

March 16, 2006 – ASWF Board Minutes

The meeting opened at 7:05 at the Rutenberg offices of Lee Co. Parks and Rec.

Present were: Barbara Bacon, Christina Baker, Ellie Boyd, Teri Heath, Sharon Kuchinskas, Vince McGrath, Frank Pirog, Pete Quasius, Dan Van Norman and Kathie Zunich.

Minutes of the February board meeting were read and approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT (Kathie)

- Checking = \$1,508 Foster Conservation Fund = \$95,661
- Savings/Money Market = \$989 (this is in the process of being closed)
- \$1,538 from National Audubon was received as for renewing members.
- Funds have been received from the CREW field trip and sale of items at the Bird Fest.
- Kathie will follow up on the bequest from Charles Foster to the chapter.

MEMBERSHIP:

A discussion ensued about requesting a more equitable system from NAS regarding receiving credit for new and renewing members. We have 1335 members at present. Pete will organize on-line membership enrollment.

NEWSLETTER (Vince and Frank)

Frank commented on the increasing slowness of the U. S. Post Office delivery of the newsletter. We mail 1150 newsletters each month. Pete will look for a corporate sponsor to pay for mailing these.

CONSERVATION (Pete and Dan)

- Sharon Kuchinskas, from Friends of Six-Mile Cypress Slough Preserve, has joined the Conservation Committee and is willing to stand for election to the board in May.
- Ellie Boyd will be involved as much as possible. Both were welcomed by the board.
- The ongoing struggle for Everglades restoration was discussed.
- Sharon spoke about the proposed interlocal agreement between East County Water Control District and Lee County regarding Harn's Marsh, a 600-acre area in Lehigh that could possibly become a county park. She will keep us informed about the issue.
- Pete invited board members and the general membership to attend Conservation Committee meetings and get involved as much as possible.
- It was recommended that our chapter join additional area "green" groups. Vince suggested that we consider the Lakes Park Enrichment Fund.
- A motion was made (Barbara), seconded (Christina) and passed unanimously that the chapter become a member of The Friends of Six-Mile Cypress Slough Preserve.

EDUCATION

- Teri Heath, chair of the Science Department at Cypress Lakes High, was welcomed and confirmed as Chair of the Education Committee and will stand for election in May.
- Vince described “Audubon Adventures” and encouraged renewing interest among schools.
- Carl Veaux is confirmed as a member of the Education Committee.
- Teri will focus on possible recommendations for our annual award for education, given at the annual dinner.
- Barbara suggested that we consider giving a scholarship to a deserving student or teacher for an Audubon summer camp.

WEBSITE

Pete reported that the chapter’s website is getting approximately 1,000 hits a month and complimented Steve Brookman for giving the chapter such excellent service. Pete mentioned that the “Good Search” website gives the chapter a penny for every hit and encouraged members to use this site.

EVENTS

Programs:

- A worthwhile goal for the year is to participate in/sponsor three programs.
- Vince will prepare written information regarding birding and native plant programs that he can present.
- Paul Gray was mentioned as a possible speaker on Lake Okeechobee issues.
- Birdathon is April 1. Dan prepared and presented an updated Birdathon packet. All were encouraged to promote this important fund-raising event.
- Vince will look into details about the June Blue Way Festival.

Field Trips:

Dan reported that the April 8 field trip to Babcock Ranch is full.

Annual Dinner:

- Christine will make arrangements for the catering at Rotary Park on May 6.
- Nominations will be needed by the next board meeting for annual awards in the areas of *land conservation, education, scholarship to a deserving student, activist.*

The next board meeting will be held on April 20 at the Rutenberg meeting room.