



# Minutes of the Board of Directors

**Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuge July 13, 2018**  
**Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, Lake Jackson, 1:00 to 4:20 pm**

**In Attendance:** Oron Atkins, Ed Barrios, Marty Cornell, Phil Huxford, David Plunkett, Kim Richardson, Dick Schaffhausen, Torry Tvedt, Myers

**Absent (excused):** Mickey Dufilho

**Refuge Staff in Attendance:** Jennifer Sanchez; Tom Schneider

**Guests and FOBWR members in Attendance:** Dick Hickner, Mike Lange, Tom Smith

A quorum being present, President Ed Barrios called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm

**Minutes** from the board meeting of May 11, 2018 were approved, with one nay, after a motion by Torry Tvedt and a second by Phil Huxford. It was noted that these minutes referred to modifications made to the minutes from the March 9, 2018 board meeting. Mickey will be asked to provide these minutes as modified for our archives.

Changes to the **Action Register** are highlighted in bold; this list is attached to the end of this report. Ed Barrios will draft a description of the history of FOBWR, consulting with Dick Hickner, Ron Bisbee, and Phil Huxford. This history will be added to our updated website. This task has been registered as a new Action Item.

The role of a Communications person could encompass all external intercourse of Friends, including publicity, websites, Facebook, and outreach. It was suggested that a Committee be formed to coordinate communication activities of members that are engaged or could engage in these processes. Participation by non-board members was encouraged. Lisa agreed to develop a description of this Committee. This task has been added to the action register.

## **Acquisition report.**

Mike Lange provided an overview of recent and pending acquisitions of land by the San Bernard NWR and for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. These purchases were facilitated by pre-purchase discovery activity financed from our third Houston Endowment grant. For the refuge, the acquisitions include the 5-acre Century Assets property, the 17.32-acre Olson property, and the 189.87-acre Snow property.

Mike also noted that the Trust for Public Lands have purchased 540 acres that have been or will shortly be added to the TPWD's Follett's Island Coastal Preserve. An additional 650 acres are under contract or negotiation.

The 835-acre Poole-Ducros tract on the San Bernard River and Intracoastal Canal, and the 177-

acre Mining Solutions, Inc. tract are nearing purchase. Mike noted that there is over six million dollars on reserve by several entities for such land purchases, including ~4 million by TPL, ~2 million by NACA, and ~0.67 million by NFWF.

Elizabeth Love of the Houston Endowment was recently given a tour of many of these properties. She is encouraging our submittal of an application for another \$300,000 grant to continue the funding of pre-purchase discovery activities.

Mike will no longer be working for TPL, but will continue his work on land acquisition as a private contractor working with another nature conservation organization.

### **Financial Report**

Dick reviewed the current Financial Statement and current P&L for the 2018 Migration Celebration. He noted that the FS will be restated to include the Cedar Lake Plantation Trail as a project reflecting cash flow of funds currently labeled as "ATFN17". It was suggested that these funds be restated to use the net income form ATFN17 as the base, with no expenditures having occurred to date on this project.

A MC17 expense of \$2,541.93 labeled "miscellaneous" was clarified to be mostly the costs of our new sound system. The cost of van rental is paid by the refuge and is thus an in-kind donation. Tom Schneider stated that this cost was the same as for MC17 van rental (\$1,808). [Note: the actual cost was later determined to be \$2,009.00]

A review of the FOBWR books by Kennemer, Masters, & Lunsford, LLC was finished and concluded that "Based on our review, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America."

Dick was asked to inquire of KM&L as to the advisability and approximate cost of an audit of our books.

### **Snake Maintenance**

Phil has asked for Friends to pay for the feeding and upkeep of his snakes, which are used at many of Friends outreach events. These animals are now kept at the Quintana County Park and are cared for by Patty Brinkmeyer. Phil will develop a budget and submit it for approval at the next board meeting.

### **Phillips66 Funding.**

At the beginning of the year, prior to the start of the 2018 Birds-of-Prey program, Amanda Linford of Phillips 66 had committed to supporting this program at the same level of the past three years, agreeing to provide \$10,000 for the school programs and \$2,000 for four programs at MC18. Per her verbal instruction, we did not need to submit a grant application this year, in contrast to the protocol of past years. These funds have not been received. Several attempts have been made to contact Ms. Linford via phone, email, text message, and letter. She has

been sent an invoice and documentation of the school programs performed this spring in the name of P66.

Phil will contact Cindy Jordan, a P66 environmental affairs manager, and ask her to intercede with Ms. Linford. Cindy has been a member of the board of GCBO, and thus is appreciative of our Birds-of-Prey project.

It was also noted that Ms. Linford has not responded for several requests to select a date for the plantation dinner bid by P66 at the ATFN17 auction.

### **Grant & Project Report**

Marty reported that funds from our 3<sup>rd</sup> Houston Endowment grant for \$300,000 will soon be depleted. Considering outstanding invoices, the current balance is less than \$8,000. During the period of this grant, 1,646.2 acres have been purchased. With the encouragement of Elizabeth Love of Houston Endowment, Marty is drafting a grant request for another \$300,000. Currently, Tom Smith of NFWF and Mike Lange are investigating 15 tracts of land for purchase, including five tracts on Follett's Island.

The old boardwalk on the Bobcat Woods Trail has been completely replaced. The next phase of this project will involve the construction of the boardwalk crossing Cacklebur Slough at the northern end of this loop trail. Eight-inch piling needs to be ordered for this stage. Because of the inflated cost of concrete, the ~760-foot stretch of concrete trail on the levy on the west side of the slough will be eliminated from this project and, for now, replaced with a mowed path. Bids will be solicited for the remaining ~650 feet of concrete trail sections. Marty has sent a change-of-scope request to the TPWD; approval of this request is needed to preserve the remaining funds in this grant. Excess composite decking will be used to resurface the current observation platform on Wolfweed Lake.

There have been no charges to date submitted to Friends for the construction of the Cedar Lake Plantation Trail. The ~\$62,000 of proceeds from ATFN17 are reserved for the purchase of construction materials for this project. Refuge staff have cleared the path of the loop trail, and work on the trail and parking lot is expected to begin this fall.

There has been no activity on two grants; the Poole Tract purchase and Cedar Lake Cut pre-purchase discovery.

### **Bryan Adams Memorial Water Garden**

The bronze statue of frolicking children has been purchased for \$9,500 and is being sent to the Brazoria NWR where it will be stored at the field office until the site at the Discovery Center is finished. Two concept drawings have been provided by a potential contractor; both include a bog feature designed to provide natural filtration. The electrical system to operate water pumps will be provided by the refuge; it will likely be powered by solar panels with battery backup. It is recommended that the pumps be operated continuously. Current thought is to stock the pond with bluegill and fence the garden to prevent damage from hogs and pilfering by raccoons.

A preliminary estimate of \$24,700 was provided for construction materials and labor costs. \$7,209 remains in funds dedicated to this project, a portion of which will be used to post turtle education

signage at the Quintana County Park. Phil moves that **“The board of FOBWR authorizes the expenditure of up to \$20,000 for the construction of the Bryan Adams water feature at the Discovery Center, with funds to come from the Brazoria McGovern fund.”** Marty seconded the motion. Unanimous approval was voted by the board.

### **Activities of the TMNWRC**

Jennifer reviewed planned activity by the refuge staff:

- Continued work on the Bobcat Woods and Cedar Lake Plantation Trails
- The summer fire programs focus on burning key areas like pond bottoms like Moccasin Pond. Cattail will be shredded, burned and disked into the soil.
- Response to lightning-ignited fires will be needed, such as the recent 30 acres burned at Hoskins Mound.
- Projects funded by Hurricane Harvey will start with the onset of cooler weather; the first priority is the rebuilding of the Bastrop Bayou fishing pier on the Brazoria NWR. Another target will be resurfacing gravel roads that got wash away by the storm.
- Invasive species eradication (Chinese Tallow) is planned for next year, using FDA interns. An experiment will begin at Hudson Woods on techniques to eradicate the Apple Snail. The lakes at Hudson Woods were inoculated by this snail from hurricane floodwaters flowing south from the Houston area.
- The Yucca Project, i.e. manually pollinating yucca, was not successful in producing seeds. Thomas Adams will transplant some of the yucca on refuges further south to see if this will induce seeding.
- Julie Chisholm will be transferring to the U.S. Forest Service near Hot Springs, Arkansas, to be close to aging family members. A replacement has yet to be authorized.

### **Environmental Education**

Tom Schneider noted that Janet Clemmons, his principal contact at BISS, has left the district. He will thus need to develop other contacts to coordinate BISS field trips to DEEP. It is probable that AISD’s Westside Elementary School will schedule a field trip to Hudson Woods. Arrangement with other schools in the district have not been made. Ed clarified that the Master Gardeners have hosted no AISD field trips this year, so they do not pose a competitive alternative to the HWEEP program.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Kim has received input on the roles and responsibilities of officers and leaders of activities, with the exception of Birds-of-Prey and membership. Clarity is needed from the board on the duties of Membership Chair. The board suggested that this position focus on maintaining the status of members and the recruitment of new members. This recruitment activity would need to be rationalized with the duties of the Outreach chair.

Kim will restate all of the input into a consistent bullet point format and send to the board for comment.

### **Outreach**

David listed upcoming outreach events

- July 28<sup>th</sup>; Kids Day at the Brazos Mall
- September 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, XHX at GCBO, 8:00 AM to noon
- October 13<sup>th</sup>; KBR Kids Day on BB (11AM-3PM) at Guadalupe Plaza Park. The Complex has been paying for the Birds-of-Prey programs for this event. Jennifer would like the sponsoring organization, the Buffalo Bayou Partnership to assume the role of funding these raptor programs. Phil will call Trudy Smith, who heads the partnership, to solicit their assumption of sponsorship.

The current notice by the City of Lake Jackson states that the November 15<sup>th</sup> Festival of lights will involve the carnival only. David will clarify.

**MC19**

The kickoff event was confirmed to be held at the RiverPlace on April 12<sup>th</sup>.

Kim has offered to run the photo contest for the 2019 Migration Celebration. She will head a committee consisting of Dick, Lisa, and Ed.

Sales of Brazoria Palm seedlings at MC18 were sparse. Remaining pots are being tended by GCBO at their nursery; some of them will be planted along various trails of the Complex refuges. Potting soil used for these plants cost \$235; Phil proposed that Friends pay \$135 of this cost. It was agreed that Ed would pay for this share from his discretionary purchasing allotment.

The board meeting was adjourned at 4:20

Submitted by Marty Cornell

Secretary, Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges.

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuge Board Action Register Updated 7/13/2018					
Action Item	Date Initiated	Who?	Due Date?	Status	Comments
Movie on BNWR, highlighting EE opportunities		Tom Schneider, Torry Tvedt	By next board meeting, 9/14/2018	On Going	Tom and Torry to develop plan to complete by 8/1/2018
Develop a New Outdoor Environmental Education Display for our canopy		David/Tom/Lisa	ASAP	On Going	<b>Make 2 tasks, one to recommend and get cost estimates for display and one for content. Need durability in wind.</b>
Contract for temporary webmaster	3/9/2018	Lisa Myers	Website to be completed	On-Going	Friends 4 websites are: <a href="http://refugefriends.org/">http://refugefriends.org/</a> <a href="http://migrationcelebration.org/">http://migrationcelebration.org/</a> <a href="http://juniornaturalist.org/">http://juniornaturalist.org/</a>

			by end of July		<a href="http://birdsofpreytexas.org/">http://birdsofpreytexas.org/</a> . <b>Christina Rivers will have live connects by 1Aug18. Need refuge photos; Sanchez will provide</b>
<b>Develop text on FOBWR history for website</b>	<b>7/13/2018</b>	<b>Ed Barrios</b>	<b>not specified</b>	<b>Fixin to</b>	<b>Ed will get background from Dick Hickner, Phil Huxford, and Ron Bisbee</b>
Purchase Leon Skeete Memorial Bench		Mickey	9/14/2018	In progress	Mickey and Phil have talked about the bench and have started making progress. The Board needs a succession plan for Officers and Board Members and needs to set up a committee to do so. The committee also needs to work on ways to increase membership
Develop a Succession Plan		Lisa Myers, Mickey	9/14/2018		Original document has been lost, only PDF copies exist and the document has to be updated
Update Friends Brochure		Mickey	9/14/2018		
Develop mentoring topics for new board members	3/9/2018	Lisa	9/14/2018		<b>Concept to assign a mentor to new board member to provide background and visit refuge sites.</b>
Consolidate job descriptions in Policies & Procedures	2/2/2018	Kim	9/14/2018		<b>Change all input to bullet points and send back out for comments</b>
Develop job descriptions for role of Communications position	3/9/2018	Kim, Lisa, Dick	9/14/2018		Kim to take the lead with input from Lisa and Dick.
<b>Install shelving and racks in the Friends storage shed</b>	<b>sometime in 2017</b>	<b>Oron</b>	<b>not specified</b>		<b>Oron will convene interested parties to develop a plan</b>
<b>Define role of Communication Committee and its Chair</b>	<b>7/13/2018</b>	<b>Lisa</b>	<b>not specified</b>		<b>Lisa will get input from David and Dick and send proposal to board</b>
<b>Determine the advisability and cost of a full audit of FOBWR books</b>	<b>7/13/2018</b>	<b>Dick</b>	<b>not specified</b>		<b>Dick will discuss with KM&amp;L, who reviewed our accounting protocol</b>
<b>Propose a budget for snake feed and care</b>	<b>7/13/2018</b>	<b>Phil</b>	<b>14-Sep-18</b>		<b>Phil estimates cost of frozen mice and other materials will be around \$30 per month.</b>

Leverage Cindy  
Jordan for  
response on P66  
pledge of BoP  
support

7/13/2018 Phil

14-Sep-18

As an environmental affairs  
manager at P66, it is hoped that  
she will be able to induce a  
response from Amanda Linford.