

Friends of the Refuge Headwaters
Refuge Office, 102 Walnut St, Suite 205
Meeting Minutes
4:15 p.m./Thursday/April 27, 2023

Participating

Members: Judy Shepard, John Lyons, JoAnn Smerage, Bart Theiler, Steve Norman, Meg Hurkman, Wendy Schneider

Visitor: Heidi Bryant

Refuge Staff: Stephanie Edeler, Mary Stefanski

Meeting called to order at 4:15 pm by Co- President John Lyons.

Minutes: Steve motioned to approve March 30, 2023 meeting minutes. Bart seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Reports

Treasurer's Report (Meg Hurkman)

- Checking Acct. Previous Total Balance = \$5,219.51
 - Deposits = \$0.00
 - Expenditures = \$0.00
- Checking Acct. New Total Balance = **\$5,219.51**
- Money Market Previous Balance = \$59,591.65
 - Deposit = \$85.61 (Dividend)
 - Deposit = \$5,000 (Donation from Bev Spande)
- Money Market New Balance - **\$64,677.26**
- Altra Regular Savings = **\$5.00**
- Grand Total = **\$69,901.77**
- Tree Planting account = \$3,658
- Pay Pal Account Balance = \$348.11

Steve motioned to approve treasurer's report and Judy seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

President's Report (John Lyons)

- Reminder of Open Board Positions including the Vice President position.
- Post flood clean-up: There will be a need for volunteers after the flood waters recede.
 - Mary will organize a volunteer clean-up and send out an email to ask for volunteers.
 - Photos need to be taken before any debris is removed in order to receive funding. Before anyone picks-up or cleans-up anything you need to take a photo unless a part of the group cleanup.

Refuge Manager's Report (Mary Stefanski)

- MN DOT gave the approval to build the observation area on Hwy 61.
- Hannah Loken (returning seasonal Biological Technician) started April 17 and a new Bio Tech Abbi Hoffman will start in 2 weeks. The three person YCC crew will start June 20.

- Shared photos of flooding at landings. The gate at Mertes was underwater this year and was not underwater in the 2019 flood. Verchota dock floated away, but is now chained to a nearby team thanks to Jennie Froehly and dive and rescue. Peerless chain donated 100 feet of chain to hold the dock.

- **Completed Business**
 - Prairie Island Road Dike Signage: Passed around finished signs.
 - Prairie Island Road trash pickup, June 27 and October
 - Dan Jackson Dragonfly Presentation – June 21, 2023, 6:00 p.m.
 - Winona Earth Day – April 22, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Thanks to Bart and Sue O’Brien for staffing the booth. It went well but it was cold. Ended by 1 pm due to the wind. Lots of member brochures, stickers, packets, and coloring books were given away.

- **Continuing Business/Fun Events**
 - Bev’s memorial bench/table – where?: There are only a couple of spots for a bench. One is Halfmoon landing the other could be Lower Spring Lake, but there is already a platform with seating there.
 - Looked at composite vs metal benches. The metal benches are what we have at the refuge currently and could be bought from the local ANOVA furnishings company.
 - Discussion of another idea to donate spotting scopes to the new Hwy 61 overlook area. There will be a ribbon cutting when this overlook opens. Scopes are around \$3500 with shipping. The Friends and the refuge could split the cost.
 - Many members liked this idea and thought it would be a unique way to commemorate Bev.
 - The Friends could participate in Jazz Jam next year and could use the funds to honor Bev. Another idea is Jazz Jam could play at ribbon cutting.
 - Timing: It may be a while before the area at Hwy 61 would be built. Ideas were discussed for a more immediate memorial to Bev until the scopes are installed.
 - National Trails Day canoe event with Sue leading. Could include a cake with a photo of Bev in a canoe and invite granddaughters.
 - A cake at Project Compass picnic with Bev on it.
 - Photo Contest for the 2024 Refuge 100th Anniversary (Stephanie Edeler)
 - Looking for places to have the winners displayed in 2024 that the public can vote on.
 - Heidi will contact the Frozen River Film Festival, Marine Art Museum, and the History Center.
 - Reminder: Project COMPASS, May 10, Huff Street Dock – 5:00 – 6:15 p.m. There will be patches to give out to participants.
 - The June 7 Project COMPASS and fishing event will be at the Hiawatha Marines Shelter. The food last year was donated by Kwik Trip after Wendy filled out a donation form. Last year we had 50 lunches including sandwich, cookie, and chips. We had to buy several additional lunches due to last minute participants.
 - Wendy will fill out the donation form again this year and see if we can get another

50 lunches.

- **New Business**

- Printing brochures and notecards: Fastenal printed 250 brochures in July 2021 for ~\$40. We do not need any more notecards. Heidi will order 250 brochures from Fastenal. Steve made a motion to buy them money to be determined. Bart seconded his motion. The motion was approved.
- June 3 – National Trails Day: Conversation above about this event and memorial event for Bev.
- Additions: Ordering more t-shirts with the Friends logo for Friends members. Charged \$10 in the past for each member. May add 100th anniversary logo to this year's shirts. Steve will take an old shirt and talk to a local printer about costs and report back.
- Next meeting: Thursday, May 25, 2023 at 4:15 p.m. Refuge Office

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