

Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges
Board Meeting Minutes Wednesday, October 17, 2018

Board Members present: Bill Dummitt, Margy VanLandingham, John McPherson, Debbie Meeks, Russ Hall, Bob Lewis, John Thalacker (on phone), Debbie Jordan (on phone)

Guests: Jay Bushnell

Refuge staff: Andrew Gude

Refuge report- Andrew Gude:

Larry is at a feral hog control meeting.

Hurricane Michael took another foot off Seahorse Key.

Andrew is hoping hurricane funds will be available for road repairs.

All part-time Law Enforcement officers (dual purpose) in FWS, including Larry Woodward, will lose their badge and gun as of January 1.

Andrew has no guidance regarding what is expected without law enforcement on the refuge. Should he close hunts? There would probably be a public backlash, but there are obvious problems with having an extensive hunting program without enforcement.

There was a short discussion of where to put gopher tortoise signs.

There is money in the Land and Water conservation fund- could it be used for LE? Not known for sure.

Andrew proposed, with a mixture of seriousness and levity, that LE officers at northern refuges be encouraged to come south for the winter.

Another proposed change is that LE officers will no longer answer to refuge managers but to a centralized LE department.

Vista: Belinda has finished her dissertation and will be working full-time on her report. The grant application discussed at last month's meeting is pending. Belinda is talking to architects who might do a survey.

Communications- Debbie Meeks-The kiosk at the River Trail is badly in need of cleanup.

Treasurer's Report-John McPherson- There was no financial report available from Faye, for the second month in a row. A discussion followed about the treasurer's job and how hard it is to transfer responsibility to a new treasurer.

Advocacy- Jay Bushnell discussed a new John Muir biography and another book entitled Serengeti Rules.

November meeting date: Since the third Wednesday of November this year is the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, the group voted to move the monthly meeting to the 14th.

Merchandising-there was a discussion of hats, our logo, the alternative logo drafted by Debbie Meeks, and the difficulties of embroidering a complex logo on hats. Andrew noted that they type of hat provided by Larry to desk volunteers and pepper busters is not proprietary and could be sold by Friends. (Blue goose emblem and refuge name). This also applies to the Columbia shirts that Larry provides for the volunteers. No decision was made by the board. Margy VanLandingham moved to form a merchandising committee. The motion was seconded and passed. Initially, the committee members are Margy, Bill Dummitt, and Jay Bushnell. Preparations for a booth at Seafood Festival were also discussed.

Gift and Donor Recognition Policy- a draft prepared by the committee formed last summer was circulated before the meeting. Because of the short notice, discussion was tabled until the November meeting.

Board calendar- Margy emphasized the importance of a comprehensive calendar to avoid conflict between our activities and those of other groups.

Utilization of Linda Tyson's student projects- Various ways of displaying these projects was discussed. No official board action was taken.

New Business- Bob Lewis would like for the group to have an Earth Day event at the refuge again in April 2019. Ideas about possible speakers were discussed. No official board action was taken.