



## **Board Meeting May 3, 2017**

Present: Elinor Williams (President), Denise Valentin (Vice President), David Lurie (Treasurer), John Siegel, Harvey Lee, Mike Winokur, Cathy Patterson, Tom Poulson, Peter McKelvy, Steven Schwartz

Guests: Rolf Olson, Project Manager, Steve Henry, Deputy Project Leader

Absent: Sue Rowe (Secretary), Jay Paredes

1. **WELCOME** - Meeting called to order at 2:30 pm by the President
  
2. **BOARD MEMBER CHANGES** -- Elinor introduces new Board member Steven Schwartz who takes the place of Bill Ross. Bill Ross resigned last month due to health problems. Steven has been living in Delray for 7 years, and is a Former Broadcast Journalist and Lawyer. Currently working in Visitor Center store. Harvey Eisen is out sick and no one is sure when he will be returning.
  
3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** – Per Tom Poulson, add corrections about aquifer storage; delete sentence from Ocean River Institute. Motion made by Mike to approve as corrected, seconded by John to accept the minutes. Minutes accepted.
  
4. **REPORTS**
  - a. **Refuge Report**

Steve Henry reported the following:

    - Thanked the Friends for providing lunch for the recent Congressional Field Day and Earth Day clean-up project. USFWS is going to try to do BBQ events as they are less expensive. Peter McKelvy asked about possibility of reaching out to the Sportsman's Group to enhance relationship but not for funding. Steve Henry to give Peter contact information.

- Most of the resident volunteers have left for the summer season except the Brooks'. Roger, Janice and their daughter will be here until June.
- The refuge has a new summer intern – Hannah Lacava, who will be sponsored by the Doris Duke Conservation Foundation. Hannah starts in early June and will be with the Refuge for 12 weeks. She will work on public use, biology, and will be writing stories for the website and GatorTails. The staff is working on finalizing an intern through the NWRA, which is not funded so it is hard to find a candidate (\$1500 stipend at the end of the internship). The Friends' funding for the current intern Lauren will be exhausted by late June. The Refuge received funding from the Regional Office for a 12 week Pathways intern.
- Permits are done for Loxahatchee Road fee booth. Will take about 3 more months to complete the booth installation. A new refuge sign and porta-potty have already been installed. .
- The Refuge was one of 8 refuges chosen to be part of a national visitor survey. Staff, Friends and volunteers will be needed to help this fall.
- On May 1, a trailer was filmed in the Refuge by IMAX for a film specifically about the Everglades.
- There was an ASAP (Apple Snail Adoptions Program with Pine Jog Education Center) planting earlier in the day with about 50 4<sup>th</sup> graders in the C10 impoundment. More cypress trees were planted. The next group to come out is a very large group and the Friends is helping to fund a bus to bring out more 4<sup>th</sup> graders. The following day, WildSTEM is sending 30 students from Belle Glade who will be joined with several USFWS Retirees. There will be displays set up on the different careers available with USFWS, and staff will talk with the students. This is part of the Urban Outreach Program.
- Next week, Award Ceremony in Atlanta ... Friends Group of the Year, Maintenance Employee of the Year, and Partner in SE Region. Elinor, George Pelt and Steve Henry will be attending.
- Chad Brown with SOUL RIVER will be bringing inner city youth along with veterans on a field trip June 19 and 20.

- Derek Hankerson from Congressman Brian Mast's office reached out about putting on a program on Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup> about the Gullah Geechee who were relocated to Florida.
- David Vela had been doing Spanish radio interviews on Vision Latina Once Q 1190 AM about the Refuge and the programs done. David will continue the interviews for the next couple of months.
- Veronica Kelly has added a calendar of events to the website, and is working on the customization of the GO BOARD located in the Visitor Center lobby. Veronica is also working on plans for a new traffic counting system. The Refuge was selected for grant funds to put in 2 traffic counters in the Refuge.
- The Refuge is renewing the canoe trail maintenance contract (cut twice a year ... Mid-fall and summertime).

Rolf reported the following:

- Rolf reported that after the Congressional Field Day, four Congressmen wrote a unified letter to the Appropriations Committee.
  - During the Earth Day cleanup, 11.7 tons of debris was removed from the Refuge.
- b. **Treasurer's Report** – David Lurie reports that the store sales were about 70% less than last month with \$4157. Operating account is \$24,583. All other balance have not changed. Donation boxes were higher this month with \$315. The membership was much lower this month. Total Non-Store is \$1069. Total Grand income is \$5,226.
- c. **Gift Shop Report** – Cathy Patterson reports that for April the store is \$639 ahead and for the year about \$2817 ahead. All reports are Gross amounts.
- d. **Financial Report** – Elinor reports that the Accountants Report for the Fiscal Year was done by the accountant. Cost for merchandise is included in this report. Hands out Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss reports. Main expense for the year is the intern, and once that shows up on the reports, the financial report can be discussed in more detail.
- e. **Grant writing Proposal and Committee** – Peter & Mike
- Peter reported that the RFP was distributed to the following: CharityWatch.com and CharityNet.com. There was an unsolicited request to help with grant writing, Sheri Tor who is a grant writer by profession and is currently living in Florida. The CharityWatch provides a network of proposal writers. You pay a fee of \$50 and they distribute the RFP across the network of writers. 4 people responded to

the request for a proposal writer. Peter had a telephone interview with Teri Pinney, who is a certified grant proposal (GPC). Her rates are lower than most at \$60 an hour. She has gotten large monetary amount grants and is a very strong candidate. The other possible candidate, Sheri Tor is also an experienced grant writer with non-profit and NGO's. She contracts for proposal writers. Third possibility is CharityNet.com – fees for service where you can pick a package. Cost structure is about \$2,000 for applying for 3 grants. Will also help work with sponsorship packages. Peter and Mike will work together to do a final recommendation to the board via email before the next Board Meetings. The 3 grants we want to look for are (1) Everglades Day (including coaches for Everglades Day transportation), (2) School bus transportation for Educational Program (bringing in school children) and (3) Urban Wildlife Habitats. We will need to work with the Refuge to gather necessary information for the grants. Rolf prefers that we use someone who does all the necessary reporting on our behalf.

- Elinor reported that she spoke with Linda, another grant writer that was authorized doing research on funding sources for Everglades Day. She came back with 7 possibilities and gave us the deadline dates, which most are this fall. Linda would be willing to submit the proposals to the 7 possibilities but does not want to do more than that including managing or reporting the work. Elinor wants us to look at all grants, large and small, to see how much work is needed to apply, and only apply for those worth the time ... whether \$1,000 or \$20,000.
- Per Elinor, there is no update on the Sierra Club grant for either the bug release or an intern. The USDA information was retrieved and submitted to the management of Sierra Club who in turn will make a decision on who and what the grant money will go to. We do not know when the decision will be made.

f. **Photo Contest** – Cathy Patterson reports that we lost \$443 and 12 entries from last year. All of last year's people were contacted. She feels we need to find some corporate sponsors to help with the cost. There were 63 entries and almost 300 photos, and 4 youths. For next year's contest, photo clubs need to be contacted and more outreach for youth photographers. Contact schools with photo contest information so more youths can apply.

g. **Speakers Bureau** – Veronica Kelly updated the Refuge's presentation. Two total presentations were given in April: Steve Henry gave 1 presentation and John gave another presentation. People skilled in public speaking are encouraged to join the Speaker's Bureau and can talk to Steve Henry if interested.

5. **NEW BUSINESS -**

a. **Creation of Committees** – Denise creates 3 new committees for the Friends – Development Committee, Education Committee and Communication Committee.

1. **Development Committee** – Denise, Peter, Sue, Mike

- Includes Sponsorship, Fund Raising, Grants, Memberships

2. **Communication Committee** – Denise + volunteers

- Marketing, Public Relations, Media Relations (newspaper, on-line, magazines, etc.)

3. **Education Committee** – Tom, Denise, John

- Outreach by classes, seminars, videos, presentations to teens and adults
- Work with Refuge staff to coordinate

b. **Media Outreach** - Research and start partnership with conservation media to promote the Refuge

c. **Friends Items** – patch, business cards, t-shirts

d. **Media Field Day** – Steve Henry would like to work with the Friends on a Media Field Day to be held in the Fall, perhaps to coincide with National Wildlife Refuge Week.

e. **Chairs for Visitors** - chairs – Mike to look into and get pricing

6. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS –**

a. **Posters** – Create 24x36 posters with Contest Photos and ARM Loxahatchee NWR name (spelled out) to sell rolled up, unframed in store. Refuge will allow us to hang a few framed posters in the Theater with a sign to purchase directly from the Nature Store. Vistaprint has \$75 membership yearly fee where you can get 40% off everything you purchase. Idea pending approval by all members of the Store Committee.

- b. ***Bike Ride*** – start with 1 bike ride to see how people respond and see how many actually show up – Steve Henry mentioned we might want to contact bike shops to get more people
- c. ***Photography Club*** – monthly contest with winner having banner \*\*to discuss at a later date

7. ***ANNOUNCEMENTS -***

- a. Thank you letter to Friends from Cindy Dohner, Regional Director for financial assistance for the 180 day biological intern for \$12,500
- b. Exotics appropriations request letter from PBC Congressional delegations signed by Reps Mast, Deutch, Hastings, and Frankel urging funding for USFWS to implement programs for invasive exotic plants
- c. Exotics funding request letter from 24 organizations to new Secretary of Interior Ryan Zinke (Audubon Florida, Audubon of Everglades, Friends, Sierra Club, etc).
- d. Peer-to-Peer Training - June 8 - 10 - Sanibel Island – Peter & Steven  
Ding Darling has been asked to share training handouts – Denise will make sure to get a copy
- e. Lee Road Cleanup - Earth Day, Saturday, April 22 – Cathy  
7 volunteers plus Board Members: Cathy, Sue & Denise
- f. Earth Day cleanup - Denise & Mike – total cost was approximately \$500 for 80-100 people
- g. Munson Foundation annual meeting - Thursday, April 6 - Peter & Elinor along with other grant winners. A quick presentation was given by Peter about our Friends group.
- h. Congressional Field Day - Tuesday, March 28 – Sue, Peter & Elinor were able to make contact with Congressman Brian Mast's office who are trying to get Boys & Girls Club out to the Refuge for educational outreach
- i. Donations for field trips - \$2945 YTD + \$25 in memory of Jean Fetterman
- j. Donations for intern, etc. - \$2425 YTD
- k. Lifetime membership \$500 from Bob Barfknecht + ExxonMobil matching grant form
- l. Matching grants received from IBM - \$80

8. ***NEXT MEETING DATE*** - Saturday, June 24, 9:00 a.m.

9. ***ADJOURNMENT***

Meeting adjourned at \_\_\_\_\_ pm, moved by Denise Valentin, seconded by David Lurie, all in agreement.