

## **Friends of the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge Board Meeting Minutes July 12, 2008**

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge ("FLR") was held on Saturday, July 12, 2008 at the Administration Offices of the Refuge. In attendance were the following directors: Jay Brenner, Joan Davis, Steve Horowitz, John Marshall, Julie Muolo, Cynthia Plockelman, Jean Poleshuck, Mitch Rosenheim, Sid Rotter, and Elinor Williams. Also in attendance was David Underwood, Visitor Services and Public Use Team Leader of the Refuge.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 9:05 a.m.

Reading of minutes - motion to waive the reading of the minutes from June was seconded and unanimously passed.

Jay Brenner reported that letters to Les Nelinson sons regarding donation of paver in Les' name; he received note from one son regarding holding a memorial service at the Refuge. He gave it to David Underwood to see if it's allowed.

There was a brief discussion on getting someone to run the photo contest. Steve said he would work on finding someone to do it and Elinor offered to send email to members.

Next, Jean Poleshuck reported the following financials: \$52,128; regular checking \$23,756 includes CD that became due last week and transferred to checking account; CD \$25,171 comes due in about a week; exhibit account \$3,277.

There was a discussion on the move into new Visitors Center: need lots of volunteers - one to welcome, one to run store - especially when season starts; some volunteers are seasonal and up north right now; it's possible to get 2 volunteers for each session - if no one shows up then Dave and other Refuge staff manage info booth, etc. Visitors Center is now open every day of the week instead of being closed on Mon. and Tues.

Next Joan reported the following: new deal with US sugar and 187,000 acres; lawsuit by Miccosukee regarding cessation of building of reservoir halted because NRDC filed lawsuit to clarify some points - not trying to stop it but SFWM stopped building reservoir; many projects on hold; what to do now that sugar is gone - ecotourism suggested; WRAC is a commission which Joan is a member of- reports come to them for discussion and/or change before they go to the SFWMD. John reported that it's not based on science - Miccosukee - hard to understand - reservoir purpose is to store dirty water and give back to farmers but with possibility of swapping land would not be needed; Florida Crystals may be ready to cooperate with land swap; people living in area - governor, rural economic development initiative - no outside involvement other than government should have other people/agencies involved.

Cynthia Plockelman reported on the Everglades Coalition: Florida Bay - algae blooms, lack of adequate water quality; resolution passed to support and pressure district and federal government to do what they've committed to doing. There was a brief discussion regarding how to include membership in this information. There is no official position from Friends. Elinor should relay info to membership on advocacy positions; EC voted on this and Friends is a member of this coalition.

Jean mentioned that we should send thank you letters to The Marshall Foundation regarding planting; she received a DVD "An Unwelcome Intrusion" regarding stunt planes flying over Refuge - should send letter to him to thank him for interest. Elinor said she would watch the DVD and talk to Lantana airport to start awareness of issue. Jean also mentioned that she reapplied to the State for FLR's status as a non profit organization and updated director list on application form.

Steve Horowitz reported on insurance. We must have liability insurance on the store. He received quotes ranging from \$900 - \$1500 per year; trying to get more comprehensive policy; prior had 300,000 liability - need more comprehensive that covers fire, theft, liability, loss of theft of money, etc. He's looking into it and thinks may have about \$900 annual fee - but nothing concrete yet to present to board. We currently have a contract with Refuge requiring a minimum of \$250,000 liability but company writes minimum of \$300,000 - is that enough? Visitors and volunteers are covered under Refuge but not when in store because we have exclusive contract with Refuge that holds them harmless. Mitch stated that \$300,000 is more than adequate for our purpose. We cannot get a combined Directors & Officers and liability insurance policy.

Next there was a discussion regarding the \$20,000 donation for video. It was specifically set aside to make the video but now the Bachelor Foundation has contributed \$100,000 money for video and wants recognition for it. There was discussion regarding where FLR's donation goes now - other exhibits; determine what exhibits are left, consult with Nancy Marshall and come back to board with specific recommendation at next meeting. Nancy to make recommendations to present to board at next meeting to vote on where to donate the \$20,000.

Nancy Marshall gave an update on exhibits and NWRA. The exhibit fundraising has had phenomenal results, thanked everyone for commissioners to governor regarding the \$300,000 from State - Richard Macheck; \$390,000 from USFW; highest level \$790,000, mid level \$75,000, including \$20,000 from ASE and Friends, \$30,000 from Marshall foundation members; lower level about \$2295; have sold 42 bricks - keep encouraging brick sales!; benches 25 have been reserved and should be installed before opening; a lot can be done with extra donations; waiting to hear from Janes Trust regarding grant under ASE; \$15,000 from Amex; money left possibly be put into a reserve by the USFW to maintain the exhibits - annual maintenance - consult with new refuge manager to determine what amount of annual maintenance is and contribute to maintenance fund with recognition; put into endowment - interest would pay operations/maintenance; pay stipend to volunteer to be expert on displays.

Next there was discussion regarding dialogue to go into video - sound bites from Refuge but not from FLR, ASE or Marshall Foundation - and maybe good idea have some from children about what they found at the Refuge; Steve recommended to Rolf recognition of Friends and Marshall Foundation as supporters and thought given as to who actual narrator would be and suggested notable guest (Janet Reno, Carl Hiaasen, etc.)

Jean reported there was \$49,000 total reserve for Friends (bank account); already donated to refuge \$15,000 - 17,000 to be used for things they cannot pay for themselves; stores sales slow \$21,000 so far; consider the \$20,000 for exhibits - \$8500 and \$11,500 or take out \$20,000 from \$49,000? It was agreed to discuss after receive suggestions from Nancy.

Nancy also reported that the National Wildlife Refuge Association ("NWRA") appreciates that FLR is a member; as store revenue increases hoping to contribute more to NWRA; Everglades Coalition 2010 - be host organization for Jan 7 - 10, 2010 working with City of WPB; may be opportunity to host Florida Friends Group Meeting as well. Grand opening of Visitors Center - David and Josette working on budget, rough estimate \$10,000 - 15,000 to put on two day event - VIP reception day before and next day open to general public - not just a FLR expense, needs to be shared with other organizations - look for corporate sponsors.

David Underwood reported on the plans for the grand opening of the new Visitors Center. It's going to be a

once in a life time event for the Refuge and an opportunity to make this a showcase for Palm Beach County and our chance to shine and to thank the donors and the general public to spread the word; tours being offered on Ipod, etc. to get people in here. He's not sure of the exact date - maybe Oct. or Nov. but will be a Fri. And Sat. event - Fri. VIP catered event, music, goodie bag with gifts, photographer, may need valet parking, show new movie to be central theme of event; Sat. - one main speaker with ribbon cutting ceremony, color guard, local school groups singing national anthem, etc. The next planning meeting is July 21st at 2:00; family volunteer day, free programs (canoe rides, trail walks) release into the refuge, local news channel doing weather, etc. out here, sheet cakes

Commitment from FLR not known yet; major expense is catering.

Fri - 150 people invited (approx) - major donors, local politicians, Friends board, ASE, Marshall Foundation

Next, Elinor Williams reported on the 2009 calendar. She received a quote of \$4,500 from Mega Color - need to get ads for \$250 each; Elinor willing to put on her credit card and get reimbursed and willing to consider it a donation if can't get back in donations; need to lock in price ASAP. Upon motion duly made, seconded, and with a vote of two against and eight for, a motion to commit to the \$4,500 for printing of 2009 calendar to present for sale and outreach for Refuge was approved.

Next John recognized The Marshall Foundation's summer interns for their work at the Refuge's gardens, pavers, weeding, etc. There's a second project - an assignment by Bob Graham, develop top 10 list for federal candidates to look at and top 10 list of science gaps for State of Florida; made comments to governing board.

There being no further matters to come before the Board of Directors, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:45.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be held on August 23, 2008 at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Julie Muolo, Secretary