

Friends of the Kissimmee Prairie Preserve Inc.
FINAL minutes
February 9, 2015
Submitted by Paul Gray

- 1) Call to order: Tim calls meeting to 1:20 PM
 - a. Roll call—sign-in sheet
 - i. Paul Miller, KPPSP biologist, as CSO member)
 - ii. Evan Hall, KPPSP manager
 - iii. Chris Clauson, Park Service Specialist KPPSP
 - iv. Deen Mountain, CSO Board Member
 - v. Paul Gray, CSO Board Member, Secretary
 - vi. Christina Evans, Treasurer
 - vii. Stan Czaplicki, citizen
 - viii. Donna Bollenbach
 - ix. Jason David, Park Service Specialist
 - b. Minutes: Christine moved approval, Donna second, approved
 - c. Agenda approved
 - i. Christina asked to change our mailing address to her address for convenience but it was decided to leave it the way it is for now—KPPSP will forward mail to Christina. Bank statements go to Deen now.
- 2) Officer election
 - a. Slate: Tim President; Donna VP; Christina Treasurer; Paul Secretary.
Unanimously approved
- 3) Treasurer's report. Paul moved to approve, Tim second, approved
 - a. Attached. Current balance of \$12,366.71
 - i. Member renewal has been good but not growing much. Website members keep increasing in number but don't pay.
- 4) Manager's report
 - a. Evan does not have a list of things he needs from CSO; Paul has some items; Evan might like to sponsor a volunteer appreciation event that the CSO could help with since the State no longer sponsors a volunteer day. The CSO can take funding requests at any time if Evan requests.
 - b. Evan asked us to pay \$11/year for a Sky Calendar subscription (see photo), unanimously approved
 - c. Chris Clauson knows of a red flashlight filter we could get for our red flashlight issues, sticks on, can get your logo put on it
 - d. KPPSP received \$200k for habitat improvement
 - e. KPPSP needs to collect on the cattle lease, lessee can pay with in kind services. Payment is based on animal units.

- f. Will start implementing new burn recommendations, especially related to Grasshopper Sparrow management. This is start of the season. They have had issues with getting burn approvals
- g. Jason David came on board at KPPSP, now have full complement of staff. Katie starts at Highlands Hammock today; Matt is applying for new positions. No camp host right now but peak of visitor season is passing
- h. KPPSP had a panther release, the panther has crossed the river to APAFR
- i. Hog contract has been terminated, looking for new contractor; no staff at KPPSP are certified to shoot hogs presently within FPS; Evan looking in to night vision and a new rifle for hog control
- j. Equestrian paddock upgrades are still pending; It was asked if a dog pen/run be useful too, but no resolution agreed to.
- k. Astronomy pad is busy during new moons. Bill Nigg does programs. Five plots are available on the astronomy pad for campers.

5) Secession Plan/New Agreement

- a. We were sent a new CSO agreement template and CSO Handbook from the State.
- b. Should CSO leave state oversight and form a separate entity that still helps the KPPSP? Friends of the Okeechobee Battlefield State Park are not state affiliated. Being independent might be less paperwork for us. The sunset clause is a concern to us—hard to gain trust for large/estate-type donations. Issues: insurance, liability, sunset clause, KPPSP could be told not to work with us, state could form a replacement CSO, if we were sunsetted—would our money go?
- c. Board action: the deadline to sign it is _____ [unknown—Tim or Evan need to look up due date] and we can make a schedule to meet it]. we need to read the documents, send Donna our comments, and vote by email on whether to sign it or not.

6) Viking Lot

- a. Should we purchase a lot in Viking as a benefit to establish a visiting researcher center? We don't have funds for a building but maybe put an RV there? Lots are relatively cheap but zoning, platting and other issues should be investigated.
 - i. Park is not attracting as many researchers as would be expected if the logistical limitations (housing) were removed.
- b. Evan has been looking at the Triple Diamond Ranch, it is #7 on the Florida Forever list. It has buildings that would meet all needs if purchased. There also is Audubon's Ordway-Whittell fund that could build a place here. Both timelines are uncertain.
- c. Board action: Paul Gray will try to find a realtor who could inform us; Tim and Donna will look on internet for info on properties, sales, etc.

- 7) Unfinished business & correspondence
 - a. Deen submitted a report on getting a prairie buggy (see Appendix)
 - i. He concludes we are too small to finance this at this point unless a major donor is found to help. Plus we don't have personnel to staff it either
 - ii. Getting a concessionaire partner might be an option
 - iii. KPPSP had 40-45,000 visitors last year, making this more feasible all the time
 - iv. Could we use Ordway-Whittell funds to help with the buggy?
 - b. We need a brochure for the KPPSP, **Christina is working on it**
- 8) Board member reports
 - a. Newsletter: Jen used to help a lot, we need to find replacement. It was noted that staff post notices on boards in the park that we could use in the newsletter with a little effort. **We need staff to be link between CSO and postings.** **Evan**, get a request they can cover in a staff meeting
- 9) New business
 - a. Visitor appreciation day for KPPSP **in planning**
 - b. Visiting research center—could we partner with Archbold? . **Paul Gray will invite Hilary and Betsey to tour KPPSP** to discuss research center/partnership ideas.
 - c. Paul Miller is redoing the 10-year plan.
 - d. Plant walk. April 25
 - i. Need a burn 2-3 weeks before to get Calapogon bloom (Zone 1?).
 - ii. **Should we borrow the TNC buggy for event?**
 - e. **Need funds to buy herbicide for cogon grass in Viking since they do not control it well. Forest Service might have assistance funds—Paul Miller says. Could we check on that for outreach to Viking? We can't buy the glyphosate/amazopine products without a license. Tim will look in to options.**
 - f. **CSO remembers are reminded to send a form to Chris to record our time**
- 10) Audience comments
 - a. none

Adjourned at 4 PM

Appendix: Treasurer's report

FRIENDS OF KISSIMMEE PRAIRIE PRESERVE INC.

Treasurer's Report

Reporting Period: Dec.11, 2014 to Feb. 7, 2015

Balance on hand at date of last report - Dec. 11, 2014 **\$ 11,175.34**

Receipts since last report:

Donations Box, Cash*	115.00
Donation for buggy use, Friends of JDSPark	868.00
Other Donations to General Fund	165.00
Interest	.02
Membership Dues	275.00
Wildflower Walk Event Fees**	34.00

Total Receipts: \$ 1457.02

Disbursements:

Paypal Fees and charges	6.78
Upgrade Website for 2 years, Weebly	159.00
Dues, Okeechobee Chamber of Commerce	100.00

Total Disbursements: \$ 265.71

Current Balance: \$12,366.58

Notes: \$12,082.16 in checking
\$250.49 in savings account
\$33.93 in PayPal

Current FGSP Fund: \$2,353.99
Current Dark Skies Fund: \$ 63.05
General and Operating: \$9949.54

*\$15 cash in donation box to FGXP fund by request

** Chargeback was resolved in our favor

Paid Memberships as of Feb 7, 2015:

49 -- 28 Individual (1 patron), 19 family (32+ members), 2 corporate
WA shows 58 active members -- the real number is probably around
68 since not all of the family memberships have family members registered

Prepared by: *Christina Evans, Treasurer*

Appendix: submitted by Deen Mountain

Proposal: Swamp Buggy Purchase
February 2015

I. Friends of Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park should purchase a new Swamp Buggy of a size capable of carrying up to 16-20 passengers.

II. Friends of KPPSP could assume operation of the swamp buggy tours.

Findings and Analysis:

I. Buy a new Swamp Buggy:

An informal inquiry for the cost estimate of a 16 passenger vehicle indicated a range of \$60,000 to \$80,000. Based on typical financial lending terms, a monthly debt service (loan payments for \$60,000 and \$80,000) would be \$12,624 to \$16,836 per year based on a rate of 6%, and a loan term of 7 years. It would be very difficult to find a special purpose lender who would extend a loan for this purpose. Lenders typically extend loans based on proven ability to pay as a commercial business, assets, liabilities, and a proven history of ability to pay based on income and expense flow. With Friends of KPPSP being a non-profit entity, such a loan would not be feasible when considering our current assets (mostly cash) of around \$10,000, and membership base of 40 to 60 members providing an annual revenue flow in the range of \$1,500 annually.

Attached is Sheet1, showing a grid of Friends' membership dues revenue, typical loan costs, and a simple revenue estimate showing the net income for both the KPPSP current swamp buggy operation, and the proposed operation after purchasing and borrowing a larger 16 person swamp buggy.

The proposal could be possible with a 16 capacity vehicle purchased with a loan, however it would more likely result in cash flow at break-even or even less after considering actual operating expenses for the swamp buggy. Note that an increase of tour fees would be required to be set at \$24 per tour with 16 passenger capacity on the vehicle, and that at least 4 tours per day be conducted during the peak season from November thru April.

II. In response to item II, the recommendation is to continue with the current operating and maintenance system, under control of the KPPSP staff. The DEP park rangers and maintenance technicians currently provide a most efficient system for leading tours, providing fuel, and ongoing maintenance of the swamp buggy system under the State of FL DEP budget. This is based on the assumption that Friends does not now have a current membership base of volunteers and resources to provide the daily logistics to run a buggy tour operation.

In conclusion, bank financing is most likely not feasible with the current levels of assets and membership levels for Friends of KPPSP. Seeking grants, and/or State DEP procurement are the most likely sources to obtain a new, higher capacity vehicle for KPPSP.

Prepared by: Deen Mountain
Member of the Friends of KPPSP Board

Friends of KPPSP
Swamp Buggy Feasibility

		Annual Revenue:				
Dues:		\$10	\$20	\$30	\$50	\$100
	40	\$400	\$800	\$1,200	\$2,000	\$4,000
	50	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$2,500	\$5,000
	60	\$600	\$1,200	\$3,600	\$3,000	\$6,000
	75	\$750	\$1,500	\$2,250	\$3,750	\$7,500
	100	\$1,000	\$4,000	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
	200	\$2,000	\$8,000	\$6,000	\$10,000	\$20,000

Typical Financing:
7 years

Loan Amount		\$60,000	\$70,000	\$80,000	\$90,000	\$100,000
Interest Rate	8.00%	8.00%	8.00%	8.00%	8.00%	8.00%
Monthly Payments:		\$1,052	\$1,227	\$1,403	\$1,578	\$1,753
Annual:		\$12,624	\$14,724	\$16,836	\$18,936	\$21,036

Cash Flow (based on \$80,000)

Swamp Buggy Income:

KPPSP Friends:

Loan Debt Service, Buggy Loan:

Net available to cover operating expenses:

Riders:

8 at \$18 16 at \$25

\$10,000	\$24,000
\$1,500	\$1,500
\$16,836	\$16,836
-\$5,336	\$8,664

Riders/Fees based on 16 capacity

4 tours Daily Saturdays and Sundays

November Thru
March