

**Friends of Arthur R Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**December 20, 2008**

**Attendees:** Jay Brenner, Cynthia Plockelman, Jean Poleshuck, Mitch Rosenheim, Joan Davis, Judy Colvard, Steve Horowitz, Elinor Williams, Tom Poulson, Herb Teitler, John Marshall

**Invited guest:** Kim Edoff

The meeting opened at 9:00 am. Jay asked for a motion to waive the reading of the minutes from the November 22, 2008 meeting. Jean moved to waive the reading and approve the minutes. Mitch seconded the motion. The minutes for the November 22, 2008 meeting were unanimously approved.

**Correspondence:** Jay read a letter from Evan Hirsche thanking the Friends for the donation of \$1,500 that was presented at the River of Grass Gala.

**Treasurer's Report:** Jean indicated that the store sales are low due to the economy as well as volunteer hour shortages. We had high expenses over the last 2 months from store improvements as well as the donation to the National Wildlife Refuge Association. Our response to the calendar letter was well received as we received over \$1,200 in donations. For the period October 1 – December 19, our net loss is \$5,735. The regular checking account balance is \$13,608, the Bank of America CD balance is \$25,228, and the exhibits account balance is \$3,200.

**New Board members:** Prospective new board member Kim Edoff was welcomed and Steve Horowitz proposed adding another new member, Lance Warley, to the Board. The current Board membership allows for the addition of 3 more members to a 3 year term. Jean moved to accept Kim Edoff and Lance Warley as temporary board members until the Friends Annual Meeting Election on January 18, 2009. Mitch seconded the motion. The motion to approve 2 temporary board members was unanimously approved.

Elinor will add board members' biographies to the website as soon as Board members can submit them.

**Report on the Refuge Manager:** Steve recently attended a refuge staff meeting and was impressed with the staff and what is going on at the Refuge. He thanked several staff members for their contributions to the Refuge. Steve indicated that there is a volunteer training occurring the same day as the annual Friends' membership meeting and that we might be able to coordinate the timing of this training to allow all interested parties the opportunity to attend all events on January 18. The need for greater communication between the Friends and Refuge staff is critical for Friends involvement in the volunteer training seminars. Judy, the Friends new Volunteer Coordinator, will coordinate with Refuge staff to get any communications issues resolved.

**River of Grass Gala:** John reported on the recent Gala and indicated that it was great to have the Friends at the event. It was a very well run and organized event and thanks was given to John and Nancy for inviting the Friends Board members.

**2010 Everglades Conference:** The Marshall Foundation is hosting an Everglades Conference

with an emphasis on the Refuge System (past years have more emphasized the National Parks) in January 8-10, 2010 and the Friends Board agreed that it would be a good idea for us to host all Florida Friends groups for a meeting possibly the Thursday before the conference start date. Judy agreed to co-chair this initiative and begin investigating this proposal.

**2009 National Friends Conference:** Discussion centered on who from the Friends would be attending this year. Anyone is allowed to attend the conference however, the payment for 2 Friends members to attend is provided by the Fish and Wildlife Service annually. The Board stressed the need to send Judy and Steve this year as Judy is a new Board member and can benefit tremendously from the conference and Steve will be assuming a more senior leadership role in the Friends next year. The Board unanimously approved to send Judy and Steve to the 2009 conference to represent the Friends.

**Annual Elections:** Jay indicated that the Board needed to nominate the 5 members (2 new members and 3 up for election) to present at the annual meeting in January, 2009. The 5 members who will be presented for nomination will be:

Ruth Levow  
Jay Brenner  
Sid Rotter  
Lance Warley  
Kim Edoff

all to be elected for a 3 year term through 2012.

Discussion occurred about electing new officers after the annual meeting and reinstating the use of the executive committee which includes a subset of the Board. The Executive Committee is comprised of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and 2 other Board members at large. The Executive Committee will carry out the day-to-day operations of the Friends group. Cynthia moved to elect officers at the next Board meeting on January 24, 2009. Joan seconded the motion.

**Advocacy Committee:** John and Cynthia indicated that there was a need to add this committee on to the Board agenda regularly and that they would like to expand the size of this committee. The mission is to inform the members on what is going on in the community concerning the Refuge, and recommend appropriate action that will ensure the Refuge's well being.

**Annual Friends Meeting:** Joan indicated there was a need for a committee to decide what we will serve at the Annual Meeting. Cynthia and Kim agreed to join and work with Joan to resolve this and plan appropriately for January 18. Jay discussed what the agenda for the Annual Meeting should look like: President's report, Refuge Manager report, Nominations, Treasurer's report, and Committee Reports. Jay will send his agenda for this meeting to the Board for review and additions. A suggestion was made to use the map with the threats to the Refuge over the last few years. The Annual Meeting needs to be staffed adequately. We will be checking with the staff to see who will be staying to the end. Discussion occurred around what Sylvia's report should be:

- Does she have good news from the incoming administration?
- What are the existing or new threats to the Refuge System?
- What is her vision and what can the Friends group do to help her in her new administration?

**Computer System:** Herb discussed the need for a new computer system to interface with the store cashier system and handle all inventories and accounting. The current set-up needs more

memory and Windows XP. At this time, it doesn't seem economical to upgrade the system as it is obsolete. Herb moved to buy a laptop, downgrade it to XP, make it networkable – onsite (access the programs remotely through the internet), make it wireless, and add a new printer. The motion was seconded by Mitch. The motion to purchase a new computer and printer was unanimously approved. Herb will use his card to purchase and then get reimbursed. The Friends will be applying for a credit card to facilitate these types of purchases in the future.

**2009 Calendar:** Mitch urged the Board to start the new calendar process in January as it was a tremendous success this year. Please add this to the agenda for the January meeting.

**Insurance:** Steve reported that we have 2 new insurance policies – \$1 million policy for the store and \$1 million policy for directors and officer's liability – all at a lower cost than we were previously paying.

**Publicity:** Steve indicated that we are now in the 2009 Palm Beach County Visitor's Guide which will potentially reach 100,000 people. John indicated that next year, we should try to ensure that the legal name "Arthur R Marshall" is used in all publicity guides.

**Photo Contest:** Steve reported that the photo contest is underway and to encourage all your friends to enter.

**Store:** Steve reported that the glass display case is on order and is due to arrive in January. We need Friends volunteers to help us.

**Everglades Day:** Steve indicated that the Day has been moved up this year to the 1st Saturday in February. Jay, Ruth, and Cynthia attend the Everglades Day meetings. With the exception of last year, the Friends have had a shelter. Cynthia will try to find out who pays for the shelter. We should have a display there as we always have had. Discussion occurred around the request to fund a Friends display shelter. The Friends is a paid sponsor along with 2 or 3 others and in the past, we have had a welcoming station that is logistically close to the store to replenish sales inventory as needed. The Board decided that Steve will talk to Serena about spacing issues for a shelter. Cynthia indicated that we may have to consider other options if we don't have the funding for a tent/shelter.

**Exhibits:** Steve reported that the Exhibits are not coming soon. The Florida Legislature has a \$300,000 grant that they will release to us for exhibits after we spend \$300,000 of our \$500,000. However the exhibit contractor, Greg Morrow, will not begin the exhibit manufacturing unless we give them the full \$800,000. It takes 6 months to complete the assembly after Greg Morrow begins. The Board discussed how to resolve this issue. Several questions arose such as

- Is there a time limit on the Florida Legislature grant?
- When is the cut-off date for these funds – 9/30/09?

Steve will draft a letter now to the Legislature addressing this issue and all Board members were encouraged to contact their representatives in both Broward and Palm Beach County now to ensure this funding is available to the Refuge.

**Final notes:** John advised the Friends to sell bricks at Everglades Day. Herb reported that the Department of the Interior updated their regulations to reflect state laws authorizing the possession of concealed firearms, while leaving unchanged the existing regulatory provisions that ensure visitor safety and resource protection such as the prohibitions on poaching and limitations

on hunting and target practice.

John moved to adjourn the meeting. Judy seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 am. The next Board meeting is January 24, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Edoff