

Friends of the Refuge Headwaters
Refuge Office, 102 Walnut St, Suite 205
Meeting Minutes
4:15 p.m./Thursday/May 25th, 2023

Participating

Members: Judy Shepard, John Lyons, Steve Norman, Meg Hurkman, Wendy Schneider, Sue O'Brien, JoAnn Smerage, Heidi Laska

Refuge Staff: Stephanie Edeler, Mary Stefanski

Meeting called to order at 4:15 pm by Co- President Wendy Schneider

Minutes: Judy motioned to approve April 27, 2023 meeting minutes. John seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Reports

Treasurer's Report (as provided by Meg Hurkman)

- Checking Acct. Previous Total Balance = \$5,219.51
 - Deposits = \$30.00
 - Expenditures = \$690.0
- Checking Acct. New Total Balance = \$4,559.51
- Money Market Previous Balance = \$64,677.26
 - Deposit = (Dividend) \$89.67
 - Market New Balance = \$64,766.93
- Altra Regular Savings = \$5.00
- Grand Total = \$69,331.44
- Tree Planting account = \$3,658.00
- Pay Pal Account Balance = \$366.92

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

President's Report (Wendy)

1. Kwik Trip Donation for June 7th Project COMPASS event may not happen due to the large number of applicants for donations.
2. National Loon Center Opens in 2024, in Crosslake, near Brainerd. Looking forward to the opening.
3. Madeline Kingsbury still missing and could join the search. More information on Facebook.
4. Ashley for the Arts volunteering did not get much money and lots of hours required. Not doing it this year.
5. June is recruitment for members.

Refuge Manager's Report (Mary Stefanski)

- Landings are now open. Verchota dock will be put back on the spuds once the water recede. We lost some kiosk signs at a few landings.
- New biotech Abbi Hoffman started. YCC crew will start June 20th.
- Dan Jackson presentation is happening on June 21, will issue news release for public event.
- Robinson Lake Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project tour was today and went well.
- There was a plan selected for Big Lake and USACE will start engineering. Construction should happen in 2026.

- Two duckling rescues in the past week. All ducklings and mothers are back in the water.

Completed Business

- May 10th, Project COMPASS fishing Event on Huff Street Dock went well and everyone caught a lot of fish.
- Ok given to the Observation Deck off HWY 61, 2024 construction likely. It is between HWY and railroad tracks at the peninsula. People are higher than the tracks, similar to Brownsville, MN overlook. The project is now on the list for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service engineers. The area will probably have a guardrail and pull off area. There will be a bus area, diagonal car parking, and two scopes dedicated to Bev.
- Taxidermy: Fisher mounted with ermine. Friends paid for half and the refuge paid for the other half. Everyone took a look at the new mount.

Continuing Business/Fun Events

- T-shirt reprinting—Steve Norman found a business that will sell the shirts for \$8.50 per shirt and 2XL is \$10.25 per shirt if ordering 30 shirts.
 - Could sell shirts for \$10 or give to members as advertising.
 - John motions to purchase new shirts at the numbers mentioned. Wendy seconded the motion. Motion approved.
- National Trails Day will not happen due to lack of refuge staff to assist.
- June 7th Project COMPASS Fishing and Picnic has moved to a new location the Kiwanis Shelter at the Spillway Landing on Prairie Island. This will mean shore-fishing instead of dock fishing but should be a good time. The event will start at 5:00 p.m. and end at 6:15 p.m.
 - There will be about 50 people for picnic.
 - Kwik trip variety of sandwiches, chips, fruit, water will need to be purchased since the donation may not come thru.
 - There will also be a cake in dedication to Bev at this event.
- June 21st Damsels & Dragons Program at the Winona History Center by Dan Jackson (dragonfly researcher and expert) as a presenter, sponsored by the Friends group, at 6 p.m.
 - Heidi put together the flyers for people to put out.
 - Could ask for donations to go to Dan Jackson.
 - Cookies and water at the event supplied by Friends 10 dozen. JoAnne will volunteer. Wendy made a motion to have the cookies and JoAnne seconded the motion. Approved.
- Plans for Bev's dedication – bench, spotting scope, other ideas? Input from Heidi Laska, Bev's granddaughter. We will do the cake at the Project Compass Event and dedicate spotting scopes in 2024 at the HWY 61 overlook.
- Continue Plans for Refuge's 100th Anniversary in 2024. Possible film festival put together by Barry Drazkowski from the Izaak Walton League of America. The Izaak Walton League was founded by Will Dilg the same man who advocated to establish the refuge.
- Locations of 100th Anniversary Photo Display were discussed and recorded by Stephanie.
- Friends brochure printing—Heidi Bryant had 250 copies printed for \$43.50
- Project COMPASS fishing this fall will happen, but we will still need volunteers since Mary will be retired before the event. Stephanie will work with the Friends and volunteers to organize this event.
- Next meeting: Thursday, June 22nd, 2023

Move to Adjourn