

Minutes
Board Meeting
Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges
Friday, January 3, 2014

Present:

Board Members: Jay Bushnell, John McPherson, Ed DeHann, John Thalacker, Maria Sgambati, Peg Hall, Russ Hall, Greg Lang, Jerry Salamon, Roger McDaniel, Bob Hudson, Richard Herman.

Other Friends Members: Bob and Carol McKinstry, Donna Thalacker.

Refuge Staff: Pam Darty, Larry Woodward.

1. The meeting was convened at 10.04 a.m. by Jay Bushnell, Chair.
2. Minutes from Nov. 22 meeting. Change: Budget was approved, with discussion about whether the Board has a policy prohibiting budgeting more than annual receipts. Consensus that this is not workable because have reserves that need to be spent. Russ will look into the policy and get back at the next meeting. **Motion** to approve with change: Greg Lang. **Second:** Jerry Salamon. Passed by unanimous vote.
3. Treasurer's report. Jerry discussed his report (attached), especially comparison of 2012 and 2013 revenues. There was discussion about what happened to receipts from the 2013 art festival. There was no deposit during that period. **Motion** to approve: Richard Herman. **Second:** John Thalacker. Passed by unanimous vote.

[**Note:** Immediately subsequent to the meeting the Treasurer determined that the deposit of the receipts had in fact been made, but had been designated as "memberships" by mistake.]

4. Financial review committee: Bob Hudson and Jay Bushnell volunteered to meet with Jerry Salamon as the Financial Review Committee.
5. Nominating Committee update.

A. Slate:

Officers: Bob Hudson-president; Greg Lang-president elect; John McPherson -secretary. It was noted that we do not yet have a nominee for treasurer.

Renewal directors: Carmelo Echevarria, John Thalacker, Richard Herman and Peg Hall.

New directors: Maria Sgambati, Bill Kilborn, Sherry Beauchamp, Debbie Meeks, Marci Wilcox, and Bob McKinstry. Alan Pither is considering the possibility.

It was agreed that there should be a short description of each nominee in the materials provided for the annual meeting.

6. Refuge update. Larry Woodward gave the following update:
 - A. Open House: Open Houses at Seahorse Key were held on November 23 and December 28. Larry thanked Maria and Jenn for all their help on the open houses, which have all gone really well with their help. At the open houses Larry gives a Refuge lecture, and then Maria, Jenn and students take over for the tour. There have been good turnouts. Larry is not sure how many should be held next year—maybe just 4 or 5 during key times. Maria reported that Jenn is really doing a lot of work, and that she (Maria) has been hired by UF to help.
 - B. Complex Issue: Waiting to see what is going to happen with the 7 refuges combined into one complex. Position of director has been advertised and should be hearing soon. Larry is not sure how the budgeting will be done, but thinks we will be able to keep a separate budget. Not clear where the Director will be located. What the Friends group can do: Voice to complex Director and advocate to focus attention on our Refuge. Each Refuge will still have a manager, but will answer to Complex director.
 - C. Conservation Easement: Andrew continues to work on this project. Upper level people have been taken on tours with good excitement about the prospects.
 - D. Budget: Reduction this year 7.5%.
 - E. Hunts: Family went well and hog going on now.
 - F. Atsena Otie: More improvements have been made.
7. Initiative updates
 - A. Education
 1. Donna's family paddle on Crystal River with the manatees scheduled for January 25.
 2. National Environmental Education Foundation grant application. Maria reported that the application for \$2,000 grant was submitted, with the purpose being to bring 3 classes of 5th graders to Seahorse Key. Will learn about grant in March. If awarded it could be a springboard to bringing

more students out to Seahorse Key. Need to promote more students from Levy County getting out to Seahorse. Jay: Should just budget money for this purpose even if don't get the grant. Russ: Friends should be included in grant proposals as in-kind or other support. Maria: Should consider whether Levy County could have an environmental learning center.

- B. Pepper busting. Roger reported that have been continuing with this project and the next is next Friday at 9 a.m. at Lukens Tract. Refuge staff have been very helpful. A lot of work has been done on SR 24 and Lukens. Need to send a report to the agency that provided the money.
- C. Art 'behind the gates'. Jay reported that he is trying to set up a time for going to Vista, or a Plan B, out on the River. Wednesday the 15th is scheduled for going behind the gates in the truck.
- D. Field trip proposal for 2014. Russ stated that he is offering to take the lead after he leaves the Board, with the goal being to compile a list of species within the Refuge. He is working on how to get the data collected and available, and would like volunteers. Maria offered to help. Larry: suggested coordinating with the burning regime: what does the burning regime do to rare plants, etc.

Jay: Should consider bringing back once per month field trip, with different leaders. Have been doing walks before the Board meeting, but now Board meetings are not on the same day every month. Now a bigger focus on library events. Weekends would be better for families. Paddles, nature walk, bird walks, bicycle trips. Donna Thalacker has volunteered for bird walks and will to keep doing that. If have set board meetings then can make that the monthly time for the hike.

- 8. Communication report. Peg: No written report for this meeting, due to focus on membership materials. Since last meeting: 3 email news briefs were sent out with 183, 160, 201 openings. Facebook posts: In last month 4,416 have seen Facebook posts. Peg would like others to post; now all being done by Peg and Bob. For example: Roger about pepper busting. Maria and Peg have spent last couple of days working on the website. Would like input from Board members.
- 9. Inventory report. Jay reported that the inventory of goods to sell needs to be replenished, and that he has been working in particular on T-shirts and what our options are. He stated that we need to have a meeting of the inventory committee. Bob Hudson noted that our most popular shirts have been the better quality multi-colored shirt with animals by Jim Wilson. It was agreed that Donna and Peg will re-order jewelry, and that Roger and Jay will take the lead on the shirt issues.

10. Annual Meeting. February 22 at the Refuge. Jack Davis who is working on the history of the Gulf of Mexico will be the speaker. Kenny McCain will do the cooking. Trying to figure out a way to get people to sign up before or have self registration so that all Board members can be at the meeting. Silent auction issue: same problem, Board members need to be at the meeting. Only have 4 items so far; need items. Roger will test the PA system before the meeting.
11. Old business

John Thalacker reported that Molly Jubitz is doing a good job of recruiting speakers. Thursday evenings at 5 p.m. and 10:30 on Saturday mornings.
12. New business
 - A. Paypal for membership. Discussion about whether it would be good to give members the option. **Motion** by Richard to try for a year. **Second** by Maria. Passed by majority vote of the members.
 - B. Ibis: Jay needs commitment that members will provide material for it. Members offered to provide items.
 - C. River Trail: John T.: Staff have made good improvements. John T will be working on adding rock to make it more handicapped accessible.
 - D. February Board Meeting: Friday February 7, 10 a.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWRs
Comparative Annual Reports (Corrected)
For the years ended on 12/31/

| | 2013 | 2012 |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Cash Receipts | | |
| Memberships | \$3,523.86 | \$3,802.06 |
| Donations | 2,887.00 | 1,950.00 |
| Sales | 1,216.00 | 2,512.00 |
| Total cash receipts | 7,626.86 | 8,264.06 |
| Cash Disbursements | | |
| support lower suwannee & cedar key nwrs | | |
| Annual meeting | 677.98 | 591.09 |
| Communications | 902.26 | 622.05 |
| Butterfly garden plants | 32.00 | 19.13 |
| Festival fees | 25.00 | |
| River walk signs | 51.73 | 40.31 |
| Friends of the Cedar Key Library | 100.00 | |
| Paddling Project | 367.82 | 140.05 |
| Dixie County Lunch | 344.00 | |
| sub-total | 2,500.79 | 1,412.63 |
| support refuge-initiated activities | | |
| Refuge summer programs (2011/2012) | | 178.72 |
| Barnett Trail Guides | 18.00 | |
| Luncheon for volunteers | 141.88 | |
| Interagency Cooperators Meeting | 263.84 | |
| sub-total | 423.72 | 178.72 |
| support National Wildlife Refuge System | | |
| NWR Association Membership | 150.00 | |
| sub-total | 150.00 | |
| administrative & fundraising support | | |
| Purchase inventory | 142.66 | 2,278.55 |
| Florida Department of Revenue | 71.83 | 131.11 |
| Florida Department of State | 61.25 | 61.25 |
| sub-total | 275.74 | 2,470.91 |
| Total cash disbursements | 3,350.25 | 4,062.26 |
| | | |
| Excess of receipts over disbursements | 4,276.61 | 4,201.80 |
| Cash Balance beginning of year | 14,731.09 | 10,529.29 |
| Cash Balance end of year | 19,007.70 | 14,731.09 |
| The cash balance consists of two components | | |
| Operating fund | 8,273.41 | 5,996.80 |
| Long term reserve | 10,734.29 | 8,734.29 |
| Total | 19,007.70 | 14,731.09 |

Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Key NWRs
Actual Versus Budget (Corrected)
Through December 31, 2013

| | actual thru 12/31 | Annual Budget |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Cash Receipts | | |
| Memberships | 3,523.86 | 2,500.00 |
| Donations | 2,887.00 | 2,500.00 |
| Sales | 1,216.00 | 1,000.00 |
| Total cash receipts | <u>7,626.86</u> | <u>6,000.00</u> |
| | | |
| Cash Disbursements | | |
| | Actual thru 12/31 | 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 | 344.00 | 250.00 |
| Education | | 100.00 |
| Paddling Project | 367.82 | 1,500.00 |
| FL Big Bend Science Symposium | | 500.00 |
| Sub-total | <u>2,500.79</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>3,350.25</u> | <u>8,000.00</u> |