

ICHETUCKNEE ALLIANCE MEETING MINUTES

6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 17, 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
Amelia McKnight
Lu Merritt

Advisory Board Member Present

Merrillee Malwitz-Jipson

President John Jopling called the meeting to order.

1. *Agenda approval/additions/deletions.* Item #21, Next Meeting Date, was added to the agenda.

GUEST

2. *Merrillee Malwitz-Jipson re: Sierra Club activities & fertilizer ordinance initiative for Springs Heartland.*

Merrillee explained the Club's new effort to alleviate water pollution by working to have local governments pass fertilizer ordinances in North Florida, including possibly in Lake City and the Ichetucknee springshed. She handed out copies of ordinances that have been passed in three other locations and shared a summary of the meeting that was held with Cris Costello and other interested people on May 16. Sierra is concentrating on three things: (1) what the setbacks from water bodies should be for our region, (2) what the timing of a summer blackout period should be, and (3) how our karst geology factors into proposed fertilizer ordinances. She encouraged us to submit names of scientists who could give their professional advice about those factors. Merrillee will try to set a meeting with John Wheeler in Lake City to get his feedback on whether he thinks this idea should be proposed there. John and Lu expressed interest in attending that meeting. Merrillee will stay in touch with the Alliance as Sierra's work on fertilizer ordinances proceeds.

PRIORITY ITEMS

3. *Status of challenge to new regional water supply plan.* Both Suwannee River and St. Johns River water management districts have voted to dismiss the challenge with prejudice. We have received no updates from anyone in the group that is guiding this effort, so we are not sure where this matter stands today.

4. *Report about public meeting, Advisory Group meeting, & submittal of written comments about Ichetucknee Springs State Park's draft unit management plan.* Bob Knight was our official representative to the Advisory Group meeting. Lu, Eric and Amelia attended another of the public meetings. Jim Stevenson submitted written comments about the plan that have been shared with the Board via email.

OFFICER REPORTS

5. *Review/approval of March meeting minutes.* The minutes were approved with no changes.

6. *Staff Assistant's reports, March-April 2017.* There were no questions.

7. *Treasurer's report.* Jasmine reported that we have \$4811.20. **Note: Out of the funds we received from Florida's Eden, we have \$2084.91 remaining that is earmarked for education-related expenses.**

8. *Membership Report.* Lu reported that the Alliance now has 69 paid members and 1258 members of the Facebook group page.

OLD BUSINESS & UPDATES

9. *Science Team update.* Jasmine reported that water quality and fish counts are each being done once a month; the information is going to the Howard T. Odum Florida Springs Institute (FSI). Paul reported that FSI is going to start issuing small reports about the various Springs Watch programs; Lu requested links or copies of the reports for Ichetucknee so they can be posted on the Alliance's website and notices posted on Facebook. Eric is creating a video to help with fish identification; Lu is interested in posting that as well.

10. *Trace Race exploration update.* Eric reported about his conversation with Joy Hancock, executive director of Bike Florida. The event course is too short for Bike Florida's riders. Joy and Eric brainstormed ideas such as: What is the point? Could videos and/or a YouTube channel do more to educate people? Could bikers camp somewhere? Could there be tours or other activities in addition to biking? Jasmine will check with the Three Rivers Estate Property Owners (TREPO) organization to see if camping could be permitted at Point Park; Lu suggested O'Leno for camping. We talked about the possibility of an adult version of the Springs Ambassadors camp organized last year by Lesley Gamble of the Springs Eternal Project; Eric mentioned the expense of local and sustainably grown food for that event. Eric will continue to explore ideas with feedback from various people.

11. *T-shirt and hat sales update.* Jasmine reported that t-shirts and hats are going to new members; there have been no sales.

12. *Report on SRWMD meeting.* Lu followed up her email report with a brief account of the Board of Directors meeting she attended earlier this month in Cedar Key. She summarized Noah Valenstein's remarks to the Board about the Alliance's challenge to the water supply plan.

13. *Update on tabling events.* Lu reported that the Alliance staffed information tables at the O'Leno Chili Cook-off and Springs Celebration and at the Alligator Lake Spring Festival. We gained no new members but four people signed up for our interested citizens email list.

14. *Report on display panels.* Lu reported that the panels have had stronger adhesive added by Stewart Thomas and she will start working again to place them in Columbia County.

15. *Informal update on Suwannee River Partnership Environmental Advisory Group activities.* Lu reported that other than several follow-up emails, there has been no new action with this group.

16. *Suggestions for other new board members.* Two names that had been mentioned before were brought up again.

NEW BUSINESS

17. *Request for reimbursement of \$40 for purchase of "Aquatic Adventures" activity booklets for tabling events.* This request from Lu was approved unanimously. All 20 copies of the booklets were handed out at the events where we had information tables.

18. *Ordering new bumper stickers.* We are out of bumper stickers. After discussion, the Board approved ordering 200 new stickers with the new logo, pending a quote from Hunter Printing to be sent later via email (cost of 100 stickers was quoted at \$105). We also discussed a 4x7 inch vinyl "No Water No Farms No Food" bumper sticker designed by Nuriya Bechtel under supervision of Stewart Thomas. Stewart's regular charge is \$250 but he quoted the Alliance \$125 for the design and \$200 for printing 500 bumper stickers. The Board approved this action pending a revised design that makes "ichetuckneealliance.org" easier to read; the revised design will be emailed to the Board for final approval before the order is placed.

19. Tour of Ichetucknee Basin by Jim Stevenson. Lu reported that Jim is willing to give a tour to new Board members. Because people's schedules are in flux during the summer because of vacations, etc., we agreed that fall might be a better time and we might be able to get more people to join the tour. Saturday is the preferred day.

20. Ichetucknee Basin Initiative. Lu reported that she is aiming to spend more time on Alliance activities in Columbia County and the Ichetucknee springshed.

21. Next meeting date. John will be away on June 21. Tuesday, June 13, seemed to work for everyone so Lu will check with Heather to see if we can meet at the Springs Environmental Center on that date.

22. Other new business. John Jopling had a question about whether it is illegal to pull grass out of the river. Jasmine Hagan will research this and write up an announcement about it for inclusion in the TREPO newsletter.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Lucinda Faulkner Merritt
Secretary