



FRIENDS OF BRAZORIA WILDLIFE REFUGES

Minutes of the Board Meeting

Friday, March 11, 2022 Venue: Gulf Coast Bird Observatory

Members in Attendance: Oron Atkins, Ed Barrios, Marty Cornell, Mickey Dufilho, Lisa Myers, Kim Richardson, Dick Schaffhausen, Mary Schwartz, Regina Tippet

Members Absent: Phil Huxford, Ruby Lewis, Neil McLain

Refuge Staff in Attendance: Tom Schneider

General Members/Guests in Attendance: none

Lisa Myers called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM.

The proposed **agenda** was accepted after adding discussion of a contribution to the NWRA.

The **minutes** of the January 14, 2022 meeting of the board and the General Membership meeting were unanimously approved after a motion by Ed and a second by Mickey.

Interim Motions: Since the January board meeting, two motions were made and passed.

- “The FOBWR board authorizes the expenditure of up to \$600 for the cleaning and repair of DEEP microscopes and binoculars, with funding from the McGovern-Brazoria reserve” was made on January 28th via email by Ed Barrios and seconded by Dick Schaffhausen and passed with ten yeas and one no response.
- “The FOBWR board amends the motion of January 28, 2022 to authorize the expenditure of up to \$900 for the cleaning and repair of DEEP microscopes and binoculars, with funding from the McGovern-Brazoria reserve” was moved by Ed Barrios and seconded by Mickey Dufilho at the February 11th MC22 planning meeting and passed with eight yeas representing all voting board members present.

Refuge Update: No refuge managers attended.

DEEP: Tom reported that, because of Covid19 restrictions, BISD would not sanction field trips and thus not pay for school bus transportation. The principal of Freeport Intermediate decided to use her discretionary funds to pay for bus transport for four seventh-grade field trips. Beau Watson, BISD science coordinator, gave assurance that the district would fund the field trips next year.

The board explored the idea to pay for the cost of bus transport, but was ambivalent in proceeding with this idea. It was noted that if the district has funds to bus students to sporting events, bussing for field trips should carry equal weight.

Action Register: The action register is attached at the end of these minutes. **New action items are highlighted below.** One action item was removed:

- The purchase of a new UTV for sea turtle patrols is not warranted; the policy of support from the State of Texas for egg incubation at the Padre Island hatchery needs to be clarified.

Grants and Projects:

- Application for a Recreational Trails Grant from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will not be pursued this year because no target was identified.
- At the suggestion of Lisa, a Letter of Intent was submitted by Marty for a \$76,000 grant from the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) under their Toyota-sponsored “2022 Biodiversity Conservation Grant: Enhancing Pollinator Habitat.” Our proposal, *Prairie Restoration for Pollinators and Public Enrichment*, would restore three parcels to native prairie conditions: ~three acres at Teal Pond on the Cross Trails Road at the Brazoria NWR, ~two acres at the Complex headquarters near Brazoria, Texas, and ~three acres at the entrance approach to the Bobcat Woods Loop Trail at the San Bernard NWR. NEEF will select candidates from LOI submissions to apply for grants with a detailed application.
- Ernest Cook received input on his rejected submission (in our name) to the NRCS for \$7,000,000 for the purchase of the Peach Creek Forest tract in Wharton County. Based on this information, Ernest will resubmit.
- Lisa found no restrictions in IRS regulations for 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations to donate to individuals undergoing medical hardship. However, many felt that doing so would violate our specific Mission Statement. Board members are free to make individual donations.

Ace volunteers: Ed noted that, as the Complex is understaffed and thus behind on trail maintenance, FOBWR might consider contracting with ACE (AmeriCorps) to help with the needed work.

Contact Lists: Ed will develop and maintain a master spreadsheet of all FOBWR contacts from corporate sponsorship and activities such as outreach events, Migration Celebration, Birds-of-Prey donors and participants, ATFN donors and participants, volunteers, members. Board members are to forward such information to him.

Financial Report: The Financial Report for February, 2022 is attached to these minutes. Regina noted that

- Our one-year Merrill Lynch CD matured and earned \$88.
- A check for \$7,000 was received from EquistarChemical for the construction of Modus transmission towers.
- Five members have paid for life membership: Oron Atkins, Dave Brandes, Mary Schwartz, Rose Wagner Gary Basinger.
- The \$3,500 spent for signage closes the current signage initiative.

Debit Card: Regina noted that approval by the FOBWR board, as reflected in our official minutes, is a required prerequisite for TDECU to issue a debit card for our organization. Toward this end, Marty Cornell moved, and Dick Schaffhausen seconded the motion that “**The FOBWR board authorizes TDECU to issue an ATM/debit card to the holders of the FOBWR account—the president and the treasurer. Such card is to be tied to the checking account and used solely for organizational expenses.**” This motion passed with unanimous consent.

Audit: pursuant to the FOBWR bylaws, a formal audit is to be contracted to certify our 2021 books. We will use Curtis Craig, CPA, who conducted the 2018 audit. Regina is reconciling our financial records for the period of January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2021 as a precursor to the formal audit.

Web and Facebook: Dick will update our data to reflect the latest refuge walk and a promotion of the April 16th Takeout Lunch. **Dick would like to update the Friends brochure; Ed will convert the current PDF of the brochure to editable form.**

Partnership Agreement: Kim reported that progress has stalled at Region 2 in approving our new Partnership agreement because they claim our submission did not include the required supplemental information. Kim did in fact include this information in our package. However, no one at the regional office will talk to her, claiming that all correspondence must pass through the Complex management (Cody). As a FWS Mentor, Marty deals with Emily DeLanzo, our Regional Coordinator and will ask her help to get this issue resolved.

Maintenance committee; Oron is looking for direction from Cody and Curtis. Several trees fell on the San Bernard Oak Trail boardwalk and some repair is needed. We have materials on hand to reconstruct the short boardwalk over the swell at the pipeline crossing, but need the area to dry to allow the setting of posts.

Projects: Direction is needed from Cody on the repair or replacement for a Crosstrails shelter using the \$500 grant from the TMN-COT chapter. The first shelter was demolished because of extensive hurricane damage; the second shelter is in need of roof repair.

Four fishing piers are slated to be built at Cannan Bend; Oron is waiting for direction for Cody to start.

We will install a poop station at the Big Slough Trail.

Birds of Prey Program: Dick made a motion, seconded by Mickey that **“The FOBWR board authorizes up to \$1,000 to pay for Phil Huxford’s out-of-pocket expenses incurred in his activities supporting our Birds-of Prey Program. The funds would come from the Birds-of-Prey subaccount.”** This motion was unanimously approved.

An individual or committee is needed to replace Phil as he phases out of his leadership of our BoP Project. Activities include scheduling, fundraising, and hosting programs.

Takeout Fundraiser: Dick is arranging a central site in northern Brazoria County, possibly Camp Mohawk, to deliver hot takeout meals. So far, seven tickets have been sold for this service.

Sales of tickets have been sluggish. Steve Polemenakos has donated \$250, which will be matched by Merrill Lynch-Bank of America.

Refuge Saturdays:

- The Bobcat Woods Loop Trail is in good shape for the March 26th open house. Ed will refresh the signs in the pollinator garden. Activities will include birding (Tom Morris will position his

spotting scope on the Wolfweed observation platform), a scavenger hunt, reptiles, butterflies, and animal pelts. Ruby will line up volunteers.

- The Dow Woods open house will be held on April 23rd.
- The Cedar Lake Plantation Trail open house will be on May. The trail still has several fallen trees blocking the way, and extensive grooming is needed.

Memorial to Barbara Burkhardt: Oron and Lisa will develop a concept for memorializing Barbara at the BWT Pollinator Garden. Ideas include a memorial bench or an entrance arch. These concepts would be presented to Donna's daughters for their sanction.

Membership: Mickey reported that 16 members have paid their annual dues, 24 have yet to pay. Mickey suggests that 6 unpaid members should be removed from our membership role.

NWRA Donation: Noting that our last donation to the NWRA was in 2019, Ed moved that **"The FOBWR board approves a \$1,000 donation to the National Wildlife Refuge Association, with funds to come from our operations subaccount."** Mickey seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved. Lisa will send a letter to accompany our check.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:48 pm.

Submitted by Marty Cornell, Secretary

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuge Board Action Register January 14, 2022

Action Item	Who? Date Started?	Due Date?	Status	Comments
Develop a New Outdoor Environmental Education Display for our canopy	Lisa/ Marty	Target 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. Need high quality images; pull
Develop text on FOBWR history for website	Ed Barrios	Sometime in 2021	Fixin to	Ed has reviewed documents back to 1994 (the start of FOBWR), and scanned newsletters through 2003. He will put these archives on our web site. When tax season ends this year.
Develop a Succession Plan	Lisa, Mickey	Sometime in 2021	Researched succession planning	Kim is looking into protocol (bylaws, P&P), board consensus is needed to define skill needs. <i>Want thoughts for November meeting. Want diversity to broaden pool. We need someone with Ravi's contact expertise. Hire executive director.? Hire part time for corporate and community involvement. New tmn disease kapline; grant writer; back of brain; how could it work.</i>
Arrange a thankyou meeting with 1st grader Alex Grogard	Lisa	As soon as convenient	Action pending	It was suggested at the 12Nov21 board meeting that we could present Alex with a plaque including an honorary life membership.
Download Migration Records to our archives	Marty	not specified	Action pending	Awaiting access protocol. Dick is charged to find a site with public viewing access and with restricted editing access. Dick was going to order idrive cloud storage; stimied by need for email address. Refugefriends1994@gmail.com perhaps nextweek
Download ATFN Records to our archives	Marty	not specified	Action pending	Awaiting access protocol
Download Governance items into our Archives	Marty	May 2020 board meeting	As soon as convenient	Awaiting access protocol

Refresh the Discovery Center Display	Lisa, Phil, Tom, Herb	not specified	Ongoing	Phil has identified another taxidermist and will make contact with him in the next few weeks. Still looking for a taxidermist. Tom will look for. Another Open House for the Chamber of Commerce is suggested for this spring . openhouses for spring; coc? Personal invitations preferred. A friends CAP?
More promotion of refuges	Lisa	not specified	not stated	
Create a Grant Solutions account to enable applying for federal grants	Regina	Not specified		The ASAP system is used for reimbursements. Regina will pursue a Grant Solutions account. Need to get reimbursed for black rail
Master Contact Spreadsheet	Ed	Ongoing		Construct a searchable file of FOBWR contacts, e.g., corporate sponsors and donors, sponsors and participants for MC, BoP, ATFN, members, volunteers, outreach
Update Friends brochure	Ed then Dick	O/B May board meeting		Ed will convert the existing PDF to an editable document. Dick will update.
Design concept for B. Burkhart memorial	Oron and Lisa			A idea is a memorial entrance arch for the BWT pollinator garden.

FOBWR FINANCIAL STATEMENT, February 28, 2022

TDECU				\$139,963.39
Merrill Lynch Cash				\$295,240.63
Merrill Lynch Certificates of Deposit				\$98,311.00
ACCOUNT BALANCE				\$533,515.02
-				-
FUNDED GRANTS and ALLOCATED FUNDS	Grantor	Total Awarded	Amount Spent	Amt Available
20131230 McGovern Brazoria NWR non committed	Katherine McGovern	295,279.33	171,554.53	123,724.80
20131220 McGovern San Bernard NWR	Katherine McGovern	137,000.00	70,248.21	66,751.79
20130919 Poole Track Land Acquisition	Trull Foundation	10,000.00	-	10,000.00

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20181231 Houston Endowment Land Acquisition 4	Houston Endowment	325,000.00	282,872.19	42,127.81	* E
20201228 Houston Endowment Land Acquisition 5	Houston Endowment	150,000.00	36,100.00	113,900.00	
20211229 Damuth Foundation Land Acquisition	Damuth Foundation	35,000.00	17,550.00	17,450.00	
20220112 Equistar Chemicals - Motus Tower Fees	Equistar Chemicals	7,000.00	-	7,000.00	
20210722 Black Rail Habitat (\$78,000 Reimbursable grant)	USFWS	-	-	-	
TOTAL ALLOCATED FUNDS		\$959,279.33	\$578,324.93	\$373,954.40	
FOBWR PROJECTS		Amt Allocated	Amount Spent	Amt Available	
46400 Birds of Prey	FOBWR	21,438.00	-	21,438.00	
Migration Celebration	FOBWR	21,018.75	105.00	20,913.75	
20170101 BNWR Donation Box	Donations	1,596.35	-	1,596.35	
20201231 General Donations, Membership Fees, Etc.	Donations	17,647.51	-	17,647.51	
20210101 Barbara Burkhardt	Memorial	840.00	-	840.00	
20140403 Law Enforcement Restitution	Federal Court Fines	1,835.35	-	1,835.35	
20211112 Maintenance of Public Use Facilities	FOBWR	18,399.86	-	18,399.86	
20190601 ATFN 2019 Cannan Bend	FOBWR	211,436.29	167,914.72	43,521.57	* B
TOTAL FOBWR PROJECTS		\$294,212.11	\$168,019.72	\$126,192.39	
OPERATIONS		\$12,473.37	\$675.13	\$11,798.24	* E
FUNDS IN TRANSIT				\$21,569.99	* I
TDECU SAVINGS				\$15.70	
TOTAL Funds in Bank Accounts				\$533,530.72	

COMPLETED PROJECTS OR GRANTS

NOTES

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

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

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

*G Merrill Lynch account now includes two Certificates of Deposit for \$50,000 each. Maturity
dates are Feb 03, 2023, Feb 20, 2024

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