

ICHETUCKNEE ALLIANCE MEETING MINUTES

6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 15, 2017

@ North Florida Springs Environmental Center, 23695 W. U.S. Highway 27, High Springs FL

Board Members Present

Paul Donsky
Eric Flagg
Jasmine Hagan
John Jopling
Charles Maxwell
Amelia McKnight
Lu Merritt

Advisory Board Members & Guests Present

Bob Knight
Kendall Pidgeon
Jim Stevenson
Bob Ulanowicz
Brenda Wells

President John Jopling called the meeting to order.

1. Agenda approval/additions/deletions. We agreed to discuss Item #3 first, since Jim Stevenson attended to talk about that subject specifically.

PRIORITY ITEMS

2. Report about possible challenge to new regional water supply plan. John Jopling reported on discussions about a possible challenge to the new North Florida Regional Water Supply Plan, why a challenge is needed and why the Ichetucknee Alliance is in the best position to be granted legal standing to challenge the plan. After discussion, the Board voted unanimously to challenge the plan.

3. Upcoming meetings to review Ichetucknee Springs State Park's unit management plan. Meetings are scheduled for 5-7 p.m. March 29 at the Fort White Community Center and 9 a.m.-noon March 30 at the Education Center at the park's South Entrance.

Jim Stevenson explained that the Florida Park Service is under some pressure to update its unit management plans for our state parks, which are required to be updated every 10 years. The last plan for the Ichetucknee was done in 2000 and the update is now seven years late. Jim described the process that has been observed at recent park plan update meetings, in which audience input via microphone has been replaced by having audience members visit various displays and ask questions that others in the audience may or may not hear; this change may have been made to avoid controversy at public meetings. Park plans are no longer including the terms "multiple use" or "consumptive use."

Stevenson described his tour of the park earlier on March 15 and that the timbering mentioned in the plan is "okay as long as they do it where they say they will do it" in old fields of planted pines on "disjunct" park tracts; plans are to replant these areas in natural habitat.

There was consensus among those who have reviewed the plan that it is a good plan. Stevenson again recommended that the Alliance push to do away with tubing from the headspring in an effort to limit damage to underwater vegetation that occurs there because of that activity. People would still be able to access that part of the river via canoe or kayak.

After initial approval, the park plan will go for final approval to the State's Acquisition and Restoration Council.

OFFICER REPORTS

4. Review/approval of February meeting minutes. The minutes were approved as submitted.

5. Staff Assistant's report. There were no questions.

6. Treasurer's report. Jasmine reported that the Alliance currently has \$4584.14. ***Note: Out of the funds we received from Florida's Eden, we have \$2084.91 remaining that is earmarked for education-related expenses.***

7. *Membership report.* Lu reported that as of March 12, we have 52 paid members and 1243 members of the Facebook group page.

OLD BUSINESS & UPDATES

8. *Science Team update.* Jasmine and guest Brenda Wells, who has been leading the fish counts, gave reports.

9. *Trace Race exploration update.* Eric is waiting to talk to Ms. Hancock from Bike Florida in two weeks. He will have a report about that conversation at the next meeting.

10. *T-shirt and hat sales update.* No sales, but one item has been sent to a new member.

11. *Report on SRWMD meetings.* Amelia reported about her attendance at the March SRWMD Board of Directors meeting.

12. *Upcoming tabling events & inventory of who has what IA supplies.* Lu and Amelia will table at O'Leno State Park on April 1. Lu and Paul will table at Alligator Lake on April 8. Lu asked people to email her about which supplies they have; supplies have been parceled out because the Board did not want to rent storage space.

13. *Report on display panels.* Lu is getting in touch with Stewart about repairs to the panels.

14. *Suggestions for other new board members.* The Board reluctantly accepted the resignation of Charles Maxwell. John indicated that we have an urgent need for another Board member from Columbia County.

NEW BUSINESS

15. *Report on Suwannee River Partnership Environmental Advisory Group meeting.* Lu represented the Alliance at this meeting and reported that it may offer an opportunity for water advocates to have a conversation with agriculturalists away from a public spotlight. SRWMD facilitated the meeting and is reconstituting the Partnership.

16. *Report on Suwannee-St. Johns Chapter of Sierra Club's new North Florida Working Group meeting, possible phosphate mining in Columbia County, & Save the Date for Solar Rocks for the Equinox (Sept. 23).* Lu reported on her attendance at a meeting of this new Sierra Club working group and the opportunity it offers for cross-posting of events on Facebook and other information sharing, such as what she learned about the potential for phosphate mining in Columbia County from one of the group's members.

17. *Other new business.* Lu has emailed Wendy Graham at UF's Water Institute about speaking at a Water Voices program.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Lucinda Faulkner Merritt, Secretary