

**Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges
November 2022 Board Meeting
11/15/2022**

Members Present: Jeri Treat, Bill Dummitt, Denise Feiber, Debbie Meeks, Peg Hall, Boyd Kimball, Linda Kimball, Linda Kimball, John McPherson, Ginessa Mahar, Ed DeHaan, Debbie Jordan, Barbara Woodmansee, Paul Ramey

Representing the Refuge: Andrew Gude, John Stark

The meeting was called to order at 10 AM CST by President Debbie Meeks. The agenda and minutes of the previous meeting were accepted by voice vote.

Treasurer's Report (Linda Kimball): The full report is on Dropbox. There was \$3382.85 in checking, not including \$140 in memberships that recently came in.

Refuge Report: Andrew Gude:

Andrew attended a Longleaf Pine workshop. Dan Frisk also attended. Our program is on the right track.

Hunts: Muzzle loader has ended, general gun season opens through Thanksgiving. There is a lot of interest in hunts this year. Many hunters and potential hunters lack good internet access and struggle to get their permit which has to be done online. Andrew wrote how-to instructions with screenshots and posted them on the Friends website.

Sterling is on medical leave for knee surgery.

Andrew will give a talk to the Florida Native Plant Society tomorrow night (11/16) in Gainesville. At the end of the month Andrew and Ann Kamzelski will give a talk to Cedar Key Audubon.

Road work and filling holes continues. The Pond 4 road work was completed.

There was a civil right data call on accessibility. Not sure if this resulted from a complaint. Birddog boats handicapped event was canceled at least temporarily.

John Stark was contacted by Russ Hall re iNaturalist. The app can be set up to go directly to the F&W database. Also working on Junior Ranger program.

Vista Report- John McPherson: The issue with architecture and engineering previously report is still unresolved. The state grant we received allows a maximum of \$5000 whereas our low bid is approximately \$13000. The low bidder reduced their bid by \$4500 but that still leaves Friends on the hook for about \$9000. Andrew will investigate whether Fish and Wildlife can help. John reported we can ask for another extension. Peg asked if an architect is required or if a less expensive engineer could be used. John said because it is historic an architect is required by the state grant and by FWS as well. Belinda Nettles prefers to have the issue resolved by the end of the month.

There was a short discussion of allowing photographers to access the Vista property before any restoration work is done in order to capture the current state of the property before any work begins.

Frank Offerle is half finished photo-documenting the property by himself. A photo event organized by Debbie Jordan will be held on Dec 9.

The regular Cooperator's Luncheon will not be held this year. Andrew wants to narrow the scope to groups who do significant cooperation.

Nominating committee: It is time to form a committee to nominate officers for the coming year. Normally it is formed of the outgoing president, president-elect, and one member who is not on the board. Ginessa suggested asking Becky LaFountain, who served last year, if she knows any non-board members who might do it. We will brush up our new board member orientation after the annual meeting.

A Budget committee is also needed for the annual financial review. Linda will organize a Zoom meeting.

Merchandising: (Boyd Kimball): The Luna and Trees shirts will be on sale for the holidays. Butterfly shirts will go to REI. Sale of note cards using images that were donated by members is being considered. Gift cards were considered but there were too many complications. In honor cards will be offered instead. If a donation is made in the name of someone else we will send a nice card.

Visitor Contact Trailer: A group visited the Friends of Paynes Prairie trailer at the LeChua trail. Bill Dummitt gave a short update on progress so far on buying our own trailer. Cost is currently estimated at around \$13k. There was a discussion of how many extras such as wiring, generator, heat, AC, etc. were needed. For purposes of applying for a grant the group agreed to be for a fully loaded trailer. Friends of PP bought their trailer used. That is also an option for us, although modifying it to fit our needs might cost as much as a new trailer.

There was a discussion of a walk/training session for Shell Mound volunteer guides with Ken Sassemann. No firm date is known but the group is interested. The UF archaeology club may be interested. Ginessa will organize something after the holidays.

Junior Ranger Program (Debbie Meeks): Hope to be ready by spring.

Peg Hall is interested in organizing a solstice event on Dec 21.

The third section of the Policies and Procedures manual was discussed. Peg Hall moved, Bill Dummitt seconded to accept the manual as presented. Motion passed on voice vote.

There was a short discussion of Guidestar. Peg Hall achieved Gold status.

The membership form now includes "in honor of" and "in memory of" options.

Suwannee the kite #2 has made it to Brazil. Suwannee 1 is thought to be there as well. Debbie Jordan floated the idea of a trip to Brazil in 2024 to visit the kites, her company can get access to the private land.

Barbara Woodmansee reported that butterfly surveys are continuing as planned. She is still getting help with every survey. Nectar sources are down because of the season and storms.