

**ICHETUCKNEE ALLIANCE
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, March 20, 2014, @ Rum 138**

Present

John Jopling
Charles Maxwell
Lucinda Merritt
Terri Skiles
Cathy Street
Jacqui Sulek

Absent

Bob Knight

Guests

Ginger Morgan, Ichetucknee Springs State Park
Kevin Clark

President **John Jopling** called the meeting to order shortly after 6:45 p.m.

GUEST PRESENTATION

1. Guest Report: Ginger Morgan, ISSP Activities Update

- Morgan asked for suggestions for future Ft. White Community Water Festivals. There was a suggestion to get more adults involved.
- Update on Hydrilla sign: Mebane is still researching interpretive signs, which is what she prefers. The diving season ends March 31 and begins again in October. We stressed that Jim Stevenson had requested a simple sign asking divers to inspect their equipment and remove any Hydrilla before entering the spring. Terri Skiles remarked that in her experience, divers do not read interpretive signs; she thought better use of an interpretive sign might be to interpret the whole river rather than Hydrilla. She also said that divers are very careful about their equipment and always clean it.
- Work on the boardwalk to Blue Hole is on schedule and nearing completion. The boardwalk will be ready for Memorial Day weekend.
- The park held a prescribed burn last weekend west of the river.
- The park needs volunteers for water lettuce removal. This task is done in canoes that the park provides. Morgan will let us know dates so we can spread the word via email and Facebook. John Jopling mentioned that he is aware of a fraternity that is looking for a multi-day service project.
- The park has two Americorps workers that are being shared between ISSP, O'Leno, Dudley Farm and River Rise. The workers are removing exotics, performing trail maintenance, etc.
- Turtle monitoring in the park is scheduled for March 29-30. All turtles that can be captured will be tagged. Turtles will be monitored every six months.
- Morgan mentioned the manatee project that Lars Andersen is working on. Morgan is the person who collects information about manatee sightings within the park. Kevin Clark mentioned that he had recently seen six manatees in front of one of the restricted areas.
- Park staff members have not yet seen any design & construction plans for work on the wall at the headspring.

- Park Manager Mebane Cory-Ogden's septic tank is being reconfigured to include a layer of wood chips to cut down on nitrate nitrogen; this is part of a pilot study to gather data about this technique.
- The Park will begin hiring seasonal workers on April 1.

2. Agenda Approval/Additions/Deletions. *None.*

REPORTS

3. Review/approval of January 18 minutes. *Jacqui Sulek moved that the minutes be approved; Charles Maxwell seconded. There was no discussion. The minutes were unanimously approved.*

4. Treasurer's report. *Skiles reported a balance of \$1,860.18. She has requested a debit card for Lu Merritt to use at the post office for membership acknowledgement letters, for office supplies, etc. If Merritt needs to spend more than \$50, she will request approval from board members first.*

5. Staff Assistant's reports/January & February 2014. *This is an FYI item and there were no questions.*

OLD BUSINESS

6. Federal nonprofit papers review. *Jopling and his assistant, Kristi Gregory, have submitted the Alliance's application. We should know within six months if the Alliance is approved.*

7. Need volunteer writers for new blog entries for website! *Possibilities: Sulek on birds of the Ichetucknee; Maxwell on history of the area.*

8. Bumper stickers & decals. *These were distributed to board members in attendance and will be mailed to all paid members of the Alliance. The remainder will be offered to members who may join the Alliance at the upcoming Springs Celebration on March 29, where we will have an information table.*

9. "Springs Eternal" booklet distribution. *Jopling took six books to distribute to the Lake City Mayor and City Council members. Merritt will get three more books to give to Maxwell and Street for distribution to the Town of Ft. White Mayor and Town Council members.*

10. Springs Celebration/Chili Cook-Off at O'Leno State Park on March 29. *We discussed who would provide what for our first public tabling event/membership drive.*

NEW BUSINESS

11. Water conservation award for Trini Johannesen to be presented at Columbia County Commission meeting. *Sulek proposed that Johannesen be recognized for her work with the Ichetucknee PARKnership students at the Fort White schools. The request was unanimously approved and we authorized an expenditure of up to \$150 for a framed print of one of John Moran's photographs.*

12. Reimbursement for \$215 for postcard handout for tabling events. *Merritt requested reimbursement for costs for the "postcard" promotional piece that shows the Ichetucknee springshed on the front and offers suggestions for protective action on the back. Printed copies of the graphic*

designer's estimate, invoice, and the receipt of Merritt's payment were given to Stiles for Treasurer's records. The request was unanimously approved.

13. Secretary's to-do list/coordination between board & Jim Stevenson. *This was an FYI item that required no action.*

14. Establishment of Advisory Board **and 15.** Appointment of Jim Stevenson and Bob Palmer to Advisory Board. *These actions were recommended by Merritt, who stressed that Stevenson is already filling the role of an advisor to the Alliance and that she could use occasional advice from Palmer about legislative matters. Establishment of an Advisory Board is permitted in the Alliance's bylaws. Jopling moved that we create an Advisory Board, add Jim Stevenson as its first member, and invite Bob Palmer to a future meeting so that those who have not met him can do so; Street seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.*

16. Estimate for "Let's Protect the Ichetucknee" brochure revision. *Board members were provided with Stewart Thomas's estimate for work on this project, which has been requested by Stevenson. After some discussion, including polling of guest Kevin Clark, the board tabled this suggestion for discussion at a later date. There is support for other, less wordy promotional pieces that could fit into a standard #10 envelope.*

17. MFL updates/Center for Earth Jurisprudence (CEJ) letter re: Fanning & Manatee Springs MFLs. *Sulek remarked that the contents of this letter serve as a reminder to us of the importance of accountability with regard to a recovery plan for the Ichetucknee.*

18. Springs bill updates. *Senator Dean's bill is moving and there is now a corresponding bill in the House of Representatives (HB 1313); the sponsor is Jason Brodeur.*

19. Report on SRWMD February & March meetings. *Merritt's report was emailed to the Board prior to this meeting. Sulek gave a synopsis of the meeting that included statements by a representative from Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU).*

20. New FLOW group update. *This is the "North Florida Water Working Group." Merritt read from a recent Lake City Reporter newspaper story.*

21. Funding an updated report card for the Ichetucknee. *The Howard T. Odum Florida Springs Institute estimates a \$5000 cost for this task. The last report card is six years old. Creating a new report card would show what changes the river system may have undergone in the past six years. Merritt will review a grant application from The Ichetucknee Partnership that was brought to her attention by Sulek.*

22. Date of next river monitoring event? *Thursday, April 10, at 10 a.m.*

23. Date of next meeting? *Saturday, April 19, at 9:30 a.m. at Rum 138.*

OTHER DISCUSSION

Maxwell expressed concern about water use at the planned new Intermodal Park in Lake City. Jopling asked him to continue to keep us informed about plans for that facility. Merritt suggested a meeting with the people who could answer questions about planned water use. Maxwell, Jopling and Merritt will follow up on this discussion.

Respectfully submitted,
Lucinda Faulkner Merritt, Staff Assistant/Secretary