

ICHETUCKNEE ALLIANCE (IA) MEETING MINUTES

6:30 p.m. Tuesday, September 24, 2019

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

Board Members Present

Hayley Curilla
Eric Flagg
John Jopling

Advisory Board Members Present

Angeline Meeks
Judy Sayre

Staff Member Present

Lu Merritt

Board Members Absent

Bruce Robinson
Brenda Wells

1. Agenda approval/additions/deletions. There were no changes.

PRIORITY ITEMS

2. Planning for October 10 special event in Lake City. We discussed arrangements for the event, including what publicity has been done so far. We stressed the need for person-to-person invitations. As reported in a 9/11/19 email, Lu has sent the press release to the following people: Florida Gateway College Water Resources Dept.; Columbia County Extension Agent (IFAS); Theresa Pinto, Columbia County Chamber of Commerce; Penny Stanley, for Columbia County commissioners and commission staff; Paula Vann, Columbia County Tourist Development Council; Joe Helfenberger, City Manager, Lake City; Robert Bridges, Lake City Reporter. The Reporter has been listing the event in its calendar section. Lu will begin a “push” for the event on social media beginning Oct. 1. Angeline volunteered to make a flyer to post at the North Florida Springs Environmental Center.

Prizes: Lu reported that the standup paddleboard has been received. Bruce reported via email that Lee Ann Hires of Dive Rite is putting together a package of door prizes. Eric Flagg and John Jopling will also donate prizes.

John recommended getting 10 large pizzas; Eric thought we might need more. Lu will need to pick up and pay for pizzas. Angeline, Judy and Lu will work the information/membership table. Lu will sort t-shirts into boxes according to size before the event and Judy will hand out shirts or hats to new members. Angeline will take membership fees. Lu will direct people to mailing list sign-up sheets, hand out membership forms, answer questions, and give out tickets for the prize drawing and free beverage. Lu will bring nametags for board and advisory board members so they can be readily identified.

John reported that he has ordered 50 hats with personal funds. We will sell t-shirts and hats at a price of \$20 each to people who do not want to become members.

Agenda/remarks will be as follows:

1. Introduction & videos: Eric
2. Vision/mission/work of IA: John
3. AquiferWatch project needs volunteers: Lu
4. Land acquisition project with Alachua Conservation Trust: John
5. Water monitoring and fish count projects: Brenda (?)
6. Q&A
7. Prize drawing

MONTHLY REPORTS

3. Review/approval of July meeting minutes. The minutes were approved with no changes.

4. Staff Assistant's reports, July and August. There were no questions.

5. *Membership report.* Per 9/22/19 email, Lu reported 146 members, 113 of which will expire on 12/31/19. We have 1433 members of the Facebook group discussion page and 410 followers of the official Facebook page. We discussed how to notify people when their memberships lapse. Lu reported that she sends information about this in member newsletters. John and Judy reported that they do not remember seeing the newsletters; Lu will research this. Lu will also research how to segment our active member mailing list on MailChimp so that an email can be sent to the members who need to renew in December or January.

6. *Treasurer's report.* Lu reported that we have \$4533.97 in our general fund and \$4405.50 in the Three Rivers Trust grant fund.

7. *Science Team report.* Tabled.

OLD BUSINESS

8. *BMAP update.* Lu reported that new hearing dates are Nov. 12-15 and 18-22, 2019. John reported that the Alliance will be required to prove legal standing for this challenge since we are not listed as an official stakeholder with DEP. Lu has not received answers from our attorney or FSC to her question about whether members who signed affidavits will be asked to attend to prove standing; these people need advance notice if they need to make special arrangements to attend the hearing. John will ask for clarification about this. Lu will investigate what needs to happen to have IA listed as an official "stakeholder" for DEP and SRWMD.

9. *MFL update.* Lu reported that the latest word from the Suwannee River Water Management District is that MFL reports/documents will be released in late October.

10. *AquiferWatch project update.* Lu reported that there are approximately 18 volunteers with wells who have responded to publicity about this project. More volunteers are needed and we will use an announcement at the Halpatter event to recruit more people and to spread the word. The Lake City Reporter did run an article about this project, which Lu emailed to board and advisory board members.

11. *Land acquisition project update.* Lu reminded John to check his email for an invitation to lunch from Tom Kay of Alachua Conservation Trust, who wants to brief us about this project. Tom needs an RSVP for the proposed date, October 4.

12. *Podcast report.* Lu announced that she would like to find someone who is already doing professional-level podcasts to help with this project. Eric has volunteered to help but he has time constraints. Hayley will ask people that she will be in contact with.

NEW BUSINESS

13. *BMAP challenge fundraising concert at Heartwood in Gainesville.* Tabled.

14. *Remaining meeting dates for 2019:* Oct. 22; Nov. 26; no meeting in Dec. since it would be on Christmas Eve. John will be out of town on Oct. 22. Lu will notify Amy Brown at SRWMD, who had agreed to come to that meeting to brief us about water supply planning. That presentation needs to be given when John can attend.

15. *Other new business.* John mentioned that he is stepping back from involvement with the Florida Wildlife Federation (FWF) to devote more time to IA, but that IA should have another representative who can attend annual and possibly quarterly meetings with FWF. Lu suggested Bruce Robinson.

Eric reminded the group of the graphic design for "Bring Back the Blue" submitted to him by one of his students, who agreed to let us use her image. We talked about having several posters with this image displayed at the Halpatter event. Lu will get estimates for printing; costs will need to be sponsored or will come out of our \$500 budget for event.

John would like to invite the manager and staff members from Ichetucknee Springs State Park to attend an upcoming meeting. Since he will be out of town on Oct. 22, since our November meeting is two days before Thanksgiving, and since we will not meet in December, this may need to happen in early 2020.

Lu talked about her work on a statement to be presented to the Columbia County Legislative Delegation on Sept. 30, 2019. She asked for feedback on a draft that was sent by email. She floated the idea of a “Blue Path for Columbia County” that would include a wish list/recommendations for specific projects that could improve the health of the Ichetucknee. Angeline discussed IA’s information card and re-design of the map on the front of the card, and reported that FSI is beginning to move away from stressing the importance of springsheds to stressing the importance of protecting the aquifer as a whole. Reason: We don’t want people who live outside springsheds thinking that what they do has no effect on our groundwater, springs and rivers. We discussed the need for new visual techniques and new language to convey this message.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Lucinda Faulkner Merritt
Staff Assistant

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