

**ICHETUCKNEE ALLIANCE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
October 12, 2013, at Rum 138**

**Minutes**

***Present***

John Jopling  
Bob Knight  
Charles Maxwell  
Lucinda Merritt  
Jacqui Sulek  
Terri Skiles

***Absent***

Cathy Street

***Guests***

Cathy Copley, Ichetucknee River Estates Association  
Mebane Cory-Ogden, Manager, Ichetucknee Springs State Park  
W. David Shoup, Interim Director, Water Resources Training Programs, Florida Gateway College, Lake City

President John Jopling called the meeting to order shortly after 10 a.m.

***GUEST PRESENTATIONS***

**Guest David Shoup** provided board members with a brief presentation about the **water programs at Florida Gateway College** that include:

- Water Quality Technician Certificate program
- Environmental Science Technology A.S. degree (on-line training for water industry careers)
- Water Resources Management B.A.S. degree (new program)

Students may begin training through the high school dual enrollment program and move seamlessly from the certificate program to the A.S. degree program and now to the B.A.S. degree program. A graduate of the B.A.S. program may expect to earn between \$30K-\$60K annually, while a water plant operator may earn a six-figure salary. Information about these programs is available at:

<https://www.fgc.edu/academics/liberal-arts-and-sciences/water-resources/>

The new four-year B.A.S. (Bachelor of Applied Science) degree in Water Resource Management is a priority at Florida Gateway College and has a statewide mission. Dr. Shoup is planning the curriculum for that program and wants to make sure that the topic of water conservation is included. He is actively seeking input from water advocates about that topic.

We discussed water education in Florida, including mention of the Ichetucknee Classroom Model presently used by Fort White Middle and High Schools, and the need for a follow-up meeting with Dr. Shoup to have a more in-depth conversation about education and water conservation. He will let us know when he is available to meet.

**Guest Mebane Cory-Ogden** briefed us about **upcoming activities at Ichetucknee Springs State Park**, including:

- Middle school day at the park is Oct. 23.
- ISSP Citizens' Support Organization (CSO) will meet at 6 p.m. Nov. 7 at the Education Center at the South Entrance.
- The Blue Hole boardwalk will be replaced.

Jacqui Sulek expressed interest in seeing the plans for the boardwalk replacement.

**Guest Cathy Copley of the Ichetucknee River Estates Association** asked for background information about the Alliance's involvement in securing a **revised route for the proposed Florida Power & Light (FPL) natural gas pipeline** that was originally planned to cross the Ichetucknee River. Discussion followed. Lu Merritt will email information about Jopling's contact at FPL to Copley.

## ***REPORTS***

1. The September 10 **minutes** were not available for review and approval. Secretary Megan Olson has resigned because of family illness.

2. Terri Skiles gave the **Treasurer's report**: \$289.79 is available in PayPal and \$934.00 is available in the bank account. Merritt and Skiles are both tracking memberships; Merritt will bring a list of members to the next meeting. We discussed our logo, bumper stickers, and acknowledgement of receipt of membership fees. Bob Knight stressed that it is important not to let acknowledgement of fees "fall through the cracks."

3. **Merritt reported on her activity** for the past month as indicated on the agenda. She will follow up on the suggestion to include some of the Fort White students' work on the website.

## ***OLD BUSINESS***

4. We discussed the **MFL process for the Ichetucknee and Lower Santa Fe Rivers**. Board members are concerned that MFLs may be set too low to enable restoration of the river and there is not a clear-cut process for challenging MFLs. Jopling and Bob Knight will research what might provide a legal basis for a potential challenge by the Alliance.

5. **Work plan for 2013-2014**. We discussed the "Adopt a Problem" approach. Sulek pointed out that biosolids are being deposited on a tract within the springshed and suggested that working to solve that problem should be a high priority. Knight suggested

that fertilizer use in the springshed (by agriculture and by homeowners and businesses) is another very high priority; in particular, the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) need to be updated. Fertilizer usage should ideally be reduced by 50% or more. Columbia County needs a fertilizer ordinance; however, the State of Florida has been working to block local fertilizer ordinances. The Communications Plan, attached to the agenda, may need to be revised given consensus on these two new priorities.

**6. Develop action plan to increase membership.** Sulek will email information about Alliance membership to her list of past members of the Ichetucknee Working Group. Merritt will begin a membership campaign on the Facebook site. Word of mouth is always the best public relations tool; everyone on the board should help to recruit new members.

**7. Next river monitoring event: 9 a.m. Thursday, November 7, at the Joplings' river house.**

**8. FPL/Sabal Trail pipeline route meetings.** Charles Maxwell reported on the change in route that was described at the meeting he attended. We engaged in discussion with Cathy Copley (see *GUESTS*, above).

#### ***NEW BUSINESS***

**9. Need a Secretary/**need to add new board member. Skiles will contact her friend Jane to see if she is interested in serving as Secretary. Sulek also knows someone who may be interested.

**10. Proposed medical waste incinerator in Suwannee County.** Sulek will attend a meeting in Suwannee County on October 13 to hear more and will ask people to sign Florida Water & Land Legacy (FWLL) petitions there.

**11. Request for us to attend the annual Bat Festival at Lubee Bat Conservancy on Oct. 26.** Merritt reported she had declined this request because she will not be available for tabling that weekend, but asked that Lubee let us know about the event next year. Sulek suggested that Merritt contact Lubee to find out if there will be a FWLL table and let Sulek know if not, so that she can arrange for a representative to attend to collect petitions. Merritt will follow up with Lubee and Sulek.

There being no more new business, the meeting was adjourned shortly after 1 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lucinda Faulkner Merritt  
Staff Assistant