

Friends of Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park
Membership Meeting
Notes and minutes from 11.13.17

Speakers:

Kathy introduced the speakers - Lt. Mark Mahoney from the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission and Officer Kyle Plussa, Regional Agency Inspector. He is the officer for our park. In 2012 FWC merged with the park service to manage all law enforcement aspects of the state parks. Lt. Mahoney supervises four officers. They have jurisdiction over our park, Fakahatchee Strand, and Collier Seminole state parks. They are certified law enforcement officers. Specific duties involve public safety, resource protection - fish and wildlife, non-native species, gopher tortoises, - DUI enforcement, derelict vessels, environmental codes enforcement. They supervise the waters for 200 miles from here to Flamingo, FL in the Everglades. The FWC personnel are first responders for lost children and medical issues at the parks.

Kyle has been assigned to our park since September. He has put in 141 hours since then, has issued 100 citations, 500 warnings involving speed limit, alcohol consumption, evasion of fees, vandalism. In conjunction with the park he is working on clearer signage for the swimming/fishing areas and where boats/jet skis can or cannot pull onto the beach areas. FWC patrols weekly for gators.

The best approach for any volunteer who observes a problem is to call the main gate. Kyle also left his number 305 434-5926.

Business Meeting:

Board members present: Marcia Byrd, Milagros Dougan, Kathy Foster, Joe Gagnier, Phil Nye, Ann Petrillo, Valerie Thompson. Absent: Larry Beer, Gabriella Miyamoto

Staff present: Zach Lozano

Meeting began at 10:35 AM

President's Report: Kathy talked about the Friends of Florida State Park annual meeting which she attended. She learned about the organization and their reorganizing due to an endowment of several million dollars. FFSP supports all CSOs in the state. A grant process will be established for CSOs to obtain money for specific projects, so more will follow. Kathy and Zach will be making a list in the meantime. A joint meeting for CSO presidents and park managers was held following the FFSP meeting. The new Deputy Secretary, David Clark, was introduced and Kathy described him as energetic, dynamic, and strategic. He commented that the job of a CSO is education.

Kathy introduced the board members. A Speakers Bureau has been formed and she read the list of speakers scheduled for the coming months.

Vice President's Report: Valerie circulated signup sheets for the 30th anniversary celebration and the art show in January. She reminded everyone to sign in, record volunteer hours, and commented on the importance of these records for the park and the state.

Treasurer's Report: Milagros reported that income as of 10/31 was \$13,100, with expenses \$6900, \$1500 ahead of last year. Cash position is \$74,000. Friends will use roughly \$10,000 for the 30th Anniversary celebration. Most of the expense is for the \$7400 kiosk sign that will be donated by the Friends.

Secretary's Report: The October minutes were approved.

Park Manager's Report – Thanked the members for the gift to the park commemorating 30th anniversary of the Friends.

Bath house 5 has been closed since May to undergo the ADA compliance. There now is accessibility to the restroom, a picnic area with concrete sidewalks, and a view of the beach from that location. It should reopen within two weeks. Irma damaged numerous boardwalks but the ones in area 5 are done. Next area for repairs is parking lot 3. Interpretive panel, gifted by the Friends, will be located in area 5. Wilderness Graphics created the signage which will include educational information about gopher tortoises, shore birds, loggerhead turtles.

The Collier County free beach shuttle will operate again this season in a loop from US 41 to Vanderbilt Beach Rd, to Gulf Shore Dr and back over the bridge using a clockwise loop. The shuttle will come into the park, drop off passengers in area 2 or 3 even when the park is closed. The county keeps track of the amount of people dropped off in the park and submits a log to us at the end of the month. With that log is payment for the amount of people calculated on the log.

A large beehive found in the park was relocated by beekeepers.

The osprey nests blew down in Hurricane Irma. The park does use artificial roosts. Two parks out of 170 still have Australian Pines. We are one. They are exotic trees and have no benefit except for the shade.

Volunteers now have a parking placards which can be used during official business. Zach worked with the Sheriff's Department and on days when the park is closed and an event is being held, volunteers will have access using these placards.

Committee reports:

30th Anniversary: Valerie, displayed the invitation sent out to members, highlighting a few details like the ribbon cutting, lite bites not a full meal. She suggested getting in an RSVP to Lori or her. Volunteers will be needed on the day of the event. Come at 4:30PM.

Membership – Currently there are 80-84 members, not an exact count since people are up for renewal.

Art Show – The 20th annual Wildlife and Wildlands Art Show will be held on January 20th. Valerie talked about the varied art media for the show. If members know of any artist who would be interested in participating in the show, they should contact Lori or any committee member. The committee hopes the shuttle will be available at the time of the event. Volunteers will be needed. The number of photographers has reached the limit so no openings exist for that medium. The committee needs sponsors for our show. Kathy asked members to provide an item or gift card for the drawing of chance.

Children's Art Show- Dates are February 24-25, 2018. Three schools have signed up already. Volunteers will be needed.

Lunch for rangers: Kathy was commended for planning the "Thank You" luncheon for the rangers. It was held on Friday, November 10th. The rangers got to order what they wanted from Jason's Deli. The park was reopened in 22 days following Hurricane Irma so this was a token of our appreciation.

Kathy called attention to upcoming activities and meetings:

Resident Artist Workshop 11/16/17, 9am – 11am

Resident Artist Show 12/3/17, 10am-3pm

Friends' Board of Directors Meeting 12/4/17 10am

30th Anniversary Celebration 12/8/17 4:30 – 6:30 pm.

Adjournment: 11:32 AM