

Sierra Club of Northeast Florida Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Place: Virtual meeting using the Zoom online system

Meeting Date: Monday June 24, 2024

Time: 6:30 PM

Call to Order: by Logan Cross at 6:32

Members in Attendance: Logan Cross, Peter Harding; Lisa Williams; Larry Zwain, Bill Snow

Others in Attendance: Suzi Stone, Susan Creek

Approval of Meeting Minutes; Motion made by Bill Snow; 2nd Lisa Williams; all approved

Executive Committee

FL Chapter Quarterly Meeting Update

Logan Cross indicated the FL Chapter quarterly meeting was held on Saturday. It was productive with primary focus being election process. Logan indicated the Political Director, Luigi G, resigned and Javier Estevez has taken the position in an interim capacity. There will be a PDF version of the presentation. This will provide additional details on Form 1 submission and process.

Okefenokee Protection Alliance (OPA) Representation

Logan has been seeking a SCNEF OPA representative. He and Susan will meet with Judy Ciocco on July 10 regarding the possibility. Logan also indicated Florida Chapter will send a letter to Governor Kemp opposing the mining. He indicated the letter may be jointly signed by the GA Chapter.

Conservation Committee – Revitalization

Logan indicated we should have an active Conservation Committee because it is part of our bylaws. We need more people to join the committee. He encouraged EC members to identify potential members. Suzi suggested we include a related message in the newsletter. Logan has worked up a set of responsibilities.

Visibility & Advocacy

Communications Team Update

Suzi Stone indicated the newsletter goes out next Monday, submissions needed by Monday. She still needs a couple of articles. Suzi can email to counties, could put together something for Clay County on political committees. Big topic at Florida meeting was what you can and can not do in communicating with campaigns. Can not sure Campfire to contact non-members without paying a fee. Mostly for political committees, advocacy not other situations. We need to be mindful of this moving into this political season. Suzi is still working on Sierra Club email extensions and will talk with individuals about this. Trying to enhance our transparency of leadership. Peter spoke on the website restructure, would like to add political page and conservation page. Logan agrees that there should not be individual tabs. Use of subtabs is expanding our website.

Events and Tabling

Bill Snow indicated we have been asked to table at Riverview Park on August 17 in the afternoon / evening. Also, a Flagler College fair in August. Marketing days at UNF will help us get more promotion and a free table.

John Lewis Memorial Event

Logan was approached by Nubian Roberts, asking about this event, she is affiliated with Florida Rising. Wednesday July 17 from 5 to 7:30. Suzi Googled it and there is the National Sierra Club Logo on this. It's a get out the vote event. Logan will look into who is the Florida contact.

Political & Legislative

Political Team Update

Barbara Gubbin was not present, but provided a written summary of Political-Legislative activities and actions. Her summary was provided in the meeting documents folder.

St Johns County Political Candidate Reviews

Susan Creek indicated the political committee met by Zoom on June 7 to discuss endorsements of 2024 candidates. The St Johns County subcommittee considered a number of local races for endorsement and focused on one, the election of a County Commissioner for District 5. Only two candidates responded to the questionnaire that was sent out, Sandy Flowers and Henry Dean, the incumbent. At least one other candidate responded saying that being affiliated with the Sierra Club would be a negative for her campaign. Led by Susan Creek with much assistance from Mimi Wahlmann, Bill Snow and John Pilecki, the two candidates were interviewed. The SCNEFL Political Committee met on Zoom and discussed the actions taken regarding the SJC elections and voted not to make an endorsement.

The Political Committee at that same meeting decided to consider endorsements in three state races: State Representative District 13, 16 and 19. The first two in Duval County and the third in SJC and Flagler Counties. Members have been identified to take the lead in each of these races to contact the candidates, send out questionnaires and follow up with interviews. First contacts sending out the questionnaire have been made in all three districts. In D-19, we have arranged for an interview with Adam Morley on July 10. Thanks to Logan for putting on the pressure to obtain the statewide questionnaire needed for action on three statewide races.

Membership

Membership Team Update

Bill Snow indicated we decreased by 49 members this month with 1,589 total members. He indicated there was no tabling was done this month. He indicated we continued with our monthly Renewal Reminder Emails and Lapsed Membership Emails and New Member meetings. More details are provided in the Membership Team Report.

Bill indicated the volunteer who runs the membership reports for him has developed a new set of diversity reports that are more automated so we can easily publish them every month. We currently publish this report every year in January.

Volunteers

Logan indicated he was contacted by a student attending the Bolles School and leads its Green P.E.A.S (Planet Equity and Sustainability). She is seeking ways to collaborate with us. We should try to find an intersection point and work with them. We did post this on our social media.

Education & Engagement

Educational Programs Update

Lisa Williams indicated she is trying to put together programs over the summer. She is organizing by themes. Sept- water quality; Oct- Plastic issues; November- invasive plants; Dec-off; Jan- Tree Hill follow up; Feb.- Resiliency; Mar- Sierra Symposium; April-Native plants;

She indicated Eco Relics might have some venue space, a business in railroad district. Its business model focuses on sustainability.

Outings Program Update

Bill Snow indicated on June, 2 regular outings were conducted, with 11 participants. We also conducted a cleanup of the Emerald Trail for Groundwork Jacksonville, which had a total of 7 attending. In addition, we had 1 SCMO outings with 12 total attending. We had our de-escalation training for all our local leaders, teaching us more about how to handle difficult situations with uncooperative participants. The training was very successful. 6 of our 9 leaders attended and everyone expressed that the training was helpful in learning tangible techniques to defuse emotionally charged situations and maintain safety for participants and the leaders themselves. We have started holding monthly zoom meetings on the second Wednesday of the month for outing leaders to discuss the many topics of interest that arise in the course of doing this work. At our first meeting in June, we discussed new lists of first aid kits contents recommended by the National Outings Staff. We determined some items that were missing from our NE Florida standard kits and agreed on items that we should include. These items have now been ordered and will be delivered to all outing leaders later this month.

Financial Capacity

Financial Update

Lucille discussed with Logan a separate meeting to discuss financing. We have money and need to do a better job of spending money; also as we spend, how do we replenish money. New development director has been hired and will be fund raising. New direction that state leaders are taking. Florida chapter will be bringing in more money. Logan feels we can do a better job on this. Lisa will be brought into this to help with spending money.

Conservation Priorities & Initiatives

Backyard Habitat Creation and Florida Native Plant Adoption

Lisa Williams indicated she was unable to produce the planned videos because the video person is unable to do it. She is talking to other agencies, such as Audubon and Ixia. She indicated the Native Plant sales are taking off, places are running out of them. Next year the garden club is going to do a feature with native plants. Growing interest in this area that we need to capitalize on.

Okefenokee Swamp Mining

Logan got Florida Chapter to come out a definitive statement in an official letter of opposition to go to Governor Kemp.

Jaguars Stadium Renovation and LEED Certification

Logan Cross indicated John Burr with the Jacksonville Climate Coalition, is leading efforts to achieve LEED Certification for the new Jaguars Stadium. He inquired if we want to be a part of this? Do we want to influence how the stadium is built? Will sustainability be a part of it? No decision was made regarding SCNEF involvement

Renew Jacksonville Campaign Update

Logan indicated there is a possibility we may be getting money from the Beyond Coal campaign allowing the campaign to buy some ads. He indicated we may try to buy digital as well. He indicated Sachs media will assist. Florida chapter have shifted responsibilities to Jyoti Parmar, so that she can assist with RenewJax and clean energy initiatives.

Logan indicated he recently met with Vickie Cavey, JEA CEO. He indicated they agreed to meet with us on a quarterly basis. That shows a willingness to listen to our views.

**Next Meeting: July 22, 2024: 6:30 PM via SCNEF Zoom Account
Adjourn Meeting at 8:00PM**