



FRIENDS OF BRAZORIA WILDLIFE REFUGES

Minutes of the Board Meeting

Friday, March 22, 2024 Venue: 325 Timbercreek Dr., Lake Jackson

Members in Attendance: Oron Atkins, Ed Barrios Marty Cornell, Mickey Dufilho, Phil Huxford, Ruby Lewis, , Mary Schwartz, Regina Tippet, Cris Tobola.

Members Absent: Dick Schaffhausen

Refuge Staff in Attendance: Brian Winton

General Members/Guests in Attendance: Barbara Whaley

President Mary Schwartz called the meeting to order at 12:01 pm.

Agenda: the agenda was unanimously accepted after a move to so do by Marty and a second by Oron.

Minutes: A motion was made by Mickey, seconded by Phil, to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2024 meeting of the board; this motion passed unanimously. Discussion amended the draft minutes of the January 12, 2024 meeting of the General Membership to include Mary's year-end-in-review presentation. Oron moved to accept these amended minutes; Mickey seconded this motion. The motion as amended passed by unanimous vote in favor.

Interim Motions: There were no motions made since the January board meeting.

Grant Activity: Marty processed the 2024 Phillips66 \$12,000 grant request for our Birds-of-Prey program on March 26th as per the instructions of Jessica Follett. Phillips uses Benevity Causes to administer their grants.

Mary noted that TDECU now has a foundation for community support. **Marty will apply for a TDECU grant to fund the construction of a Stream Trailer.**

Land Acquisition: no discussion at this meeting

Refuge Update: Bryon Winton

Lee Gaston has been promoted to be the Complex Visitor Service Manager, replacing Tom Schneider. Lee will train at the Bosque del Apache refuge in New Mexico during the month of April

Bryan Johnson is serving two days per week at the Prairie Chicken NWR.

Hanna Beckett will complete her contract in May, having served as an intern for one year, which will give her some priority for a future hire by the FWS.

Prescribed burns are targeted for 18,000 acres in the near future (outside of the black rail breeding season). Conditions require an north wind to blow smoke offshore.

The Complex partnership legal agreement with Brazoria County is still a work-in-progress. This agreement is for the management of refuge lands adjoining Hanson County Park.

The annual Volunteer Appreciation Lunch will be held on April 18th at the Clute community center.

Hana has completed an inventory of signs on refuge property, noting those that need to be removed, repaired, or replaced. Bryan will provide this electronic inventory to **FOBWR, who will consider assuming the role to maintain and approve signage.**

Metal edging along the south trail of Dow Woods is being removed and the parking lot will be expanded south.

The addition of up to 55,000 acres to the Aransas and Big Boggy NWRs has been approved. This expansion was motivated by the international Crane Foundation to accommodate the growing number of overwintering Whooping Cranes.

Additional upgrading of the Discovery Center display was made; the \$3,600 cost covered from refuge funds.

Action Items are listed at the end of these minutes. New action items are **highlighted in yellow** throughout these minutes. Items completed or removed are:

- The Cannan Bend Lake has been stocked with 20,000 minnows, 2,000 bluegills, and 500 large-mouth bass, paid with Cannan Bend funds.
- The Discovery Center display will not be fumigated. Animals are pretreated by the taxidermists. It is also suggested that the room be fogged once a year.
- Refuge rules prohibit the donation of out-of-service UTVs.

Treasurer's Report: The February, 2024 Financial Report is attached to the end of these minutes. Regina noted that we have two CDs remaining, one maturing in June, 2024 and the other maturing in June 2025. **Dick will consult with Steve Polemenakos at Merrill Lynch and recommend the reinvestment option for these matured funds.**

Funds from the fourth Houston Endowment grant have been spent, and only \$52,727.81 remains in the fifth Houston Endowment grant.

\$ 16,972.00 remains in our grant from the Hershey Foundation; upon depletion and our reconciliation report, Mike and/or Ernest will apply for another \$50,000 grant.

Web and Social Media: no report

Maintenance Committee: no report

Capital Projects: no report.

Birds of Prey: Phil reported that the program for Steven F. Austin was canceled at the last minute. The school showed little consideration for this action's impact on the falconers or volunteers who would have provided this program at no cost to the school

2024 Migration Celebration: Ed emailed request for support letters to eleven industrial corporations in southern Brazoria County; Mickey sent a similar letter to Tenaris, located in Matagorda County. MEGlobal will not support Migration Celebration because of their misperception that FOBWR made negative comments about industry at one of our outreach events. CPChem asked for our plan to measure the impact of Migration Celebration.

Barbara has posted our new volunteer sign-up program on line.

John O'Connell has not yet confirmed the availability of the TAMU Stream Trailer. It was built in Oklahoma for about \$15,000.

Membership: Mickey reported that we have 20 members who have paid their 2024 dues (out of 50 total annual members). With the addition of James Heller and Susan Conaty, we now have 44 lifetime members plus Skyway Energy who joined with a lifetime membership. Friends also has 15 chamber of commerce members.

Outreach: The Spring Break Open House week at the Discovery Center brought 1,395 visitors, with 333 guests attending on Wednesday of that week. Several were repeat visitors. They came from 21 different states plus Canada and Puerto Rico.

Upcoming;

- On April 10th, Nancy Brown will be at the Discovery Center to transmit her 35-minute live "Virtual Wild" program to participating 4th-grade classes in the Houston area. The focus will be on adaptation, and feature alligators with Ruby and David Heinicke.
- Mary will represent Friends at an outreach program at Brazos Bend State Park.

Monthly Walks: Monthly walks are on hold through the summer. The next Monthly Walk will be on add in kayak walks on hold through summer.

Next Meeting May 17th,2024 at GCBO starting at noon.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 pm

Submitted by Marty Cornell, Secretary

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges.

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuge Board Action Register March 22, 2024

Action Item	Who? Date Started	Due Date	Status	Comments
Develop text on FOBWR history for website	Ed Barrios	TBD	Fixin to	Ed has gathered old newsletters and will use this as the basis for this history
Develop a Succession Plan	Mickey	TBD	Researched succession planning; no further action	The NWRA held a webinar on this subject on September 20, 2023
Refresh the Discovery Center Display	Phil Marty, Cris	not specified	Ongoing	The work to date (Oct23) has been paid for. Looking to add coyote and perhaps another specimen.
Master Contact Spreadsheet	Ed	Before MC24		Construct a searchable file of FOBWR contacts, e.g., corporate sponsors and donors, sponsors and participants for MC, BoP, ATFN, members, volunteers, outreach. Marty and Lisa have given lists to Ed. Ed is in the process of combining all contact lists.
Design concept for B. Burkhart memorial	Ed and Phil		\$840 in donations have been received.	Ideas considered and rejected include a memorial entrance arch for the BWT pollinator garden, a granite bench with an etched design, a concrete bench with bench with imbedded tiles, and a stained glass hanging.

			Need a proposal to cover all deceased volunteers. Phil needs to look at site on BNWR, draw up a design. Funded memorials for deceased volunteers become problematic as the numbers increase. A policy is needed.
Create informational PowerPoint presentation on refuges & FOBWR to present to community organizations/groups	Mary	Summer of 2024	Mary will develop a new 15-min PPT with segments of drone footage. Mary wants to include drone videos. Mike Mullens is willing to fly his drone.
Investigate using our webpage to serve as an archive	Dick and Cris Tobola	Report at Nov. 10, 2023 board meeting	The latest thinking is to archive the materials on our website. No need to restrict accessibility. Jan, 2024 still looking into it
Check out the cost of a UV film to prevent sunlight degradation of the DC display	Marty	Report at Nov. 2023 board meeting	Film would be preferable to blinds Marty found films are available at several Houston outlets.
Determine if FOBWR should pursue a grant for engineering Salt Lake breakwater	Brian and Bryar	On or before Jan24 board meeting	Instigated by rejection of our grant application to Galveston Bay Foundation. 1/24 Need to apply for other grants for engineering Try again with Galveston Bay Foundation.

<p>Add flora & fauna data to the report that maps oil/gas location on complex lands To satellite tracts.</p>	<p>Ed and Phil</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>Bryan would like spiral-bound copies of the amended report. 1/24 Phil gave a few mucker surveys to Bryan</p>
<p>Determine the desire of school districts west of the Brazos for DEEP, and limits to do this</p>	<p>Phil → Ed</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>Stimulated by desire of P66, CPChem for fund more programs 1/24 – Phil will give names of school contacts to Ed to follow-up– Van Vleck, etc.</p>
<p>Look into Google Workspace as a fundraising tool</p>	<p>Cris</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>1/24 – Cris has not figured this out dick signed up on Microsoft for non-profit; Mary checked out google website, needs to create a friends account</p>
<p>Redo web page for targeted donation</p>	<p>Cris and Dick</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>1/24 Working on it</p>
<p>Update membership application forms</p>	<p>Cris</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>1/24 Cris will work on it</p>
<p>Look at Idrive for archiving</p>	<p>Dick</p>		<p>Re-look at FatCow as this is an accessible. retrieval library.</p>
<p>Apply for a TDECU grant to build a Stream Trailer</p>	<p>Marty</p>	<p>In April, 2024</p>	<p>TDECU grants are not for capital projects, but rather for event sponsorship.</p>

Maintain signage on
refuge trails

Not
determine
d

This could be paid for
from our maintenance
fund

Recommend
reinvestment strategy for
matured CDs

Dick
Schaffhau
sen

Dick will consult with
Steve Polemenakos of
Merrill Lynch

FOBWE FINANCIAL STATEMENT February 2024 Final

TDECU				\$56,213.93	*
Merrill Lynch Cash				\$363,262.69	A
Merrill Lynch Certificates of Deposit				\$102,218.98	*F
Prepaid - McCoy's Deposit Account				\$3,859.88	
ACCOUNT BALANCE				\$525,555.48	
FUNDED GRANTS and ALLOCATED FUNDS	Grantor	Total Awarded	Amount Spent	Amt Available	
20131230 McGovern Brazoria NWR non committed	Katherine McGovern	345,279.33	197,484.49	147,794.84	
20131220 McGovern San Bernard NWR	Katherine McGovern	157,000.00	111,269.39	45,730.61	
20130919 Poole Tract Land Acquisition	Trull Foundation	10,000.00	-	10,000.00	
20201228 Houston Endowment Land Acquisition 5	Houston Endowment	150,000.00	97,272.19	52,727.81	
20220112 Equistar Chemicals - Motus Tower Fees	Equistar Chemicals	7,000.00	664.00	6,336.00	
20221101 Knobloch Foundation Land Acquisition	Knobloch Foundation	118,304.00	29,350.00	88,954.00	* C
20221129 Hershey Foundation Land Acquisition	Hershey Foundation	47,322.00	30,350.00	16,972.00	* C

TOTAL ALLOCATED FUNDS		\$834,905.33	\$466,390.07	\$368,515.26	
FOBWR PROJECTS		Amt Allocated	Amount Spent	Amt Available	
46400 Birds of Prey	FOBWR	6,560.06	-	6,560.06	
Migration Celebration	FOBWR	24,720.12	3,692.45	21,027.67	
20170101 BNWR Donation Box	Donations	2,977.85	-	2,977.85	
20201231 General Donations, Membership, Etc.	Donations	9,353.25	-	9,353.25	
20210101 Barbara Burkhardt	Memorial	840.00	-	840.00	
20140403 Law Enforcement Restitution	Federal Court Fines	3,121.35	-	3,121.35	
20211112 Maintenance of Public Use Facilities	FOBWR	16,961.19	-	16,961.19	
20190601 ATFN 2019 Cannan Bend	FOBWR	211,436.29	175,862.30	35,573.99	* B
TOTAL FOBWR PROJECTS		\$275,970.11	\$179,554.75	\$96,415.36	
OPERATIONS		\$41,919.98	\$1,235.83	\$40,684.15	* D
FUNDS IN TRANSIT				\$19,956.41	* E
TDECU SAVINGS				\$15.70	
TOTAL Funds in Bank Accounts				\$521,711.30	

COMPLETED PROJECTS OR GRANTS

NOTES

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

* A December 2022, Transferred \$100,000 from TDECU to Merrill Lynch; Oct 2023 transferred \$50,000 from Merrill Lynch to TDECU

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

* C Jan 2023 Per grant agreements, 5.3571% allocated to Admin expenses

* D Sept 2022 Per board approval, \$15,000 reclassified from General Donations to Operations

*F Merrill Lynch account includes two Certificates of Deposit for \$50,000 each. Maturity dates are June 21, 2024 and June 23, 2025.

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