



Minutes of the Board Meeting

of the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges

March 13, 2020

Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, Lake Jackson

Board Attendees: Ed Barrios, Marty Cornell, Mickey Dufilho, Phil Huxford, Lisa Myers, David Plunkett, Kim Richardson, Dick Schaffhausen.

Absent Board Members: Oron Atkins (excused), Herb Myers

Staff Attendee: Jennifer Sanchez

General Member Attendee: Mike Lange

A quorum being present, President Lisa Myers starting the meeting at 1:06 pm

The **Minutes of the January 10, 2020 meeting of the Board** were unanimously approved, as amended, after a motion by Mickey and a second by Ed.

The impact of the **Covid19** virus is rippling through Friends and refuge activities. At this point, no guidance/instructions have come from the USFWS.

- The willingness of potential volunteers to participate at MC20 is not known aside from a few, because of existing conditions, who must self-isolate. If a sizable number from our volunteer pool feel uncomfortable in participating this April, and/or if it appears that attendance would be significantly lower, we will consider rescheduling MC20 to the Fall.
- A go/no-go decision of the April MC20 will be made at the first part of April. Expenses to date have been minimal aside from the street banners and sound systems, which are useful for the future, and flyers and rack cards.
- The MC20 Committee will need to consider modification of activities where social distancing is not possible, like van tours and shuttles and the marsh buggies.
- Cancellation of the Kickoff event would result in the loss of net fundraising profit of about \$3,500 (MC19 numbers: \$4,083 from the dinner, \$1,471 from the raffle, minus the rental \$1,995 cost of RiverPlace). This shortfall could be covered by our Migration Celebration reserves, currently at about \$9,750.

A motion was made by Dick and seconded by Ed that **“The MC20 Kickoff Fundraiser shall be cancelled as a precaution to mitigate the spread of the Covid19 virus.”** This decision requires follow up action, assigned as follows:

- Dick and Marty were tasked to compose a statement to notify those who have already bought tickets that the Kickoff event has been cancelled and that their purchase price may be kept as a donation or refunded. We have since decided that the notification shall be made individually by the person who sold the ticket. [Below is our statement]

To Committee Members: Because we are cancelling the Kickoff Dinner, we are asking each of you to personally contact everyone that bought a ticket from you and determine if they would like a refund or if they would consider their purchase price to be a donation in support of the on-campus MC20 weekend. Here is our suggested wording.

“Because containing (mitigation of) the effects of the Covid19 virus requires social separation, especially in confined spaces, we have decided to cancel the April 17th Kickoff Dinner Fundraiser at the RiverPlace. At this point in time, we are still planning to host the outdoor Migration Celebration on the weekend of April 25th and 26th, and thus will continue to solicit corporate and private donations to fund the event. We appreciate your purchase of tickets to the Kickoff Dinner. Please let us know if you would like us to return your purchase price, or if you prefer to convert this into a donation supporting the 2020 Migration Celebration.”

Let me know the results of your canvassing of your ticket purchasers. You would, of course, return any cash or check refunds not already turned in.

- Ed is to notify Geoffrey Haskett of the Kickoff cancellation.
- Lisa will have BayStar update our website
- Lisa and Ed will compose a PR notice for The Facts and other print media.
- David will do the same on our Facebook page.
- Ed will continue to solicit donor support.
- Lisa is to contact parents of Alex Grogard to inform them of the cancelation of the kickoff event.

Birds-of-Prey: Phil reported that to date over 3,000 students have attended this season’s Birds-of-Prey programs. As of March 11th, \$5,300 has been received in donations; EarthQuest has been paid \$3,500 (seven programs). The two programs scheduled for Brazos Bend State Park for tomorrow are still on. 15 programs have been scheduled over the next two weeks, but it is likely that public schools will be closing and that few additional school BoP programs will happen. Donors will need to be notified if school cancellations are extensive. Amanda Linford of Phillips66 has yet to respond on our request for their annual \$12,000 grant. Should the school program be reduced, we would still pursue the \$2,000 of their grant that has paid for the four BoP programs at MC20.

Financials: Dick will now report the P&L for the ~ two-month interim periods between board meetings; he will continue reporting Financial Statements on a monthly basis.

Notable income for the period is Marga McWilliams \$2,500 donation for the MC20 food booth. Steve Polemenakos has again given a \$300 donation for MC20; Dick has turned in the paperwork for Steve’s \$300 corporate match from Merrill Lynch. The first expenses for the Cannan Bend Unit were \$14,400 for granite fines for surfacing a trail. \$6,000 has been spent on discovery surveys for land in Matagorda County, to be paid for from our \$30,000 reimbursement grant; Dick will apply for reimbursement using the federal SAMS system.

Funding administration expenses. It was noted that, aside from a small cash flow from dues and interest, we have created no source of funds to cover administrative expenses, which because of audits will approach \$22,000 per year (Audits estimated to be about \$8,000 if done annually, website hosting ~\$500, website maintenance ~\$5,500, insurance ~\$3,500). It was concluded that we will start adding

administrative costs to grant applications, which typically range from 5% to 10%. We will also consider using a portion of program-specific donations to cover admin costs.

HWEEP: In anticipation of field trips to Hudson Woods by Angleton schools, Ed has ordered owl pellets at a cost slightly over \$400. A motion was made by Mickey, seconded by Phil, that **“The FOBWR board authorizes the expenditure of up to \$500 for the purchase of owl pellets, with the money to come from San Bernard McGovern funds.”** The motion passed unanimously.

Mike Lange reported that he is working on several potential purchases of bottomland in Matagorda County, as well as the 250-acre Spears conservation tract on Oyster Creek south of Harris Reservoir. Processing of the 4,678-acre McNeill property has stalled because the meeting of the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission has been postponed. The Knobloch Foundation has pledged 10% of the \$13.5 million purchase price contingent on pledges of another \$675,000 (5%) by other sources; these moneys would increase the likelihood of funding from the MBCC.

Action Register: Active items are noted in the register attached to this report. Items completed since the January 10, 2020 board meeting are:

- Bylaw revisions were approved by the membership at the January 10, 2020 annual meeting.
- Interpretive signs for the Bobcat Woods, San Bernard Oak, and Cedar Lake Trails have been rendered per FWS specs and have been submitted to the regional office for approval.
- Password protection has been removed from our archives, allowing the downloading of material into our archive.
- A backup sound system for Birds-of-Prey has been purchased.
- Lisa and Phil volunteered to serve as focal point(s) on the Cannan Bend project.

Jennifer update:

- Student volunteers on spring break worked at Cannan Bend last week, but student volunteers scheduled to arrive next week have canceled.
- Absent these students, Friends will recruit a work crew to spread granite fines on Tuesday, March 24th (presuming that DEEP will be canceled; Jennifer to verify). Refuge staff will preposition mounds of granite fines along the trail path. Volunteers might bring a rake; staff will provide wheel barrows. Hot dogs may be provided (Marty to arrange)
- The complex is working on bringing basic utilities to the Cannan Bend site.
- Three interns will start on Monday, contracted to work six months on eradication of invasive plants and apple snails. Apple snail removal will start earlier than last year to capture them as they emerge from the muck.
- Interpretative panel designs have been finished by Fast Graphic Designers; their product will be sent to the FWS regional office in Albuquerque for approval. If needed, temporary versions of these panels will be printed for use at MC20.
- Work will continue on finishing the Bobcat Woods Trail; this includes railing for the Cacklebur Slough portion of the boardwalk, two spur boardwalk section giving access to the slough, benches, restoring a water well, and concrete sections of the trail. Marty is to confirm the deadline date for the extended completion of the Texas Parks and Wildlife grant for this trail.
- The walking tour for March be on the 20th, visiting the Palm Unit of the SBNWR. We will start at 8:30 am at the Complex Office, and car pool to the site.

- For the rest of the month, Jennifer will be focused on judging Junior Duck Stamp submissions.

Hickner Trail: Prodigy of Dick and Doris Hickner gathered at the Cannan Bend unit on March 6th to celebrate the naming of the new trail in their honor. Lisa will compose an article for The Facts based on background information provided by Phil, and acknowledge the \$100,000 donation by the Hickner Foundation to develop this property. The Hickner family support this and other activity that promotes our refuges.

Lisa and Kim will represent FOBWR at the May 29-31 **regional workshop** in Austin. Tom Schneider will attend as the TMCNWRC staff representative.

Grants and Projects: Refuge staff will power wash the boardwalks on the Bobcat Woods and San Bernard Oak Trails next week. Marty and Mike Mullins will follow with filming for showing at the information booth during MC20.

Submitted by

Marty Cornell, Secretary

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges.

FOBWR FINANCIAL STATEMENT, February, 2020

TDECU				\$131,455.00	
Merrill Lynch				\$419,320.26	
Cedar Lake Cut Lands Receivable				\$3,600.00	*A
Bobcat Woods Grant Receivable				\$41,723.86	
ACCOUNT BALANCE	-			\$596,099.12	
-	-				
FUNDED GRANTS and ALLOCATED FUNDS	Grantor	Total Awarded	Amount Spent	Amt Available	
20131230 McGovern Brazoria NWR non committed	Kathrine McGovern	\$272,279.33	\$135,033.28	\$137,246.05	
20131220 McGovern San Bernard NWR	Katherine McGovern	\$117,000.00	\$52,271.29	\$64,728.71	
20130919 Poole Track Land Acquisition	Trull Foundation	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	
20181231 Houston Endowment Land Acquisition 4	Houston Endowment	\$325,000.00	\$188,822.19	\$136,177.81	
20170811 Cedar Lake Plantation Trail	ATFN 17 FOBWR	\$62,155.96	\$35,437.57	\$26,718.39	
20160728 Cedar Lake Cut Lands See NOTES \$30,000.00 Reimbursement	USFWS	\$3,600.00	\$3,600.00	\$0.00	*A
20161017 Every Kid in Park	National Park Service	\$112,500.00	\$89,583.91	\$22,916.09	
20161205 Bobcat Woods Matching Funds Received	FOBWR	\$213,740.86	\$153,660.47	\$60,080.39	
plus ATFN 2015 funds plus receivable					
TOTAL ALLOCATED FUNDS		\$1,116,276.15	\$658,408.71	\$457,867.44	
FOBWR PROJECTS		Allocated	Spent		
46400 Birds of Prey 2019	FOBWR	\$16,686.28	\$1,776.12	\$14,910.16	*C
Migration Celebration	FOBWR	\$12,060.00	\$2,335.34	\$9,724.66	*D
Xmas bird count dinner reimbursement		\$540.16	\$540.16	\$0.00	
20161205 Morgan Storage Building San Bernard	FOBWR General Funds	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	
20171104 Bryan Adams Memorial Fund	Donations	\$16,759.00	\$15,585.78	\$1,173.22	
20170101 BNWR Donation Box	Donations	\$1,122.88	\$591.99	\$530.89	
20140403 Law Enforcement Restitution	Federal Court Fines	\$7,916.11	\$2,309.92	\$5,606.19	
20190428 Alex Grogard Kemp Ridley Fund	Donations	\$88.87	\$0.00	\$88.87	
OPERATIONS Merrill Lynch Dividend income		\$3,103.57	\$2,571.01	\$532.56	
20190601 ATFN 2019 Cannan Bend	FOBWR	\$105,406.29	\$0.00	\$105,406.29	*B
TOTAL FOBWR PROJECTS		\$164,183.16	\$25,710.32	\$138,472.84	
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR PROJECTS				-\$241.16	

TDECU SAVINGS

15.08

TOTAL Funds in Bank Accounts

\$550,790.34

COMPLETED PROJECTS OR GRANTS

NOTES

20161205 Bobcat Woods Trail is a receivable. Grant 160,000.00 plus \$53,641.00 ATFN fundraiser

*A 20160728 Cedar Lake Cut Lands is a receivable. We will receive funds as invoices are turned in.

*C 46400 Birds of Prey 2020 beginning funds balance \$13,911.28

*D Migration celebration 2020 beginning balance \$12,000.00
 January Moved \$1,595.00 negative web site maintenance balance from 2019 motion to operational expense account

9/1/19 Using Merrill Lynch dividend income for operational expenses.

*B 3/1/2020 Combined Hickner Memorial Fund \$51,540.00 and ATFN net \$53,866.29

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuge Board Action Register 13Mar20

Action Item	Who? Date Started?	Due Date?	Status	Comments
Develop a New Outdoor Environmental Education Display for our canopy	David/Lisa/Marty	Target May 8, 2020 board meeting for concept proposal	No action has yet occurred	Committee to define aesthetics and variations in content/message modules. Material options for signs and displays to be defined as basis for cost estimates. Check spring-mounted signs and GCBO-pipe frame type. Multiple events on the 7Mar20 illustrate the need for target-specific displays.
Contract for temporary webmaster to upgrade website	Lisa	Date not specified	Ongoing	BayStar has been contracted and has completed MC20 web page (we still need to provide input on exhibits). Easy access to BoP is needed. The next task is to update the FOBWR site. David Stark of Overnite Software has an interest in managing our websites; he needs to be interviewed for this task.
Develop text on FOBWR history for website	Ed Barrios	Sometime in 2020	Fixin to	Ed will review Friends archives stored at Complex office for early history (see J. Sanchez)
Develop a Succession Plan	Lisa, Mickey	Sometime in 2020	Researched succession planning	The Board needs a succession plan for Officers and Board Members and needs to set up a committee to do so. Each board member to fill out questionnaire to use to know what is important to the board. Make activities independent of person, archive documents. Lisa to resend questioner

Define role and responsibility of School Outreach Chair	Phil and Marty	On/Before 31Dec20	Action pending	Marty is to draft a statement for Phil to review. Noted that Vic Wade has become very active and will help fund raising.
Provide suggestions for a FOBWR logo and more formal shirts for board member to wear an business-type forums.	Lisa and Herb	Due date target not specified	Action pending	Lisa's graphic artist contact did not respond to our suggestions. Need another approach. [perhaps a high school art class project? Marty]
Construct ramp or steps at entrance of Morgan building	Oron	Need new deadline target	Action pending	Not enough room for a ramp; steps to be considered. Additional shelves are needed [Marty suggested a design for the back wall]
Arrange a thankyou meeting with 1st grader Alex Grogard	Lisa	As soon as convenient	Action pending	Lisa's invitation to the 17Apr20 kickoff will need to be withdrawn because of the cancellation of this event. Another path to recognition is needed.
Finish Bobcat Woods Trail	Curtis, Oron, Marty	Before June, 2020	underway	Boardwalk needs railings, spurs, and benches. Concrete contractor has yet to be found. Well needs to be rehabilitated.
Download financial records to our archives	Dick	not specified	Action pending	Marty will provide path for folders. Password protections have now been removed.
Download Migration Records to our archives	Marty	not specified	Action pending	Now possible with password protection removed.
Down-load ATFN Records to our archives	Marty	not specified	Action pending	Now possible with password protection removed.

Download Outreach records to our archives	David	not specified	Action pending	Now possible with password protection removed.
Download Governance items into our Archives	Marty	May, 2020 board meeting	As soon as convenient	
Board to develop annual goals	Lisa	As soon as convenient	Actively Working	Lisa will set up a meeting. [Marty note: Goals are not time-bound, whereas Objectives are; they should be SMART]
Provide cost estimate for demolishing the Hudson Woods boardwalk and replacing with granite fines	Jennifer	January board meeting	TBD	Funds to come from McGovern pool
Refresh the Discovery Center Display	Lisa, Phil, Tom, Herb	not specified	Ongoing	"Working on costs from taxidermist and his availability" 10Jan20
TDECU Relationship	Lisa	not specified	Working	
Membership of FOBWR	this action item needs clarification. Minutes suggest a discussion but no action			
More promotion of refuges	Lisa	not specified	not stated	Need to discuss and work out plan. Spring break option.
Signage at BNWR trails	Jennifer	not specified		Visitors frequently ask about trails near the Discovery Center; Alligator Marsh could be developed as a loop trail.
Confirm TPWD due date of the BWT grant	Marty, 13Mar20	O/B 30Mar20	in progress	Contact Trey Cooksy of TPWD
Send letter to The Facts on the naming of the Hickner Trail on Cannan Bend	Lisa and Phil, 13Mar20	O/B 30Mar20	in progress	Sanctioned by the Hickner Family