

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges  
November 4, 2011, 1:00-2:30 P.M.  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Location: Hudson Woods Unit

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Attendees: Ed Barrios, Marty Cornell, Neal McLain, David Plunkett, Sarah Heller, Phil Huxford, Mickey Dufilho, Krissy Plunkett, Sandy Henderson, Ron Bisbee, Jennifer Sanchez, Donna Jablecki, Ed Johnson

The Meeting was called to order by President Ed Barrios at 1:05 p.m.

The Agenda was reviewed and approved as proposed for this meeting. Marty made motion to approve, Ron seconded, motion passed.

The final draft of Nov 4, 2011, of the Board Meeting Minutes for the meeting of June 12, 2011, was reviewed and Mickey Dufilho made a motion the minutes be approved. Phil Huxford seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The Board Meeting Minutes for the meeting of August 9, 2011, prepared by Marty Cornell were reviewed and Ron Bisbee made a motion they be approved. David Plunkett seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**Financial Reports** --- Krissy Plunkett presented the Financial Report as follows:

As of today the balance of the FOBWR accounts are totaled at \$130,142.54. Monies that are dedicated to grant projects of set aside for specific use equal \$116,952.35, which leaves \$13,190.19 left in general funds. As you can see in the breakdown of dedicated funds spending has begun on the Pentagon Marsh project [\[a.k.a. GCJV Mottled Duck Conservation Plan IV\]](#) and is reflected in the decrease of Houston Endowment rolling grant, which will be replenished upon reimbursement from the USFWS. ~~When the monies are reimbursed from the grantor that will increase back to its usual \$20,000.00.~~

Expected funds to receive are the \$300,000.00 from Houston Endowment this month and reimbursement for refreshments at the Dow Woods Dedication from Dow Chemical.

~~A reminder I'd like to make to everyone~~ Kressy reminded the board that, when requesting a payment for reimbursement or for the payment of an invoice, ~~you MUST submit~~ a signed payment request form must be submitted; this form ~~that~~ is available on the special forms page of the FOBWR website. ~~This applies to EVERYONE.~~

~~I'd like to submit to the board the idea of canceling~~ Kressy suggested that our merchant account with Bank of America be canceled. This account was created to ~~that~~ allows us to take credit cards for the weekend of Migration Celebration. This year alone it has cost us \$346.73. This included the annual and monthly fees to have the account plus the percentage taken from transactions. We can greatly reduce this cost by switching over to a Square account ~~and~~ device that can be plugged into an iPhone and it would cost 2.75% per transaction with no annual or membership fees. ~~Since I am the principal person that takes credit cards and also have an iPhone I think this would be a good deal for~~

~~us. It would require someone else to run the store at the Friday night dinner, but as treasurer I probably needed to transition to Lois' role as main cashier anyway. This action would require Kressy to assume the role of cashier at the Migration Celebration kickoff event, and for someone else to run the store on that evening.~~

**Grant Updates** --- Marty Cornell presented a detailed report to the board today. Marty noted that the Board members may access data about the grants at:

[http://refugefriends.org/Grant\\_Tracking/index.php](http://refugefriends.org/Grant_Tracking/index.php)

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#### **Marty - Objectives Today**

- \* Understanding of current status of our grants.
- \* Get Board decisions on issues of grants:
  - Agreement to place unassigned McGovern donations into general funds (Marty proposes 8 different McGovern monies)
  - Reconcile cash imbalances of some grants
  - Assign administrator to new grants (The administrator would be in charge of keeping and transmitting all data)
  - Approve / Reject / Modify in-kind cash requests
  - Institute discipline in documenting board actions on grants

#### **Grant History**

Marty stated the grant monies are not small potatoes any more and the Board needs to be sure where all the money is going.

- ⤴ Since 1996: 29 Grants Completed; \$445,593 spent
- ⤴ Current Grants: 10 Grants Active; \$867,195 in cash awards plus in-kind obligations

#### **Survey of Past Grants**

Some are really donations in support of Friends' activities, e.g. Migration Celebration, Mc Govern funds:

- ⤴ Cash upfront
- ⤴ No reporting requirements
- ⤴ Some are really donations in support of Friends activities, e.g. Migration Celebration, McGovern funds
- ⤴ Really operating income, not grants
- ⤴ Can become "in-kind" part of a grant upon Board approval.

#### **MCGOVERN DONATIONS TO BNWR**

Date	Transaction	Balance	Date of Board Approval	Notes
14-Jan-08	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00		
15-Dec-08	\$10,000.00	\$15,000.00		
10-Jan-10	\$6,000.00	\$21,000.00		
22-Dec-10	\$8,000.00	\$29,000.00		
????	-\$19,500.00	\$9,5000.00	18-May-09	Board authorized \$15,000 for Discovery Center Display
????	\$9,750.00	\$19,250.00	06-Jun-10	50% recovery from Challenge Cost Share contract #20181-A-J617.

USFWS \$20,000 cost share grant money was approved.

Sanchez and Tvedt are to modify the contract with Rosie to include the extra money.(Board minutes)

#### Mc Govern - Expected Pending Transactions

-\$7,000.00	\$12,250.00	Cost of Discovery Center Display
\$3,500.00	\$15,750.00	50% recovery from Challenge Cost Share contract
-\$3,899.00	\$11,851.00	cost of Discovery Center Display
\$1,949.00	\$13,800.00	50% recovery from Challenge Cost Share contract
-\$1,153.00	\$12,647.00	Friends match for 2011 Dow Community Grant, Otter Slough Boardwalk. (No record of board authorization)
-\$2,200.00	\$10,447.50	Friends match for Birding Initiative Grant #20110926 (No record of board authorization)
-\$3,000.00	\$7,447.50	Friends match estimate for Fish Casting pavilion Grant
\$1,500.00	\$8,947.00	50% recovery from Challenge Cost Share contract (what is left of McGovern money for Brazoria Refuge)

#### MCGOVERN DONATIONS TO SBNWR

Date	Transaction	Balance	Date of Board Approval	Notes
14-Jan-08	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00		
15-Dec-08	\$10,000.00	\$15,000.00		
07-Jan-10	\$6,000.00	\$21,000.00		
22-Dec-10	\$8,000.00	\$29,000.00		
????	-\$5,000.00	\$24,000.00	????	Part of Friends match to the Wolfweed pavilion spend on/before 15Mar08 (no record of board approval found in board minutes)

**Expected Pending Transactions**

- \$16,000.00	\$8,000.00	Reserve for costs of Dow Woods Trails(board approval not in minutes)
- \$900.00	\$7,100.00	Per request of Jennifer Sanchez, spent on a project at SBNWR. (Not documented in board minutes)
- \$7,100.00	\$0.00	Proposed additional reserve for Dow Woods trails pending board approval

Marty Cornell made the motion: The board authorizes the allocation of unassigned donations from Kathrine McGovern to the general funds of the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges, separately accounting for expenditures of those donations designated by Mrs. McGovern to the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge and to the Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge. By authorization of the board, portions of these donations may be assigned to various projects at these refuges.”

Neal McLain seconded the motion. Discussion followed about difficulty if called “grant” in tracking and identifying what is McGovern; suggestion made to call it a fund, not a grant so the treasurer can track items separately. The motion passed unanimously.

**Wolf weed Shelter #20080717**

As of 10Oct11a residual of \$2,720.98 is still on the books. Board action is needed; perhaps moving to general funds.

Marty Cornell made the motion: “Since the shelter at Wolfweed has been completed, it is moved to reallocate the remaining funds currently dedicated to this project to the general fund.” Sandy Henderson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Native Tree Restoration #20080303**

As of 08Oct11, no expenses have been charged against this \$500 grant; still have this money. Jennifer said Charlie Cox provided the money.

Friends paid, out of the general fund, expenses for 06Dec08 tree planting at the refuge complex office. Lois Morgan was the grant administrator.

A new administrator is needed. Board action is needed; perhaps move the ~~\$2,720.98~~\$500 to general funds.

Noted: Need a new administrator.

Noted: Need a plan from refuge ~~management~~management.

**Reforestation Program #20110401**

Christopher Zurita via court order gave \$2,500.00 for restoration and we still have this money.

Noted: Need to assign a Friends administrator of this grant.

Noted: Need a plan from refuge management. Jennifer Sanchez said that these funds must be used at that property.

Marty Cornell proposed for the minutes that: “The treasurer, Krissy Plunkett, shall serve as the

administrator for both the 20080303 and 20110401 grants. [Ed, was this not a motion made, seconded, and approved?]

#### **Discovery Center Exhibits #20100909**

20Apr07 Union Pacific grants \$10,000.

??? Some money was spent for a touch screen and a cone to project sound, etc.

(Jennifer said this money came from the CCS grant.

18 May09 board approved \$15,000 McGovern funds to this project.

12Feb10 Friends paid \$3,500 to the contractor. (Tom Schneider said that Tory Tvedt should have the records of the \$3,500.)

06Jun10 Friends accepted \$20,000 CCS Grant from USFWS.

This grant obligates Friends to \$20,000 cost share. (The \$3,500 does not count because it Krissy stated this has not been paid.)

Decision: Marty suggested that he, Tom Schneider and Krissy Plunkett get together to work out the financial details.

Marty made a motion: "It is moved to allocate \$1,450.00 of McGovern funds to pay for the final costs of the Discovery Center exhibits."

Phil Huxford seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Dow Woods #20091123 & #20100623**

Grants and in-kind cash: \$291,625.00

Spent to date: \$266,036.75

Remaining funds: \$25,588.25

Yet to do: Culvert Crossing of Bastrop Bayou

Board discussed McGovern: \$16,000.00

Un-allocated McGovern: \$7,100.00

Total available to complete the project: \$48,688.25

(Jennifer Sanchez said that it looks like approximately \$36,000 will be needed to complete.)

(Marty Cornell stated that any unspent money will go into the McGovern fund.)

Note - From 18May09 board minutes: Marty motioned Friends allocate \$2,100 for the Dow Woods project, second by Neal. Motion approved."

Discussion – Marty and Ed Barrios thought that the \$2,100 should be unrestricted.

#### **Dow Woods #20091123 & #20100623**

Marty Cornell made the motion: "It is moved to allocate \$23,000 of McGovern funds to pay for the costs of the projects at the Dow Woods Unit of the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge."

Neal McLain seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Dow Woods #20091123 & #20100623**

Marty made the recommendation: At the completion of these projects, a thank you letter should be written to Mrs. McGovern, with photographs, for her contributions.

The board unanimously agreed. Jennifer added that photos should be included, and to make a big deal of it.

#### **Otter Slough Boardwalk #20110825**

Dow Community Grant

\$25,000.00

\$1,153 match from Friends part of our grant application.

No record of authorization in board minutes.

Marty Cornell made the motion: "It is moved to allocate \$1,153.00 of McGovern funds for the Otter Slough Boardwalk grant #20110825 to satisfy our match obligation."

Sandy Henderson seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Pentagon Marsh Project, Mottled Duck Conservation – phase IV #2011072**

Per Ron Bisbee 10Oct11: "Pentagon Marsh Restoration project has spent \$2,956 for water control structures out of the \$32,000 grant. The principal work of the project is mostly completed with the help of some outside non-match funds. We are now exploring the possibility of improving the production of an existing well in the project area. This may cost us \$5-7 k in the next few weeks."

Ron added that NAWCA, administered by USFWS, reprogrammed some money for this.

\$80,000 project was \$57,000 matched; part of which was used to spray tallow trees.

#### **Birding Initiative Grant #20110926**

\$5,000 from NFWF

Denis Mudderman asked for an 80% advance (\$4,000).

\$2,2000 match from Friends ~~\$1,500~~.

An undetermined Friends match will be needed.

No Friends administrator has been assigned.

Marty offered to be the administrator and the board agreed unanimously.

~~Cody, who has the blueprints, agreed to build it but will first need to get authorization from the board to proceed once he obtains the actual cost.~~

#### **Fish Casting Pavilion Grant #20110928**

Stimulated by a ~~\$300,000.00~~ \$3,000 directed grant from the family of Al Clark

Build a replica of the "Bug Sweeping" pavilion in the area where fish casting is taught at the BNWR Bill of Materials for the Bug Sweeping pavilion was \$3,269 in June, 2007; Contract labor \$1,500

An undetermined Friends match will be needed (thought to be over \$5,000)

No Friends administrator has been assigned.

Marty Cornell volunteered to be the administrator and the board unanimously agreed.

Cody, who has the blueprints, agreed to build it but will need to get board approval to proceed once he obtains the actual cost.

### **Columbia Bottomlands Discovery Grant #201111??**

\$300,000.00 from Houston Endowment (currently waiting on the check)

Mike Lange will coordinate with contractor

Marty Cornell is grant administrator

### **Survey of all Grants**

Documentation of Board decisions is poor (as evidenced from Board minutes January 2007 to August 2011).

Final reports of a few grants have never been made.

### **Documentation of Authorization of Expenditures**

The minutes of the Board of Directors of the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges are the official record of expenditure authorization not associated with approved grant contracts. Minutes should not be approved until this documentation of all such authorizations are properly recorded.

Ed Barrios observed that in addition, when communications are done by mail they need to be copied to the secretary to incorporate into the minutes.

### **Refuge Updates, Jennifer Sanchez**

Big Pond info ---

Refuge Beat noted acquisition of 28,000 acres possible by December 1<sup>st</sup>. Still needs 3 public meetings and land protection plans.

An additional 42,000 acres have been added to Columbia Bottomlands.

Dow Woods is receiving a lot of use.

### **Migration Celebration Update, David Plunkett**

Due to meeting time limitations David had to just hand out copies of information being used to assemble a budget for Migration Celebration.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 pm by Ed Barrios, President.