours and how the work is done. There are many pepper plants at Lukens to that it will be a long-term project. More volunteers are needed, and people should report pepper trees around Cedar Key.
 - D. Vista: Jay Bushnell reported on what is being done including cleanup, artist visits, etc.
7. Communication Report: Peg Hall made an oral report and provided a written report which is attached. She reported that there has been an influx of new members, and discussed the statistics. She asked for suggestions as to what can be added to the website, etc. The Board commended Peg on what a great job she does on the websites—it takes a lot of time and effort to do such a good job.
 8. Inventory report. Jay Bushnell reported that he is trying to get new inventory.
 9. Budget Committee Report: Russ Hall passed out materials (attached). Greg Lang, Bob Hudson, Andrew Gude and Russ met and come up with the attached report. They decided to be more bold for 2014 with more expenditures. \$2,000 was added to Support Refuge category, and additional inventory is proposed to be purchased. Initiative budgets stay about the same. Peg Hall suggested increasing the education budget for Seahorse Key and children's projects. Jay Bushnell discussed the need for greater focus on children to get outside and appreciate nature. Greg Lang suggested the need to broaden the education initiative and add money.

Jerry reported that we got a very nice thank-you note from the Cedar Key Library for the Friends donation.

There was further discussion about the role of the budget, and that it's just a planning document rather than a constraint on our activities.

10. Membership Application: Jay Bushnell provided some background and said he tried to come up with a better application. There was some feedback that it was too long and so he made revisions and sent out a new draft. Jay asked for a discussion on what the membership form should be. Jane Connors suggested that the areas of interest tell new members what we do, and that she likes including that information. Peg Hall suggested that we just tell what we do on the form, but don't ask for information; instead use electronic means to convey and get information from membership. She noted that it is very time consuming to record the data, and then it's not very useful. Russ Hall suggested that we should tell what we do to encourage them to join, and not ask for information. He suggested putting Friends accomplishments on the reverse side. There was general Board support for this approach.

There was then a discussion of life member levels. Peg Hall reviewed the history of having multiple levels, with acknowledgment of people who give different amounts. Jay Bushnell stated that we can't change now because people are already in the categories. Roger McDaniel suggested that Friends acknowledge life members with some sort of gift: hat, T-shirt, etc.

There was then a discussion of the Code of Ethics which is mentioned on the application form. Jay Bushnell discussed the history of the Code. The possibility of putting the Code on the backside of the membership form was discussed, and that not everyone has access to computer to see the Code online. Peg Hall stated that she didn't want to have check-off that the applicant has read the code, and there was general agreement that it is not necessary to get individuals to sign the organizational code of ethics.

Jay and Maria will work on another revision to the membership form.

11. Suwannee River Cleanup: Jay Bushnell reiterated that it is on December 7th and that volunteers are needed.
12. Old business
 - A. Florida Master Naturalist: Jay Bushnell reported that he is working to make it happen, and that he and Russ Hall are working on a program.
 - B. Annual Meeting on February 22: Jerry Salamon will help Donna Bushnell with the silent auction. Roger McDaniel suggested the possibility of having it in Suwannee. Jane Conners will check on whether the Suwannee Community Center would be big enough, including where the silent auction could be held. The need for speakers was noted, as well as the need to ask Kenny McCain about food.
13. New business
 - A. Field trips: Russ Hall said that he is going off the Board, but would like to continue participating by providing natural history field trips relating to the Refuge, and create a data base of species as part of the project. The Board agreed that this is a good idea that it deserves Friends support.
 - B. National Environmental Education Foundation Program grant opportunity: Maria Sgambati reported that the deadline is December 18, and that it is a \$2,000 grant awarded in March and tailored to Friends groups. She asked if there were any ideas. The Board agreed that it should be looked into, and Donna, Jay, and Maria agreed to do so.

- C. Maria Sgambati reported that she will be doing a 2- to 3-week paddle on the Suwannee, and that she'll keep the Board apprised of the trip and her record of it.
- D. The next meeting was set for December 3 at 10 a.m.

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

Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWRs
Treasurer's Report
For the Period January 1 thru November 20, 2013

	Year to date
Cash Receipts	
Memberships	3777.86
Donations	2,841.00
Sales (includes \$75 in paddling panels)	968.00
Total cash receipts	7,586.86
Cash Disbursements	
support lower suwannee & cedar key nwrs	
Annual meeting	677.98
Communications	902.26
Butterfly garden plants	32.00
Festival fees	25.00
River walk signs	51.73
Friends of the Cedar Key Library	100.00
Paddling Project	367.82
sub-total	2,156.79
support refuge-initiated activities	
Barnett Trail Guides	18.00
Luncheon for volunteers	141.88
Interagency Cooperators Meeting	263.84
sub-total	423.72
support National Wildlife Refuge System	
NWR Association Membership	150.00
sub-total	150.00
administrative & fundraising support	
Purchase inventory	142.66
Florida Department of Revenue	71.83
Florida Department of State	61.25
sub-total	275.74
Total cash disbursements	3,006.25
Excess of receipts over disbursements	4,580.61
Cash Balance 12/31/2012	14,731.09
Cash Balance 11/20/2013	19,311.70
The cash balance consists of two components	
Operating fund	8,577.41
Long term reserve	10,734.29
Total	19,311.70
Note: Long term reserve at 12/31/2012	8,734.29
Budget committee recommended transfer	2,000.00
Long term reserve at 11/20/2013	10,734.29

Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Key NWRs
Actual Versus Budget
Through November 20, 2013

	actual thru 11/20	Annual Budget
Cash Receipts		
Memberships	3,777.86	2,500.00
Donations	2,841.00	2,500.00
Sales	968.00	1,000.00
Total cash receipts	<u>7,586.86</u>	<u>6,000.00</u>
Cash Disbursements		
	Actual thru 10/27	Annual Budget
support lower suwannee & cedar key nwrs		
Annual meeting (food, supplies, honorarium)	677.98	500.00
Communications	902.26	800.00
Great Suwannee River Cleanup		150.00
Butterfly garden	32.00	50.00
Festival fees	25.00	100.00
Other (River Walk Signs)	51.73	300.00
Friends of the Cedar Key Library	100.00	
2013 Initiatives		
Art		250.00
Dixie County Friends		250.00
Education		100.00
Paddling Project	367.82	1,500.00
FL Big Bend Science Symposium		500.00
Sub-total	<u>2,156.79</u>	<u>4,500.00</u>
support refuge-initiated activities		
Interagency Cooperators Meeting	263.84	500.00
Refuge summer program (2013)		250.00
Luncheon for volunteers	141.88	
2013 Initiatives		
Dixie County Refuge expansion		50.00
Nature Coast Conservancy		250.00
Inventories/survey Refuge Biodata		50.00
Shell Mound Enhancements		750.00
River Trail Accesibility		100.00
Refuge Restoration Projects		
Refuge Trail Guides (Barnett guides)	18.00	200.00
Vista Property Conservation Planning		1,000.00
sub-total	<u>423.72</u>	<u>3,150.00</u>
support national wildlife system		
NWR Association Membership	150.00	150.00
sub-total	<u>150.00</u>	<u>150.00</u>
administrative & fundraising support		
Purchase of inventory	142.66	
Florida Department of Revenue	71.83	100.00
Florida Department of State	61.25	100.00
sub-total	<u>275.74</u>	<u>200.00</u>
Total cash disbursements	<u>3,006.25</u>	<u>8,000.00</u>

**Communications Report
November 2013 by Peg Hall**

News Brief

November 6

Subject Line -- Where's Andrew?, Pepper Busting, Board Meeting & Event in Suwannee, Seahorse Key Workshop & Open House, Seafood Festival, BioBlitz, Advocacy

This News Brief went to 423 people, 153 of whom are current members. 13 people joined the list this month.

- **47% opened the email, including 90 of the current members. The same percent opened the October email.**
- **48 people clicked on the snake with egg photo taking them to our Friends website**
- **20 people clicked to the Friends website welcome to Maria and thanks to Mark**
- **10 clicked on the call for volunteers for the BioBlitz**
- **8 clicked to the Friends Facebook page about the baby flounder and snook**
- **8 clicked to the Education Initiative on Seahorse Key info**
- **5 clicked to Maria's website**
- **1 clicked to the FL Outdoor Recreation advocacy link**

Facebook

- **5 new fans since last report = 178**
- **3 new posts since the last report**
 - **36 people saw the post about the baby flounder and baby snook, 1 commented, 2 'liked'.**
 - **90 people saw the post about the News Brief, 2 commented, 5 'liked'.**
 - **113 people saw the post about the Friends Education Initiative adventure on Seahorse Key, 4 'liked'.**

Friends Website

I have now added the Minutes for all meetings back to March of 2008. I do not have any earlier minutes. They are on the tab "Minutes of Meetings." We are being transparent! Sarbanes and Oxley would be proud of us.

I have added 4 new posts since mid-October, including many photos from the Science Camp for Grownups last week.

- **Pageviews in October = 2,063**
- **Pageviews in September = 1,841**

Paddling Website

- **Pageviews in October = 1,897**
- **Pageviews in September = 691 (partial month on new site)**

Cash Receipts:	Actual-10/27	Budgeted	2014 Proposed	Comments
Memberships	\$3,678	\$2,500	\$3,000	
Donations	\$2,851	\$2,500	\$2,500	
Sales	\$968	\$1,000	\$1,500	
Total Projected cash receipts	\$7,497	\$6,000	\$7,000	
Cash Disbursements:	Actual-10/27	Budgeted	2014 Proposed	Comments
Support Lower Suwannee & Cedar Key NWR's				
Annual meeting (food, supplies, honorarium)	\$678	\$500	\$675	
Communications	\$902	\$800	\$1,200	Includes cost of Ibis
Great Suwannee River Cleanup		\$150	\$150	
Butterfly garden	\$32	\$50	\$200	
Festival fees	\$25	\$100	\$100	
Other	\$52	\$300	\$500	Includes River Walk signage, Nature Walk guides
Friends of the Cedar Key Library	\$100		\$100	
Outreach			\$500	
Kiosk Relocation			\$500	
Refuge Restoration Projects			\$50	
sub-total for support of NWR's	\$1,789	\$1,900	\$3,975	
2014 Initiatives				
Art		\$250	\$250	
Dixie County Enhancement		\$250	\$250	
Education		\$100	\$100	
Padding Project	\$368	\$1,500	\$1,500	Includes \$1,000 for printing panels
FL Big Bend Science Symposium		\$500	\$0	
Dixie County Refuge expansion		\$50	\$200	
Nature Coast Conservancy Gateway Signage		\$250	\$1,000	
Inventories/survey Refuge Biodata		\$50	\$50	
Shell Mound Enhancements		\$750	\$750	
River Trail Accessibility		\$100	\$100	
Refuge Trail Guides (Barnett guides)	\$18	\$200	\$200	

Vista Property Conservation Planning		\$1,000	\$1,000		
sub-total for 2014 Initiatives	\$386	\$5,000	\$5,400		
Support Refuge-Initiated Activities					
Interagency Cooperators Meeting	\$264	\$500	\$500		
Refuge summer program (2013)		\$250	\$250		
Luncheon for volunteers	\$142		\$150		
sub-total for Refuge-Initiated Activities	\$406	\$750	\$900		
Administrative & fundraising support					
NWR Association Membership	\$150	\$150	\$150		
Purchase of Inventory	\$143		\$2,000		includes redesign of Tee shirts, hats, etc, for sale at event
Florida Department of Revenue	\$72	\$100	\$100		
Florida Department of State	\$61	\$100	\$100		
sub-total for Administration & Fundraising Suppo	\$426	\$350	\$2,350		
Total Cash Disbursements	\$3,006	\$8,000	\$12,625		