

Friends of LSNWR Board Meeting

Members Present : Bob Lewis, Debbie Meeks, John Thalacker, Margy Van Landingham, , Kit Lane, Bill Dummitt, Miriam Wiley, Libby Cagle, John McPherson, Mackenzie Russell; Dan Kline and Debbie Jordan on call

Refuge and FWS Staff: Andrew Gude, Jason Coates, Dan Frisk, Rick Kanaski (FWS archaeologist)

Guests: Belinda Gates

Meeting began at 10:00 AM

Report of activities by Refuge staff was given by Andrew. Major portion of the report was by Rick Kanaski, regional archeologist, regarding:

- a. Sea Horse Key and work with U of F regarding maintenance /etc
- b. Documentation of wood mill ruins and possible shell midden at Atsina Otie
- c. Vista tract – future use of grounds and buildings were briefly assessed with his recommendation that parking be off site except for a handicap space and one for volunteer/staff working at the visitor center in order to maintain the pastoral nature of the property.

Recommended as a first step that an Archeology Historian be retained to make a formal Condition Needs Assessment. This would determine:

- a. Status of all buildings and structures on the site,
- b. Costs to bring into compliance for each
- c. Prioritize the work to be done
- d. Develop a long and short term maintenance plan. The plan might include recommendations for some buildings to be stabilized and then “mothballed” to later date or rehabed.

Pertinent comments included: Mr. Kanasky felt the houseboat was probably beyond repair. It should be photographed and documented, but restoration may not be feasible. Even though we don't have immediate plans to list the site on the National Register of Historic Places, because the buildings are historic and on federal property, any changes must still maintain their historic character.

Dan Frisk spoke of ongoing discussion with U of F regarding uses of Seahorse Key property. The proposed yoga retreat has been canceled.

Meeting agenda and minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Bob Lewis gave an update on the Earth Day program to be presented at the refuge on April 20. Three speakers (Mackenzie Russell, Hannah Healey, and Jon Quarterman) will discuss conservation topics. About 77 fifth graders from Dixie county are scheduled to attend.

Committee Reports (not otherwise covered)

- a. Visitor contacts – the formal scheduling of volunteers will end at the end of April. Some volunteers may continue over the summer.
- b. Pepper Busting – In Roger's absence, John Thalacker reported the last scheduled event will be next Tues.
- c. Communication – Per JohnThalacker, the Cedar Key Drummond bank indicated \$200 support for re-printing of the Dennis Creek Trail brochure. Refuge staff has asked the regional office for approval of

this funding source. Since Friends are the entity producing the brochure and not the Fed. Government it is hoped it will be approved.

- d. Advocacy – Jay reported that there has been a grant received from the Conservation Fund. Friends had supported this grant request and provided river cleanup efforts as our “in kind” match.; he recommended the book:Florida Climate for review; suggested that the Friends get involved in the planting of milkweed (he will get with the regional expert on this topic to see what would be involved); suggested that metal signs be purchased to note areas used by Gopher Tortoises. (Bill will speak with Andrew on this issue). John made the point that we should be careful about taking on new initiatives that extend more than the time that most of our membership are in the area to support so as not to overburden Friends who are here year around.

Bill reported on leadership issues for next year. At the last meeting it appeared that several key positions would remain empty for the near future, but several members have stepped forward in the interim.

- a. Financial – Mackenzie reported that finances will be “paperless” in the future. Signatures for access to the Friends account will need to be completed leach year as leadership changes.
- b. Miriam will handle Facebook updates
- c. Kit – will coordinate volunteers to assist at desk in the fall when the program is re-activated.
- d. Peg and Russ will transition News Brief to Bob
- e. Anne Lindgren will help with Neon (membership)
- f. Bill will handle merchandise until a new volunteer is found

No new business.

Meeting adjourned at 1200

John Thalacker

(one time acting Secretary) for Ed DeHaan