



FRIENDS OF BRAZORIA WILDLIFE REFUGES

Minutes of the General Membership Meeting

Friday, January 12, 2024 Venue: Gulf Coast Bird Observatory

DRAFT, 1st version

Board Members in Attendance: Oron Atkins, Ed Barrios, Mickey Dufilho, Phil Huxford, Dick Schaffhausen, Mary Schwartz, Cris Tobola, Regina Tippet

Board Members Absent: Marty Cornell, Ruby Lewis

Refuge Staff in Attendance: Bryan Winton

General Members/Guests in Attendance: Mike Lange, Ann Lange, Herb Myers, Janet Townsend, Jerry Eppner, David Heineke, Tom Taroni, Tom Schneider, and Martin Hagne

Mary Schwartz called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

Mickey verified we had a quorum of the membership in good standing were present.

Mary Schwartz presented the slate of board Members and asked for nominations from the floor. There were no nominations from the floor.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oron Atkins • Ed Barrios • Marty Cornell • Mickey Dufilho • Phil Huxford • Ruby Lewis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herb Myers • Dick Schaffhausen • Mary Schwartz • Regina Tippet • Cris Tobola
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The board was elected by unanimous vote.

Regina gave a Financial Update. See Appendix A for report.

2023 Highlights – Land Acquisition and 2024 Plans – Mike Lange (See Appendix B for maps)

- 2 K-Bar acquisition – 5600 acres – this was the largest Migratory Bird Commission acquisition in history by cost. Cost was \$17.5 million. Mike worked on it for 3-4 years.
- In early 2022 the McNeill tract (Peach Creek Forest) was purchased – 4600 acres.
- Proposed new addition to McNeill tract is 1360 acres called McNeil Tract II
- Proposed Burr Tract in Wharton County – 1630 acres – It includes a moist soil unit that is managed for waterfowl and the tract is used by the Harrison Foundation for environmental education.
- Proposed addition to Dow Woods for 2024 is 57 acres.
- Proposed expansion of Big Boggy and Aransas NWRs– this is Whooping Crane habitat.

2023 Highlights – Birds of Prey – Phil Huxford

2023 Highlights Refuges and 2024 Plans – Bryan Winton –

- Bryan said the refuge friends could help the refuge by writing letters to the refuge service to get a formal partnership agreement with the Brazoria County Parks System. Since before the Service acquired the Harris-Beal Unit of San Bernard NWR, then Project Leader, Jennifer Sanchez and Bryan Frazier, Director of Brazoria County Parks Department negotiated arrangements and prepared NEPA documents and plans to work with Brazoria County to

expand public access/visitor opportunities onto our Harris-Beal Unit (under Agreement) to fundamentally expand and oversee opportunities leading from Hanson Riverside County Park. About a year lapsed between Jennifer Sanchez retirement and my arrival. I quickly was brought up to speed with the partnership plans and have sought to obtain an approved agreement with the County but have experienced continued delays in getting an appropriate format identified and approved by the agency.

The Friends can arrange a meeting or TEAM call with Bryan and Mike Lange and we can bring you further up to date with what the plans were, what has or hasn't transpired, and why it is important that the Service obtain leadership support and assistance to formalize the partnership.

The contact information for our Southwest Region for US Fish & Wildlife Service is:

Dennis Chavez Federal Building
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; National Wildlife Refuge System
500 Gold Avenue Southwest
Albuquerque, NM 87102

- The USFWS gets money from TxDOT for highway 36 road widening. The service is waiting on the check.
- Roland Davis heads up the Turtle Patrol effort for refuge. He has requested more help to take over some of the responsibilities. He needs to help to relieve the service for Turtle Patrol response.
- Bryan stated he sent refuge grant funding needs to Marty for the board to review and search for grant resources.
- Bryan mentioned the Charles River Laboratories' Proposed Primate Facility located in Brazoria County and asked for the friends to send letters to the elected officials opposing the location due to environmental issues.
- Bryan also requested the friends send letters opposing the location of the Offshore Wind Farm Leases.
- If anyone needs a Refuge name tag, send your name to Bryan.
- Aerial Feral Hog Removal was conducted December 2022, July 2023 and December 2023.

2023 Birds of Prey Report – Phil Huxford

- Phil is looking for funding for the 2024 Birds of Prey from corporations, businesses and individuals.
- The Birds of Prey Program reaches 16,000 – 18,000 students each year. This year we are planning programs at 40 schools and about 58 programs total.

2023 Highlights – Mary Schwartz

(Need presentation)

Adjourn 2:00 PM

Appendix A – Financial

December 2023 Final

FOBWR FINANCIAL STATEMENT

TDECU	\$79,658.99 *A
Merrill Lynch Cash	\$311,095.13
Merrill Lynch Certificates of Deposit	\$151,036.05 *G
Prepaid - McCoy's Deposit Account	\$3,859.88
ACCOUNT BALANCE	\$545,650.05

FUNDED GRANTS and ALLOCATED FUNDS	Grantor	Total Awarded	Amount Spent	Amt Available
20131230 McGovern Brazoria NWR non committed	Katherine McGovern	345,279.33	197,377.72	147,901.61
20131220 McGovern San Bernard NWR	Katherine McGovern	157,000.00	111,163.87	45,836.13
20130919 Poole Tract Land Acquisition	Trull Foundation	10,000.00	-	10,000.00
20181231 Houston Endowment Land Acquisition 4	Houston Endowment	325,000.00	325,000.00	- *E
20201228 Houston Endowment Land Acquisition 5	Houston Endowment	150,000.00	89,672.19	60,327.81
20211229 Damuth Foundation Land Acquisition	Damuth Foundation	35,000.00	35,000.00	-
20220112 Equistar Chemicals - Motus Tower Fees	Equistar Chemicals	7,000.00	664.00	6,336.00
20221101 Knobloch Foundation Land Acquisition	Knobloch Foundation	118,304.00	29,350.00	88,954.00 *C
20221129 Hershey Foundation Land Acquisition	Hershey Foundation	47,322.00	15,000.00	32,322.00 *C
20210722 Black Rail Habitat (\$78,000 Reimbursable grant)	USFWS	76,440.00	76,440.00	- *H
TOTAL ALLOCATED FUNDS		\$1,271,345.33	\$879,667.78	\$391,677.55

FOBWR PROJECTS		Amt Allocated	Amount Spent	Amt Available
46400 Birds of Prey	FOBWR	29,916.77	26,056.71	3,860.06
Migration Celebration	FOBWR	38,862.86	15,413.68	23,449.18
20170101 BNWR Donation Box	Donations	2,905.35	-	2,905.35
20201231 General Donations, Membership, Etc.	Donations	8,753.50	-	8,753.50
20210101 Barbara Burkhardt	Memorial	840.00	-	840.00
20140403 Law Enforcement Restitution	Federal Court Fines	3,121.35	-	3,121.35
20211112 Maintenance of Public Use Facilities	FOBWR	18,399.86	1,438.67	16,961.19
20190601 ATFN 2019 Cannan Bend	FOBWR	211,436.29	175,862.30	35,573.99 *B
TOTAL FOBWR PROJECTS		\$314,235.98	\$218,771.36	\$95,464.62

OPERATIONS	\$46,803.43	\$7,053.33	\$39,750.10 *E, *F
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FUNDS IN TRANSIT	\$18,773.48 *I
TDECU SAVINGS	\$15.70
TOTAL Funds in Bank Accounts	\$541,805.87

NOTES

*I Accounts Receivable/Payable & bank activity not yet posted

*A December 2022, Transferred \$100,000 from TDECU to Merrill Lynch; Oct 2023 transferred \$50,000 from Merrill Lynch to TDECU

MOTIONS

*B Mar 2020 Combined Hickner Memorial Fund \$51,570.00 & 2019 ATFN (net \$53,866.29) & added \$50,000.00 Hickner donation

Mar 2021 reclassified \$56,000.00 from McGovern Brazoria

*C Jan 2023 Per grant agreements, 5.3571% allocated to Admin expenses

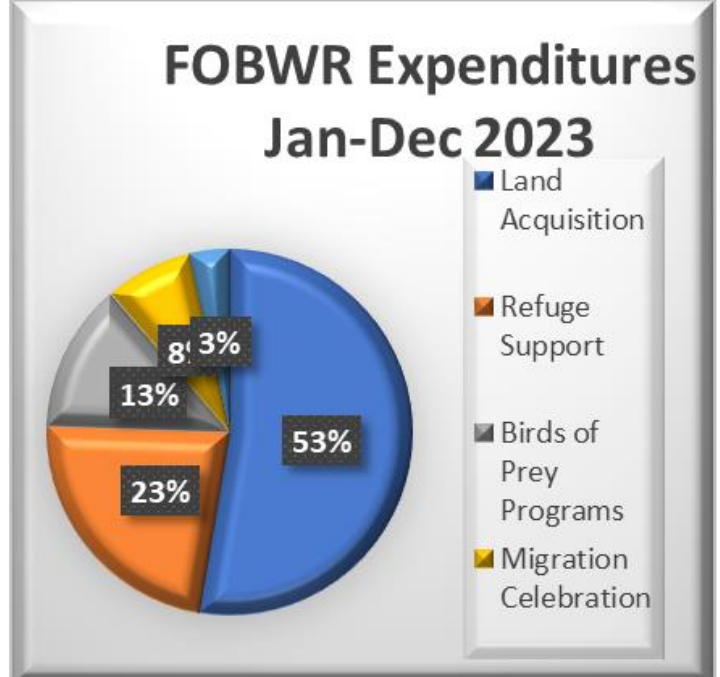
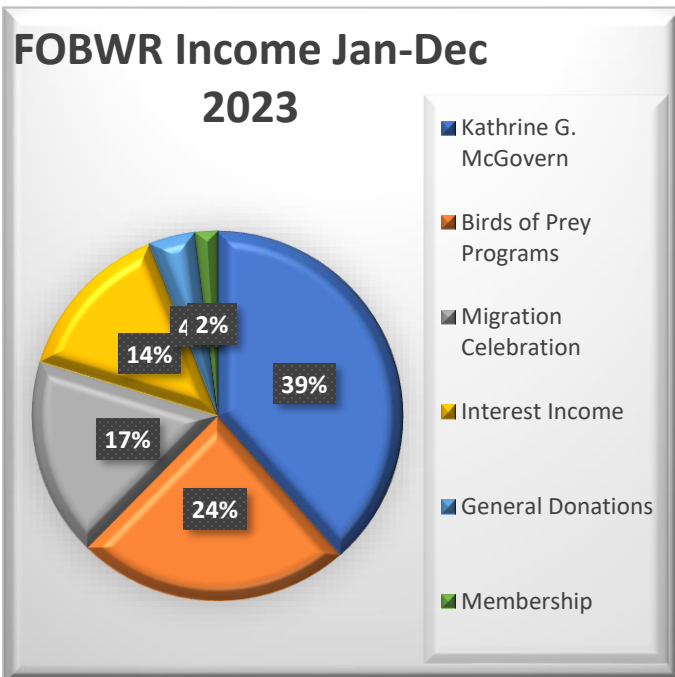
*E 11/13/20 Per Board guidelines 7% was allocated to Admin expenses from Houston Endowment # 4

*F Sept 2022 Per board approval, \$15,000 reclassified from General Donations to Operations

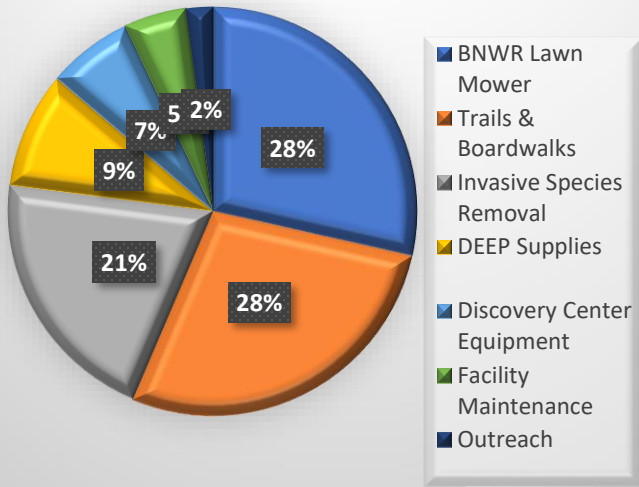
*G Merrill Lynch account includes three Certificates of Deposit for \$50,000 each. Maturity dates are Feb 20, 2024, June 21, 2024, June 23, 2025.

Balance is net of unrealized market gains/losses and includes estimated accrued interest.

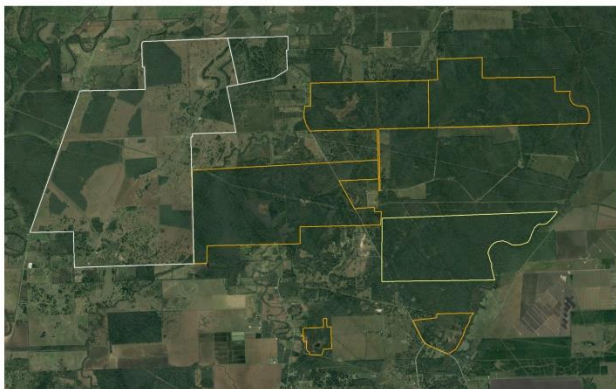
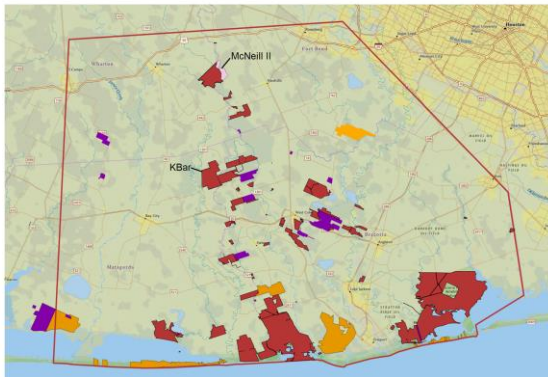
*H Total Grant = \$78,000: \$76,440 for program costs plus \$1,560 for FOBWR indirect costs (reclassified to Operations Oct 2022)



FOBWR Refuge Support Jan- Dec 2023



Appendix B – Maps from Mike Lange





Burr Tract (Proposed CE) - 1,600 acres



McNeill Tract II - Proposed addition to San Bernard NWR



Oyster Creek Limited Tract Location

