

MINUTES
Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges
Regular Board Meeting
Monday August 27, 2012 10:00 a.m.

Attending by conference call: Ed DeHaan, John Thalacker.

Attending in person: Peg Hall, Russ Hall, Bob Hudson, Carmelo Echevarria, John McPherson, Mark Gluckman.

Refuge Staff: Andrew Gude, Pam Darty, Larry Woodward.

Approval Items:

1. Minutes from July 2, 2012, Board Meeting.

A motion was made to approve; seconded; passed by a unanimous vote.

2. Next meeting date.

It was agreed by consent that the next meeting would be held on Monday, October 15, 2012.

Discussion and Decision Items:

1. Vision and Planning.

Andrew Gude and Peg led the discussion regarding issues set forth in Attachments 1 and 2 hereto. Andrew stated that the refuges ought to preserve and maintain wildlife and habitat for this region AND simultaneously enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of the surrounding communities. To do this, he is building partnerships with land owners and water managers throughout the region to assure that the conservation perspective is articulated and that private and public decision makers know there is a strong constituency for it. He also is talking to land owners who might like to add some of their lands to the conservation management program of the refuges. Friends responses were enthusiastic.

2. Mandated Committees.

Peg led the discussion based on the recommendations in Attachment 3 hereto. The following committee memberships were approved:

Financial Review Committee

Bob Hudson, Richard Herman, Carmelo Echevarria, (Jerry Salamon, ex officio)

Budget Committee

Russ Hall, Ed DeHaan, John Thalacker, (Jerry Salamon, ex officio)

Nominating Committee

Bob Hudson, Jay Bushnell, Roger McDaniels, Greg Lang

3. Managing Our Future

Peg led the discussion of the issues raised on Attachment 4 hereto.

4. Hidden Coast Paddling Festival

Mark Gluckman provided a report on the upcoming Hidden Coast Paddling Festival to be held in the Town of Suwannee. After discussion, a motion was made and seconded to sponsor the Saturday morning breakfast by providing up to \$300 to cover costs. Motion passed unanimously.

Mark and Peg discussed further Friends involvement and urged Friends members to volunteer assist with the Festival events.

Informational Items:

1. Refuge Update.

Provided by Andrew, Larry, and Pam.

2. Treasurer's Report.

Provided by Jerry. Attachment 5 hereto.

3. Communications Report.

Provided by Peg. Attachment 6 hereto.

4. Ibis and Kiosk.

Jay reported that he would get an Ibis out in September and asked for contributions. He also reported that the Kiosk project was moving ahead and showed a template for review.

5. Membership Report.

None provided due to board member absences.

Old Business:

Research Symposium.

Russ reported that further thought was needed on this. Andrew agreed to work with Russ on this.

New Business:

Marci requested that she be relieved of duties as vice president due to health reasons. The Board agreed.

Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Approved by the Board at a regular meeting on the _____ day of _____, 2012.

Peg Hall, President

VISION INTERSECTIONS AND CONNECTIONS FOR THE LS/CK NWRs FRIENDS GROUP

Inside the Boundary

1. Hunt check stations
2. Citizen science: surveys w/ refuge staff but also with outside researchers
3. Outreach: education, conservation art, interpretation, school involvement
4. Paddling and paddling trails
5. Bird watchers self-guided refuge tour – brochure/map
6. Forestry/botany self-guided tour– brochure/map
7. Building awareness and support: strategic approach to inviting key individuals to tour the refuges.

Outside the Boundary

Of all the refuges in Florida, the SE US, and even the larger US, LS has the unparalleled opportunity to expand inland and north to address climate change and future development impacts and build a true, large landscape-ecosystem conservation series of connections via working landscapes.

1. Grow the Refuges: increasing the managed acreage of the LS/CK NWRs through a strategic approach.
 - a. Public outreach
 - b. Elected representative outreach
 - c. NGO and key stakeholders outreach
2. Support Local Communities, Cultures, Lifestyles, and Economies
 - a. Foster and maintain existing roles, but develop new roles and events related to existing ones.
 - b. Explore and develop new opportunities for the refuges that we currently have not considered.

Background for Discussion of Vision and Planning

Refuges Mission Statement

The Mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

1. What is the highest potential for conservation and management of fish, wildlife, and plants for the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys NWRs? **(Andrew)**
2. What would make it inevitable that our Refuges could reach their highest potential? **(Andrew)**
3. What are we (Friends), could we, would we like to be doing to help the Refuges move toward that highest potential future? **(All of us)**

Background for Discussion of Committees Mandated to Meet in the Fall

Financial Review Committee (as described in the bylaws)

There shall be an annual financial review and report as required by State and Federal agencies, and at each change of Treasurer. A Financial Review Committee of three shall be selected by the Board to help conduct the review. The Review shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Adequacy of internal controls
- Accuracy of the financial records and reports to the board of directors
- Proper accounting for membership dues
- Proper authorization of expenditures
- Ascertaining that any taxes and corporate reports are properly filed in a timely manner.

Suggested members for 2012: Bob Hudson, Richard Herman, Carmelo Echevarria, (Jerry Salamon, ex officio)

Budget Committee (established by the Board at its November 18, 2009 meeting)

The President will appoint a Budget Committee of three board members to prepare a draft budget for review and approval by the Board of Directors annually. The budget for the coming fiscal year (calendar year) will be presented to the Board at their last meeting of the current year.

Suggested members for 2012: Russ Hall, Ed DeHaan, John Thalacker, (Jerry Salamon, ex officio)

Nominating Committee (as described in the bylaws)

The President will appoint, and the Board will approve, a Nominating Committee composed of two current Board members and one non-Board member. The Nominating Committee shall be constituted no later than September of each year, and shall present a slate of Officers and Directors to the Board no later than November. The Slate shall be published for the general membership no later than January of the next year. The Nominating Committee shall present its slate to the annual meeting.

Suggested members for 2012: Marci Wilcox, Jay Bushnell, Roger McDaniels

Background for the Discussion of Managing Our Future

1. Friends has been an active and productive organization in recent years.
 - Enthusiastic participation at the Annual Meeting, programs, lectures, nature walks, group paddles
 - Outreach to our communities on behalf of the Refuges through our presence at festivals and events, on the web, in social media, and through our email newsletter, as well as in regional and national activities such as the Outdoorsman of the Year competition and the Friends Academy
 - Recognition in local, regional, and national venues that our Refuges and our Friends group are a force for conservation and wise management of our assets for long-term regional economic and quality of life benefits.
2. To continue this success and move toward helping the Refuges achieve the most they can, we are managing a lot of events and thinking about more. As we begin to recruit members for the Board, I believe it will be good to know which of us wants to take on which of the activities and responsibilities already on our docket, or if there are some we should forego.
3. The Nominating Committee, in recruiting new and returning members, could have them specify the activities they would choose to chair, from among those in need of leaders.
4. Before the Nominating Committee could do that, it would be good to review what those of us currently on the Board are doing and whether any of us would prefer to take on some of those activities that the new members might otherwise be offered.
5. I had proposed at the last meeting that the vice president, president, and past president positions might be changed so, instead of each serving a two-year term and there being no progression from the vice presidency to the presidency, they would each serve a one-year term and progress from one position to the next. The vice president would serve for one year in that role and then automatically move up to become president and then after one year move to being past president. My idea is that the Friends would have a three-year commitment from each member of this presidential cluster, but the heavier responsibility for the presidency would be carried for a shorter time thereby making it more attractive to potential candidates. I still like the idea and want to leave it on the table for consideration and discussion if it appeals to some of you also.

The list shows what Friends has been doing as an organization in recent years. The table shows ongoing commitments for leadership of the activities. Last year we each took on many additional activities and covered all of the items on the list. What does each of us want to take on for this year?

- Budget Committee
- Financial Review Committee
- Nominating Committee
- Membership
- Annual Meeting
 - ✓ Silent Auction
- Paddling Project
- Inventory
- Communications (would benefit from being divided into two or more committees)
 - ✓ Facebook page, Friends website, News Briefs (email)---these are best managed by the same person because of the overlap information
 - ✓ Press announcements for events
 - ✓ *Ibis*
 - ✓ Paddling website
- Lectures and Programs
- Kiosk renovation
- Nature Walks and Trails
- Refuge volunteer needs -- ie Gopher Tortoise Survey and the Replanting Project
- Great Suwannee River Clean-Up
- Advocacy
- Festivals

Board Members	Chair or Co-Chair	Current Committee Member
Kirby Alexander	Membership	
Jay Bushnell, past president	Kiosk, River Cleanup, <i>Ibis</i> , Advocacy	
Ed DeHaan		
Sean Dowie		
Carmelo Echevarria	Inventory	
Mark Gluckman	Paddling	Advocacy
Peg Hall, <i>president</i>	Communications	Paddling
Russ Hall	Paddling	
Richard Herman	River Cleanup	
Bob Hudson		
John McPherson, <i>secretary</i>		
Jerry Salamon, <i>treasurer</i>		
John Thalacker	Nature Walks and Trails	
Marci Wilcox, <i>vice president</i>	Membership	

Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWRs
Treasurer's Report
For the Period January 1 thru July 31, 2012

	Year to date
Cash Receipts	
Memberships	3,518.60
Donations	1,919.00
Sales (includes paddling panel sales \$291)	1,862.00
Total cash receipts	<u>7,299.60</u>
 Cash Disbursements	
support lower suwannee & cedar key nwrs	
Communications	340.83
Annual meeting (food, supplies, honorarium)	591.09
Butterfly garden	19.13
River trail identification	40.31
Paddling panel mailing cost	9.51
sub-total	<u>1,000.87</u>
 support refuge-initiated activities	
Refuge summer program (2011)	78.72
sub-total	<u>78.72</u>
 administrative & fundraising support	
Florida Department of Revenue	188.43
Purchase of inventory	2,278.55
sub-total	<u>2,466.98</u>
 Total cash disbursements	 <u>3,546.57</u>
 Excess of receipts over disbursements	 3,753.03
 Cash Balance beginning of period	 <u>10,529.29</u>
 Cash Balance 6/30	 <u>14,282.32</u>
 The cash balance consists of two components	
Operating fund	5,548.03
Long term reserve	8,734.29
Total	<u>14,282.32</u>

Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Key NWRs
 Actual Versus Budget
 7 month results versus Annual Budget

	2012 actual thru 7/31	Annual Budget
Cash Receipts		
Memberships	3,518.60	2,000.00
Donations	1,919.00	2,000.00
Sales (\$291 in paddling panel sales)	1,862.00	1,000.00
Total cash receipts	7,299.60	5,000.00
 Cash Disbursements		
support lower suwannee & cedar key nwrs		
<i>Allocated Items</i>		
Communications	340.83	800.00
Annual meeting (food, supplies, honorarium)	591.09	500.00
Butterfly garden	19.13	50.00
River trail identification	40.31	100.00
Other Allocated items		400.00
<i>Unallocated items</i>		
Paddling panel postage	9.51	1,700.00
sub-total	1,000.87	3,550.00
 support refuge-initiated activities		
<i>Allocated Items</i>		
Refuge summer program (2011)	78.72	200.00
Other allocated items		400.00
<i>Unallocated items</i>		
sub-total	78.72	1,100.00
 support national wildlife system		
<i>Allocated</i> (NWR Association Membership)		150.00
sub-total		150.00
 administrative & fundraising support		
<i>Allocated Items</i>		
Florida Department of Revenue	188.43	200.00
Purchase of inventory	2,278.55	1,800.00
sub-total	2,466.98	2,000.00
Total cash disbursements	3,546.57	6,800.00

**Communications Committee Report
August 2012**

News Brief

July 2012 News Brief			News Brief to Paddlers in July		
Sent to	360	Life Members----29 Current Members----110 Former Members----56 Non-Members----165	Sent to	108	Life Members----10 Current Members----32 Former Members----7 Non-Members----58
Open rate	49%	Life Members---34% Current Members----65% Former Members----39% Non-Members----33%	Open rate	44%	Life Members----60% Current Members----62% Former Members----29% Non-Members----44%
Unsolicited new subscribers since our last report = 10					
Our average open rate = 41% Average non-profit open rate = 20%					

Facebook

New Fans since last report = 5
Fans as of August 22 = 144

Press Release Sent

Group Paddle and Picnic in Town of Suwannee

Friends Website

Pageviews in July = 977
Pageviews in May = 947

Paddling Website

Pageviews in July = 403
Pageviews in May = 229