

Present: Joan Davis, Becky Garcia, Harvey Eisen, Stephen Horowitz, Jeff Kramer, Kay Larche, David L. Lurie, John Marshall, Max Wald, Elinor Williams

Absent: Judy Colvard, Brian Hopper, Cynthia Plockelman, Tom Poulson, Bill Ross, Pauline Stacey

President Horowitz called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM. A quorum was present. Max Wald was introduced as an observer prior to his election to the BOD at the Annual Meeting.

December Minutes previously circulated via Email were unanimously approved upon motion by David L. Lurie with a second by Harvey Eisen.

President Horowitz announced that Brian Hopper has volunteered on weekends his experience to the Refuge as an arborist. Rolf is pleased to have professionally pruned trees.

Treasurer David L. Lurie distributed his report for filing. Elinor Williams discussed the P & L and Balance sheet she previously had Emailed to members.

Harvey Eisen distributed the store accounting. The 2011 sales exceeded those in 2010, and the December, 2011 sales were \$747.00 more than December, 2010. Harvey strongly suggested that Visitors to the Refuge should be encouraged to view the film in the auditorium. This would take them past the Gift Shop where all items are domestic, mostly from Florida. Harvey had samples of the attractive Everglades Day Tee Shirt which will sell for \$10.95. On Everyglades Day volunteers will wear shirts provided by Fish and Wildlife.

The 27th Annual EvCo Conference was held on Hutchinson Island from Jan. 5-Jan 8th. On this subject, President Horowitz emphasized and clearly stated that whatever position Friends take at such a meeting must be in compliance with and fully in support of Sylvia and the government's positions. Pauline Stacey, the Friends EvCo representative is to clear science matters with Tom Poulson and with President Horowitz for Refuge conformity.

In attendance at this EvCo Conference were President Stephen Horowitz and Pauline Stacey representing the Friends, while representing other groups were John Marshall, Cynthia Plockelman, and Dr. Tom Poulson. A bare-bones account from Pauline Stacey re: Conference follows: (Refer to the EvCo's Website for details.)

"All-in all, feedback has been that the conference was well planned, smooth, and very productive. Topics were relevant and interesting.

Special Speakers: Governor Rick Scott; Senator Bill Nelson; Lisa Jackson, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Nancy Sutley, Chair, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works; Carl Hiaasen, Bestselling Author and Miami Herald Contributor; Dr. JoAnn Burkholder, Center for Applied Aquatic Ecology, NC State University; Col. Alfred Pantano, ACE; Rachel Jacobson, U.S. Department of the Interior, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

AWARD WINNERS: George M. Barley, Conservationist of the Year Award: E.Tom Rumburger

James D. Webb Award: Sec. Jo-Ellen Darcy & Estus Whitfield

John V. Kabler Award: Drew Martin

Friends questioned an advertisement indicating that Friends was a Saw Grass Roots Sponsor. Friends did not sponsor this year's conference.

A 2013 conference announcement, to be hosted by the Everglades Foundation, was made with a "save-the-date" sticker attached to the Attendance List: January 10-13, 2013, Biltmore Hotel, Coral Gables, FL.

Anyone wishing an attendance list or program (limited supply) contact Pauline Stacey.

New Memberships approved: 1)Snook and Gamefish Foundation, 2)Florida Conservation Alliance. Total membership of EvCo now 56.

The previously discussed Hall of Fame Award was voted on one year advanced and approved E. Thom Rumberger , future Hall of Fame Recipient for 2013.

New Resolutions Passed: 1)Resolution Supporting Central Everglades Planning Project; 2)Resolution Urging Suspension of Consideration of Bird Drive Recharge Area Land Surplus Until Ecological Value and Assessed and Protected; 3)Resolution of Support for the Proposed Greater Everglades Partnership Initiative

Changes were made to the By-Laws in Article VI: Decision Making. Language was added to reflect “decision making under specific circumstances” which included acceptance of conference sponsorship or donation and consideration of inductions into the Hall of Fame shall only take place at a quarterly meeting.”

Following are notes from JAM and PRESIDENT HOROWITZ re: attendance at EvCo Conference: JAM: EvCo accepted \$2500.00 contribution from Wind Capital Group with no listing (we opposed). Pauline was unsure of Friends’ Position since there had been no discussion re: allowing WCG to be sponsor. JAM says he and Steve Horowitz had discussed this and made their position clear. In fairness, JAM felt other controversial sponsorships have been accepted in the past. 1000 Friends of Florida has been the leader in tracking the Wind Capital Group Project. ARMF and Waterfowlers positions have been in agreement. Time could be requested to obtain more data while USACE and FWS could affect permitting. Most speakers were emotional on the issue but with no data. JAM feels Friends voting reps must be thoroughly informed prior to voting. PRESIDENT HOROWITZ: At breakout session, when Robin Saiz of Wind Capital Group made a presentation, Steve challenged their lack of commitment to developing a strategy to protect the migratory birds. WCG responded re: their work with Gary Andrews at Detect Inc. in Panama City for feasibility of using their Merlin Bird Strike Avoidance radar technology. President Horowitz reports that the project is now 115 turbines at a cost of \$350,000,000.00. In private conversations with WCG personnel, Horowitz found them not “up front” and “not trustworthy.” JAM: JAM thought WCG to be professional at a briefing held at ARMF office before the conference. JAM believes that at future conferences more Friends and Refuge handouts are needed, i.e. calendars, news letters, et al are required for publicity and awareness of programs.

PRESIDENT HOROWITZ: Sylvia and U.S. government agencies oppose WCG installation w/o a three year study. Detection devices for protection of migratory birds raise costs to WCG who will soon go before the PBC Commissioners for further permitting needs. Friends must support Sylvia.

PRESIDENT HOROWITZ and JAM concurred that the EvCo conference was positive and left the impression that things are moving in the right direction. Most attendees feel optimistic about the future.

Kay Larche reported re: ongoing plans for the Saturday, February 11, 2012, Everglades Day which is themed “Mysteries of the Everglades.” Kay reported that Chuck is seeking additional volunteers for the Day. Kay related that the speaker for Everglades Day is a real coup. It is James Currie, a life long birder and native of South African, now living with his family in West Palm Beach. Mr. Currie hosts and produces “Nikon’s Birding Adventures” on NBC and also hosts “Aerial Assassins” on National Geographic Channel.

JAM again raised the issue of dues paid by BOD members. It has been decided to indefinitely terminate any further discussion of this subject.

Membership chair Elinor Williams reported a total of 295 Members of Friends. The breakdown is:

2 Student, 136 Individual, 88 Family, 30 Supporting, 22 Benefactor, 17 Lifetime

It has been recommended that with the next fiscal year Individual Membership be \$20.00 and Family \$30.00. Elinor has also studied Friends’ By-Laws and an update will be considered by a committee composed of Elinor Williams, President Stephen Horowitz, and Max Wald. The plan is have this completed for a vote at the 2013 Annual Meeting.

JAM reported that on Saturday, January 21st, he had installed 15 Bricks but is now turning over uninstalled bricks Friends who will now have full responsibility for the project. Friends will seek a more conveniently located engraver.

Jeff Kramer stated that the Virtual Airboat Ride is the prime attraction of the Exhibit, but the earphones are in poor condition and unsanitary. They should be installed in an improved manner. Rolf is aware of the situation.

JAM reported that Ken Salazar was in Florida to announce the establishment of the Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area. It is located in Polk, Osceola, Okeechobee, and Highlands Counties. At the time only 12 acres are part of this Refuge with huge expansion expected.

Elinor Williams read a letter received from Jean Poleshuck, Past-President and longtime member of FLR, who praised FLR's work and accomplishments. Also, Jean has rejoined although now a resident of Staten Island.

President Horowitz showed the attractive 2012 Annual Meeting Invitation/Announcement that had been mailed to FLR members and friends. The printing had cost \$350.00.

With no further business President Horowitz adjourned the meeting at 11:00AM.

Respectfully submitted by Joan E. Davis, Secretary