

**ICHETUCKNEE ALLIANCE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
November 18, 2013, at Rum 138**

Minutes

Present

John Jopling
Bob Knight
Charles Maxwell
Lucinda Merritt
Cathy Street
Jacqui Sulek

Absent

Terri Skiles

Guests

Kris Cathey, Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
Sue Karcher, IA Member
Merrilee Malwitz-Jipson, Our Santa Fe River
Ginger Morgan, Ichetucknee Springs State Park

President John Jopling called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

GUEST PRESENTATIONS

Ginger Morgan gave an update about activities at Ichetucknee Springs State Park. Mebane Cory-Ogden was unable to attend the meeting.

- The boardwalk to Blue Hole is being replaced; it will be level for ADA requirements and they are making good progress. Dale Kendrick is managing the project.
- Sand is not entering the headspring. Some gravel and old PVC pipe has been removed.
- The headspring parking lot has been surveyed for ADA compliance for access to the headspring.
- Ginger led a tour of the Ichetucknee Trace for the City of Lake City.
- Park staff members have met with the consultants, but the conceptual design for the retaining wall has not yet been received.
- One of the take-out sites is being modified to enable safer use during floods.
- The new citizens' support organization (CSO), Friends of Ichetucknee Springs State Park, has had two meetings and is proceeding well. The next meeting is December 5, 2013.
- The inaugural "Iche Nippy Dip Day" event will be held 9:30-11 a.m. on Saturday, January 4, 2014. This will be an annual "Take the plunge!" event on the first Saturday in January. Pre-register on the park's website.
- The Christmas Bird Count in the park is December 17, 2013.
- Blue Hole remains open for diving. Kelly Jessop is removing underwater graffiti.

MFL Discussion: Item #6 from the agenda was discussed next. Merrilee Malwitz-Jipson and Jacqui Sulek reported about minimum flow and level (MFL) discussions for the Lower Santa Fe River and the Ichetucknee River that were held at the Suwannee River Water Management District and the North Florida Regional Water Supply Partnership meetings. A lengthy discussion ensued; salient points are as follows.

- Presenters at the SRWMD meeting included Wendy Graham and Mark Clark of the University of Florida's Water Institute and Edward de la Parte, a lawyer for a consortium of utility companies in North Florida. Will the utility companies sue SRWMD if they think that the MFLs will negatively affect their consumptive use permits? The question of "How much business can come in?" may be the primary concern of the WMD.
- Many questions remain about the accuracy of the models, data, and scientific methods used to set the MFLs. The Alliance is on record as favoring an MFL for the Ichetucknee River of 350 cubic feet per second (cfs), the river's historic average flow; questions remain about where that MFL will finally be set. The Alliance has taken no position on an MFL for the Lower Santa Fe River.
- Bob Knight mentioned the MFL situation in Keystone Heights, in which the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) worked to gain the trust of local residents but is now lowering MFLs for lakes that are already dry or very low. He also spoke about "the appearance of a recovery plan with no recovery involved" and the importance of "winning the hearts of the public."
- Jopling asked whether a legal challenge to the MFL would be the most effective way for the Alliance to take a stand on this issue. Discussion ensued about what course of action might be most effective for restoration of the river.
- Knight moved that the Board authorize Jopling to have a conference call with Rob Williams and John Thomas to consider the Alliance's options for a potential challenge to the MFL for the Ichetucknee River; Charles Maxwell seconded. The motion carried, with Sulek abstaining.

Malwitz-Jipson reported on dates for upcoming MFL-related events, as follows.

- November 22: MFL Technical Report
- December 6: Revisions posted
- December 18: Comment deadline
- December 16: North Florida Regional Water Supply Partnership Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting

REPORTS

1. **Approval of Oct. 12 Minutes:** Maxwell moved that the minutes of the October 12, 2013, meeting be approved; Cathy Street seconded. The minutes were approved.

2. **Treasurer's Report:** Lu Merritt gave the report for Terri Skiles. A \$453.03 balance in PayPal has been transferred into our bank account. Two invoices for \$25 each (\$50 total) from Stewart Thomas, for technical website support, have been paid. The current bank account balance is \$1143.03.

The Alliance has a bill for renewal of our post office box in High Springs. Rates are \$27 for six months or \$54 for one year. Maxwell moved that we renew the box for one year; Sulek seconded. The motion passed.

3. **Staff Assistant's Report:** Merritt referred the Board to the report of her activities that appears on the agenda.

OLD BUSINESS

4. **Need a Secretary:** Merritt reported that Skiles has not yet heard back from Jane Gray about her willingness to serve on the Board. Merritt will continue to prepare minutes until a secretary can be found.

5. **Membership Report:** Complete membership information has been shared by Skiles with Merritt. Merritt will draft language for official “thank you” emails to members and send that language to the Board for comments/revisions. Sulek will arrange for bumper stickers to be printed within the next month. Jopling asked that each Board member recruit three new Alliance members.

6. **Update on MFLs.** See “MFL Discussion” under “Guest Presentations,” above.

7. **Update on FPL Pipeline:** Malwitz-Jipson announced a community meeting at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, November 21, 2013, in the Methodist Church in Fort White. Spectra Energy will be invited to another meeting that will be set before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) meeting on December 5, 2013. Jopling reported that he had attended a TREPO meeting and was well received as a representative of the Alliance.

8. **Update on North Florida Regional Water Supply Partnership activities:** Sulek reported that work on the draft water supply plan is still in process. She has given copies of Cynthia Barnett’s book *Blue Revolution* to the partners in this stakeholder group. *Aside:* Florida Water and Land Legacy petitions “are getting close” to their goal.

9. **Update on medical waste incinerator in Suwannee County:** Merritt reported that this issue appears to be dead; however, citizens are watching closely to see if it may be revived.

10. **Work plan for 2013-2014:** This item was skipped because the group ran out of time.

11. **Date of next river monitoring event: December 5, 2013, 8:30 a.m.**

12. **Representation of the Ichetucknee Alliance at official meetings (SRWMD, FDEP, etc.) (Lu):** This item was skipped because the group ran out of time.

NEW BUSINESS: ALL ITEMS WERE SKIPPED BECAUSE OF LACK OF TIME.

13. Water lettuce removal (see attached emails) **skipped**

14. Manatee data collection/Jim Stevenson’s request for a volunteer **skipped**

15. Springs Alliance group meeting update (Bob, John, Charles) **skipped**

16. Citizens’ Clean Water meeting update (Lu) **skipped**

17. Florida Springs Institute/Springs Eternal Project Razoo crowd-funding effort for “Springs Eternal” booklets for legislators **skipped**

18. Holiday party? **skipped**

NEXT MEETING: 9:30 a.m. Saturday, December 14, 2013, at Rum 138

Respectfully submitted,
Lucinda Faulkner Merritt, Staff Assistant