

Present: Roger McDaniels- Libby Cagle- John McPherson. - Kit Lane - Jay Bushnell - Dan Kline - Joe Hand - Margy Van Landingham - Debbie Meeks— From Refuge: Andrew Gude — on phone John Thalacker and Debbie Jordan

Friends of the Lower Suwannee and Cedar Keys Wildlife Refuges
May 15, 2019 10am Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

1-Approved: ***previous minutes.***

2-Treasurer Report: ***Provided by email from Linda Kimball, not discussed because some had not received.***

3- Refuge Report: ***Ken Meyer from ACRI and his crew toured the Refuge with Larry Woodward and Daniel Barrand to better plan burns that will benefit swallow tailed kites with minimal disturbance to their owl predators. Would Friends be interested in sponsoring a chipped bird to study its migration and feeding paths? Debbie Jordan offered to champion that and will contact Ken (meyer@acrinst.org 352 514 5606) to learn how we can help and will lead a fundraiser if necessary.***

Vic Doig performed a flight line count. The numbers were not available but are up especially for the white ibis and roseate spoonbills. Vic is doing UAV imaging to get aerial view of the nests.

Shell Mound board walk is complete but in the fall some cleanup along the side by volunteers would be good. The new “you are here” panels have been ordered and should arrive anytime.

A \$50K grant with the Florida Historical Society and the CK Historical Society has purchased a new lens and repairs to the Seahorse Key Light Station. There will be an official lighting on 5 July at 9 pm. July 6 will be an open house and Friends will try to have a presence with some historical and barrier island ecology info.

A regular user of the Refuge proffered a complaint, to both Rep Dunn and Yoho and then all the way up the Refuge chain of command to the secretary, saying he did not feel safe after seeing ATVs and hearing gun shots in areas he was used to fishing. Evidently this was the way to get things done. A contingent of LE from Appalachia has been detailed to the Refuges and are working to provide a safe environment to the public. They are here for the long haul. It was either guarantee public safety or close the Refuge. This led to a comment by Andrew that his phone number (703 622 3896) can and should be made available to the public. He will respond to any comments, concerns, complaints, etc. It might be good to invite the person who complained to one of the board meetings. Andrew will ask if he is interested.

The Refuge is looking for a partner to help with providing information regarding Shell Mound access and thinks the City of Cedar Key would be perfect since they refer folks. This could be another opportunity for visitor contact.

4-Vista - **John McPherson recommended that we terminate the contract with Belinda Nettles for non-performance. She is over a year past the due date for the final report and no workable draft has been submitted. John has met, called, and otherwise corresponded but feels that we will never get the report. He does think that she will be willing to provide us with the info she has gathered. John also feels sure that we will receive a grant that Belinda applied for. The grant will provide and architectural assessment of the buildings that will include structural efficacy and suitability for our purposes. A motion to terminate was made by Margy, seconded by Kit, and passed the board.**

5 -Visitor contact - **Kit Lane - There were about 51 visitors in April who came to the desk. Many of the seasonal volunteers have gone north but we will continue to staff the desk as much as possible with the remaining volunteers throughout the summer.**

6 -Interpretive media - **Debbie Meeks - Shell Mound panels should be here anytime. Debbie will work on story boards for open house events at Seahorse Key.**

7 -Inventory and Sales - Bill Dummitt - **No report - Bill not available**

8 -Advocacy- Jay Bushnell - **Florida Legislature session is over. Bills on Governor's desk awaiting signature include SB 7068 which will build toll roads through the backbone of all that is left of rural Florida. This will not only change the character and way of life for the residents it will also do irreparable damage to the environment. John Thalacker made a motion for the board to write a letter requesting this bill be vetoed but it did not garner a second and therefore did not move forward. Another bill of interest is SB 7013 and takes control away from local governments regarding development. It is time to write, call, or email the Governor.**

9 - Events - Bob Lewis -

Kayak Initiative - **Dr. Paul King may be a good person for this since he already offers tours to the islands. John McPherson knows him and will contact.**

Suwannee Boat Tours- **After discussion on what Andrew sees as the proper use for the boat, we set up a test run for 8:00 am on 17 July before the scheduled board meeting. Until others are certified, a staff member will have to accompany any boat trip so advance planning is required. All use of the boat will have to be related to the Refuge.**

10- By-law review - John McPherson - **There was time at the end of the meeting to work on the by-laws. John will provide another updated version before the next meeting. In the meantime everyone should review carefully and recommend or comment accordingly.**

11- Open Discussion - **Refuge staff has spread wildflower seeds in several areas hoping to attract butterflies. Some weeding of the existing plot was done.**

Adjourned at noon

Prepared by Libby Cagle