

**Minutes  
Board Meeting  
Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges  
Friday, June 28, 2013**

**Board Members Present:** Jay Bushnell, John McPherson, Carmelo Echeveria, Bob Hudson, Peg Hall, Russ Hall, Jane Connors.

**Attending by phone:** John Thalacker.

**Staff:** Andrew Gude.

1. The meeting was convened at 10:06 a.m. by Jay Bushnell, Chair.

2. Minutes from the April 16, 2013 meeting.

**Motion** to accept: Bob Hudson. **Second:** Russ Hall. Passed by unanimous vote.

3. Treasurer's report and related items.

A financial report prepared by Jerry Salamon was presented and is attached. **Motion** to accept: Peg Hall. **Second:** Carmelo Echeveria. Passed by unanimous vote.

A. A discussion ensued on investing long term funds in an interest bearing account. Jay suggested putting \$10,000 in a long-term fund to make some interest. Bob checked about CDs and found these rates: Drummond Bank at .5%, with the best being Ally Bank at .9% for one year. Bob noted that Drummond would be simpler, and there is no penalty for a nonprofit to withdraw early if the funds are needed to run the operation as opposed to just getting better interest rate. Jay suggested that Drummond might be willing to match whatever interest rate can be found. Russ suggested that a savings account can now have the same or better interest rate as a CD. Peg opined that it would be best to use the local Drummond Bank for a variety of reasons. Jay agree that he would talk to Drummond and bring back information to the next meeting.

B. The Board considered the following possible purchases:

Audio System: After discussion, Bob agreed to talk to Jim about what should be bought and report back at next meeting.

Projector: After discussion it was agreed that for now the Friends would use the Refuge's projector which Andrew said would be available.

Laminator: After discussion it was decided that there is no need at this time.

- C. Carmelo raised the issues of inventory, restocking, and pricing. He said there needs to be an agreement on what is needed, and it was agreed that Carmelo, Peg, and Roger will meet when Roger gets back. Bob suggested that this be done by the time of the paddle and seafood festivals. Carmelo suggested that there needs to be an inventory of everything that Friends owns, e.g., computer, laminator, file cabinet.
- D. Jay raised the issue of making the \$100 donation to the Cedar Key Friends of Library for refreshments. He said he will check with Jay about this.
- E. Jay raised the issue of making a contribution to National Friends Association, and noted that such a donation has been budgeted. **Motion** to make the donation: Bob Hudson. **Second:** Peg Hall. Passed by unanimous vote.

4. Membership report.

Jay noted that the Board needs to be thinking about new board members and officers.

Bob asked whether it was time to appoint a nominating committee. It was noted that Jay, as President, is responsible for appointing the committee. Jay said he would get back to the Board on this. Carmelo suggested that we should formally invite persons to the Board Meetings to see where there is interest. Jay asked the Board members to think about new board members and bring ideas back at the next meeting.

5. Review of Special project initiatives

- A. Paddle Initiative: There was a discussion about Mark's continued role in this project and how Friends will keep it going.
- B. Bob provided an update, attached, and summarized the projects; Andrew provided updates from a refuge prospective.

Dixie County Expansion: Andrew explained that he had put together a vision for RESTORE, Dixie, Caber, etc, and is getting attention from higher-ups in Fish and Wildlife. It will be necessary to go through the procedures for expanding a Refuge, and will be working with the big timber companies between Suwannee and St. Marks. He will be pitching it as conservation area for economic development: sustainable economies to preserve culture and economy. Also, possible panther habitat.

Education: With regard to the overnight stay on Seahorse Key, a discussion ensued on how to decide who gets to go. Bob said he was not comfortable limiting it to Friends Board. Russ said it was a good way to get others involved rather than preaching to the choir. Jay said he wanted to allow Board members to get first crack, and John Thalacker agreed.

Florida's Nature Coast Conservancy: Andrew reported that good maps were provided to FNCC showing the Section 29 property, and that the Refuge was ready to move ahead with an uplands-only management plan.

Paddling: Andrew reported that the refuge is going to authorize festival use of Seahorse Key.

Refuge Restoration: Andrew reported that the grant was denied, but that he is looking at other options for restoration with volunteers.

6. Communications

- A. Peg submitted a written communications report which is attached. She noted that there was a lot of reaction to the spoonbill photos, with discussion about the expansion of the spoonbill nesting range. She explained that there is good "cross pollination" amongst the online offerings, but that looks at Facebook were dropping off, probably because of lack of new posts.
- B. Jay reported that he did most of the work on the most recent Ibis, and that he needs summaries of the initiatives from the champions, and generally more contributions. Jane said that the Ibis goes quickly when put out at Suwannee. Peg said a revision and update of membership forms was needed, and that there are some outdated forms floating around.

7. Refuge update

Andrew addressed the following issues:

He is working to make the Refuge website a more comprehensive location for information. He wants it to be very detailed; one-stop shopping for all going on in the Refuge.

He is working on how to adjust to the 20% budget cut, and is working with the Region to figure what the strategy should be. He noted that the Refuge can't upgrade current facilities while also providing all the public services. Peg suggested the need to clearly identify what can't be done after the 20% cut, and that people need to be informed of what effect the cut will have.

8. Things to consider

- A. Thank you notes to life members

Peg reported that Marci sends a thank-you note to life members, to keep them connected, when everyone else gets a renewal notice. Also sends thank-you notes for special contributions.

- B. September Coastal Cleanup. The date is Saturday, September 21. It was noted that Friends has not participated as a group, but that individual members have participated.
  - C. Friends booth Town of Suwannee July 6<sup>th</sup>. Jane asked that Friends do the usual festival booth, and will provide more information to Jay.
  - D. Florida Master Naturalist. Jay stated that he will continue to work on this.
9. Old business
- John McPherson reported on the Hidden Coast Paddling Festival.
10. The next Board meeting was set for August 23rd.
11. The meeting was adjourned.

Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWRs  
Treasurer's Report  
For the Period January 1 thru June 26, 2013

	<b>Year to date</b>
<b>Cash Receipts</b>	
Memberships	3590.93
Donations	2,685.00
Sales (includes \$75 in paddling panels )	473.00
Total cash receipts	6,748.93
<b>Cash Disbursements</b>	
<b>support lower suwannee &amp; cedar key nwr</b>	
Annual meeting	677.98
Communications	581.18
Butterfly garden plants	32.00
Festival fees	25.00
River walk signs	51.73
sub-total	1,367.89
<b>support refuge-initiated activities</b>	
Barnett Trail Guides	18.00
Luncheon for volunteers	141.88
Interagency Cooperators Meeting	263.84
sub-total	423.72
<b>administrative &amp; fundraising support</b>	
Purchase inventory	142.66
Florida Department of Revenue	69.87
Florida Department of State	61.25
sub-total	273.78
Total cash disbursements	2,065.39
Excess of receipts over disbursements	4,683.54
Cash Balance 12/31/2012	14,731.09
Cash Balance 6/26/2013	19,414.63
The cash balance consists of two components	
Operating fund	8,680.34
Long term reserve	10,734.29
Total	19,414.63
Note: Long term reserve at 12/31/2012	8,734.29
Budget committee recommended transfer	2,000.00

Long term reserve at 6/26/2013

10,734.29

Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Key NWRs  
Actual Versus Budget  
Through June 26, 2013

	<b>2013 actual</b>	<b>Annual Budget</b>
<b>Cash Receipts</b>		
Memberships	3,590.93	2,500.00
Donations	2,685.00	2,500.00
Sales	473.00	1,000.00
Total cash receipts	<u>6,748.93</u>	<u>6,000.00</u>

**Cash Disbursements****support lower suwannee & cedar key nwrs**

Annual meeting (food, supplies, honorarium)	677.98	500.00
Communications	581.18	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

**2013 Initiatives**

Art		250.00
Dixie County Friends		250.00
Education		100.00
Paddling Project		1,500.00
FL Big Bend Science Symposium		500.00
Sub-total	1,367.89	4,500.00

**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	423.72	3,150.00

**support national wildlife system**

NWR Association Membership		150.00
sub-total		150.00

**administrative & fundraising support**

Purchase of inventory	142.66	
Florida Department of Revenue	69.87	100.00
Florida Department of State	61.25	100.00
sub-total	273.78	200.00
Total cash disbursements	2,065.39	8,000.00



### Friends of the Refuges – 2013 Initiatives Update – June 28

<b>Initiative &amp; Champions( Friends/Refuge)</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Art</b> - Ann Kamzelski, Ed, Mark/Pam, Andrew	The purpose is to showcase the diversity and beauty of the Refuges. 18 individuals have been invited to prepare artistic representations of the Refuges in any media, which will be exhibited at the CK Arts Center next March.
<b>Dixie County Enhancements-</b> Jane/Pam, Larry	
<b>Dixie County Refuge Expansion-</b> Greg, Jane, Carol West/Andrew	
<b>Education Enhancements-</b> Donna B./Pam, Kenny (CK)	
<b>Nature Coast Conservancy Cedar Key Marshes-</b> Jerry, John M./Andrew	
<b>Paddling Project-</b> Mark, Jane/Andrew, Larry	Jennifer reports that SKML is available for field trips.
<b>Refuge Restoration-</b> Roger/Daniel, Kenny	
<b>River Trail Enhancements-</b> John T./Kenny	
<b>Science-Florida's Big Bend Science Symposia-</b> Russ/Andrew	Probably will not take place in 2013.
<b>Science-Refuge Biota-</b> Russ, Jennifer/Larry, Daniel, Vic	Jennifer reports: Working on funding for a citizen science program in partnership with the Refuge. Planning to offer FL Master Nat Programs at SKML- not qualifying programs but extra field trips. Friends Group trip to SKML being planned. Planning to do a BioBlitz of the SKML in the winter which will need volunteers.
<b>Shell Mound Visitor Enhancements-</b> Ron, Ken Sassaman/Larry, Pam, Andrew	
<b>Trail Guides Initiative-</b> Donna T./Pam, Andrew	
<b>Vista Property Conservation Planning-</b>	

Kirby/Andrew	
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## Communications Report June 2013 by Peg Hall

### News Brief

1. We have sent 1 News Brief since the last Board meeting on April 16.  
June 22 Subject line read: [Spoonbills Roosting, YCCers, Prescribed Burns, Seahorse Key Open House, More](#)
  - It went to 406 readers (the same number as the previous News Brief)
  - As of June 24, it has been opened by 41% (49 % opened the previous one in 10 days)
  - Of those who opened it, 54% (90) are Members and 46% (77) are non-members
  - 13 clicked through to Friends website
  - 9 clicked through to the Membership and Board lists
  - 9 clicked through to Hidden Coastlines magazine
2. The June News Brief was forwarded by 1 reader and generated 3 new unsolicited subscribers. No one un-subscribed this month. Two addresses bounced:
  - Paul and Laurie Dietrich [epauldietrich@hughes.net](mailto:epauldietrich@hughes.net) (2013 members)
  - Florian and Iris Jublin [florianandirisj@windstream.net](mailto:florianandirisj@windstream.net) (not yet members)

### Facebook

- 2 new fans since last report = 162
- 2 new posts since the last report

### Friends Website

- In the last month:
  - 2 new posts on the Friends website, 1 by Peg and 1 by Donna T
  - Peg updated the Membership and Board lists, added the Bylaws changes and the April Ibis
- Pageviews in May = 1,532 (Apparently, it helps to post new content regularly.)
- Pageviews in April = 2,818

### Paddling Website

- Pageviews in May = 347
- Pageviews in April = 396