

Friends of Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park
FINAL meeting minutes
January 15, 2017

1. **General Information**

Welcome! The Friends of Kissimmee Prairie Preserve, Inc. was formed in 2011 to work for the preservation, protection, interpretation and promotion of and in the best interest of Kissimmee Prairie Preserve. The Friends organization is a Florida not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation and relies on membership fees and private donations to pursue activities on behalf of the Preserve. *Robert's Rules of Order* govern the conduct of this meeting.

2. Call to order

- a. Roll call, sign-in sheet Appendix 1.
 - i. Paul Gray, board member
 - ii. Tim Kozusko, Vice President
 - iii. Rick Deluga, board member
 - iv. Donna Bollenbach, Treasurer
 - v. David Kandz, Secretary
 - vi. Allen Como, filling in for board member Dave Holko
 - vii. Derek Demeter, visitor
 - viii. Steve Smith, visitor
 - ix. Kim Kandz, visitor
 - x. Daniel Willis, KPPSP manager
- b. Approve previous minutes: Donna move approve minutes, Paul second, unanimous
- c. Approve agenda, make additions / deletions as necessary: Agenda approved

3. Manager's report:

Missy and Chris Clauson's son Quinn was born and all are doing well

KPPSP staff member Jason is leaving to go to Highlands Hammock State Park at the end of January.

Daniel needs to hire a new PSS at KPPSP (Park Service Specialist)

CSO activity: Tim and Donna did first day hikes: took a dozen people out, more than half of state parks had first day hikes

CSO: Firewood sales going very well, ran out of 4 pallets, 4 more ordered and will arrive Tuesday (17th), saves staff time not cutting wood, makes money for the CSO

CSO: Water well at primitive campsite is now installed, diameter 2 inches; pitcher pump on top, has connector for fire equipment (\$5000, 140 feet deep)

Ordway-Whittell Audubon grant approved in the Park Service for 3 sparrow techs, will start in March!

KPPSP staff still looking at options for a visiting worker building

KPPSP looking to hire 2 Americorps technicians Feb 1 for 11 month stint, get education credits for the work, help with exotics, sparrows, etc.

Burns: 3700 acres last week, KP 48, 28, 35, 36 part, 50 part; annual goal 27-30,000 acres. Chloeta is contractor for burning 7000 acres; WRI (Evan Hall) is contracted too,

Upland Ecosystem Restoration Project: KPPSP received a grant from Tall Timbers for 19,000 acres of rollerchopping

Many active volunteers helping now

Lisa Edgar is the new Park Service director

Prairie has dried and access is improved
FWC law enforcement helping with poaching
Reserve America runs booking for astronomy pad
Doing predator surveys, skunks, snakes
Hog contracts in flux, no removal right now
Campgrounds have been full
The KPPSP 10-year Unit Management Plan is almost ready to come out

3a (and 3c). Financial/treasurer report, the latest not in.

- The latest report from Paperpushers is not in so Donna gave unofficial updates
- \$17,000 balance (\$5k not taken out for the well yet)
- Need to pay \$1k for wood, grossed 930, we appear to have been shorted \$70 on wood bundles
 - Donna ordered 4 more pallets but not delivered yet, we will delegate purchase authority to Donna for up to 4 pallets when supply drops to 2 pallets. Passed unanimous, we pay sales tax on each bundle sold [post-meeting update: Donna ordered an additional 4 pallets for a total of 8 by the time the delivery occurred to prevent running out again]
 - **Paul and Donna** will count the money after the meeting
- Subtracting the wood and well bills leaves us with a balance of about \$11,000
- \$159 for web site for 2 years
- \$57.89 taxes
- The Florida broadband that we bought for the shop is an ongoing bill

3b. No new membership report (Christina later sent a membership report and it is attached as Appendix 2).

3d. Spring plant walk: April 8th. 9:30 AM walk is fully booked, 18 have paid and 2 to go; 1:30 walk has 5 sign-ups

3e Non-astronomy use of astronomy site: Derek Demeter, Seminole College Planetarium Director and President of the Central FL Astronomy club addressed the Board about issues brought to his attention by astronomers.

- Non-astronomy folks have been booking the pads and sometimes astronomers have not been able to get in because of that
 - Non-astronomers often violate light codes, complain about noise at night
- Reserve America (RA) books sites to anyone, creating the situation where astronomers can't get in.
- RV tent site designation on site includes astronomy pads. Rules are posted on the RA web site but not always read by campers who are booking
 - RA just made a separate category for astronomy to help bookers understand the limitations
 - enforcement of the rules can be difficult
- Some folks book a year in advance and there are many no shows
 - Advanced booking previously required no deposit so people could book as a placemark with a low commitment to go. ReserveAmerica now requires a deposit which should reduce the number of no shows
- Only 5 spaces are on the pad and inquiries have increased with IDS designation
- Might need to add more pads

- Need to coordinate better enforcement of pad rules
- Previous manager, Parks Small, used to allow primitive astronomy camping in bahia pastures north of 7-mile slough, which could be an option for astronomy groups
- Can **Derek** send us bullet points on Astronomy pad use?
- The CSO hopes the new astronomy category on RA will help resolve these issues, Daniel agreed to cooperate to reduce these concerns
- This will be an ongoing issue to track

4. Unfinished / Continuing business and correspondence

4a. Donna set up a Dropbox file sharing account that we can begin using

4b. Firewood (covered in 3a, the financial report)

4c. Okee battlefield: Feb 25-26.

- **Donna** can be there. **Christina** has display materials but unknown if it will be ready in time. We can use the Park display.
- Student day on Friday the 24th? **Paul** will check with Dowling Watford to see if Friends could help. **Tim** could make the 24th for students

4d. Prairie Days and Prairie Nights March 25.

- Insurance: Friends of FL State Parks might be able to help
- Cattle drive with lessee? **Paul** will arrange to have cracker cattle, hopefully a cattle drive and ask the Okeechobee County Centennial committee and FL cattlemen's association if they would like to participate in some capacity
- **Daniel** volunteered to do A Land Remembered reading
- **Steve, Allen** their club will host an astronomy program in evening
- Do we want to invite Ben Prestige, musician, for \$500/day? Probably not
- Cowpokes will cater (**Daniel**)
- A rough schedule of events was outlined:
 - Start 9AM:
 - buggies on the hour 9-4, how many buggies?
 - prairie walk: 10 and 2 PM 15 people limit
 - cattle drive at 12PM
 - Daniel's reading at 4:30
 - solar viewing all day

Should we do Eventbrite reservations? **Donna** will investigate

What if we get more people than we plan for, how can we limit attendance?

- We will have people pre-register for buggy rides and walks in Wild Apricot, which can help us project attendance (Dave will help set this up)

We will need signage

Porta potty rental?

KPPSP Friends, Astronomy Clubs and Tropical Trekkers can have displays

Kids events face painting? **Paul** will ask the Battlefield folks

With all the loose ends, we need to look for skype meeting possibilities, or at least plan conference calls

Rick Deluga announced he has a medical issue so his near-term schedule will need to accommodate that

Adjourn at 3PM

Notes compiled by Paul Gray, out-going Secretary

Appendix 1. Sign-in sheet to the Friends of the Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park January 15, 2017 meeting.

Kissimmee Prairie CSC meeting
1-15-17

Paul Gray
Rick DELUGA
Tim Kozusko
Derek Demeter
Donna Bollenbach
Daniel Willis
Steve Smith ("Friends" member)
Allen Como
* Dave Karch
KIM KANDZ

Appendix 2. Membership report submitted by Christina Evans, Feb 2, 2017.

We currently have 90 active members. That counts each family membership as two members, and the corporate membership as one member. (Actual memberships of all types is 71) That is up from our previous report.

The breakdown by type of membership is:

22 - 1 year individual

16 - 2 year individual

18 - 1 year family

4 - 1 year Patron (\$100)

3 - Lifetime individual

1 - Lifetime family

1 - Corporate (Halifax River Audubon)

6 - Honorary members (all but one are founding board members)

Six new memberships in the past 30 days.

Our Facebook page is currently at 781 members.