

**Sierra Club of Northeast Florida
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Place: Virtual meeting using zoom

Meeting Date: Monday, March 25, 2024

Time: 6:30pm

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

Others in Attendance: Suzi Stone

Call to Order: Logan Cross

Minutes were not approved. Will approve them next month.

Executive Committee

Emerald Trail Tour Recap

Logan Cross indicated Groundwork Jax offered us this tour in appreciation for our work on trail cleanups and other help. We continue to build relationships and increase Sierra Club visibility through partnerships such as this one with Groundwork.

Okefenokee Protection Alliance

Logan indicated we need a different recruiting method to find a volunteer for this position since no one has come forward to help yet. Logan asked us to refer potential candidates to him instead of asking for commitment.

UNF Environmental Advocacy Reach (EAR)

Logan is giving a mini lecture on the environmental history of Jax on 3/26/24 at UNF. Opportunities to contribute will be extended to students. Bill Snow asked for help from the students with tabling at Love Your Mother Earth Day on April 12. Bill will send Logan info on this event.

Visibility And Advocacy

Communications Team Update

Suzi Stone indicated the newsletter goes out Monday April 1 so need info in before then. April 9 is the deadline for Okefenokee comments to Governor Kemp. Please send in your comment.

Social Media Strategy for Shaping Discourse

Logan has met with Ashantae Green (City of Jax) regarding Mayor Deegan's climate goals. He asked the board members to go to the mayor's social media and approve of the mayor's direction. Suzi explained that she and Julie were also monitoring the mayor's social media and commenting.

Riverfront Parks Development

Logan monitored a meeting between Jimmy Pelouso, Matt Carlucci and Ron Salem for some of the time. The Conservancy was discussed.

Earth Day Events

Bill Snow indicated there not a lot of big events on Earth Day except for Lullaby of the Rivers and Earth Day Atlantic Beach. Bill has people who can lead that tabling and find volunteers

Events and Tabling

Bill Snow indicated the SCNEF had a table at 7 Creeks for the third year. 94 people visited the table. City Nature Challenge-Competition between communities regarding the number of observations using I Naturalist. Bill has 3 outings scheduled to collect observations. April 12 is one of them.

Anastasia Island Beach Outing and Social on May 11- Mimi Wahlmann is assisting with development of this event. The focus is the Suwannee but also clean energy. So, RenewJax should be represented. Mimi will write up something for the newsletter.

Political And Legislative

Mimi Wahlmann is working on the questionnaire for use in screening a potential state representative, Adam Morely. She noted Adam has supported many of our environmental outings and trash pickups.

Membership Team Update

Bill Snow indicated we are down 6 members to 1672 during the recent reporting period. Bill is working on reaching people in the Northwest side of Jax. He is currently engaged in monitoring water quality there.

Education and Engagement

Educational Programs Update

Lisa Williams indicated the remaining programs include an invasive plant clean up at Tree Hill Nature Center on Sat Mar 30 from 10-12. She indicated Ixia would like to continue partnering with us on these twice a year in fall and spring.

The Sierra Symposium and Social

Lisa indicated the SCNEF Symposium will be held on May 4 at Tree Hill Nature Center's amphitheater from 9-11. Speakers have been notified. There will be tables for us to educate, so please bring your tabling materials. There will be refreshments and a guided walk for those that are interested.

Outings Program

Bill Snow indicated there were 6 Outings in February with 64 people, 2 Partner Cleanups on Emerald Trail and Veterans outings. Bill discussed the "Transit to Trails", a national campaign to increase access to nature for disadvantaged groups.

Financial Capacity

Financial Update- No update was provided.

Lullaby on the River- Mimi made the motion asking for \$100 for sponsorship of this event. We would be listed in the program. Bill seconded the motion and all approved. Logan will request the money from Lucille.

De-escalation Training- Bill Snow indicated funding was approved by the state and our local group for this training of Outings leaders. There was an altercation on an earlier outing which necessitated the need for this training.

Conservation Priorities and Initiatives

Backyard Habitat Creation and Native Plant Adoption

Lisa indicated we are continuing to look for partnerships with other groups like IXIA and Audubon to increase awareness of the need for native plantings.

Okefenokee Swamp Mining

Logan has appealed to the State Sierra to support a commitment to the Okefenokee similar to the Ga Chapter's. Logan has been disappointed by the state's response and will follow up with them.

Saltwater Cowboys Restaurant

Mimi updated us on this potential zoning change. She explained that there used to be decks around the restaurant, but they had fallen apart. The new owner would like to rejuvenate the decks and add a dock and gazebo. The residents around the site are against it citing environmental factors but also parking issues and views. The question is whether this is an environmental issue worth weighing in on. We have decided not to act for now.

Crowley Tree Planting

Logan conveyed that Ashantae Green has indicated Crowley is trying to do a lot to reduce their contribution to climate change so the city is working with them. We are still deciding whether to engage with Crowley.

RenewJax Planning Committee

Logan indicated there has been a lot of support from the state and national Sierra for the RenewJax Campaign so we will begin flexing our muscles soon. Logan told Ashantae Green that we must interact with JEA soon to slow down their march toward the natural gas facility. Logan would like a one-year pause.

Regional Climate Plan Update

Larry Zwain cited 3 projects we support. Logan will produce a letter of support from us for the competition.

- The Sunshine State Energy Resilience Coalition a project can reduce greenhouse gas emissions while creating more resilient communities for those most affected by climate change.

- The E -VOLT grant – The grant reflects a collective regional effort to address climate change, enhance our regional transportation systems, and promote sustainable economic growth.
- The City of Palm Coast Dynamic Reinvestment of Piping Systems (DRiPS) for Wastewater Energy Efficiency and Climate Resiliency grant application supports efforts to improve critical infrastructure needs, sustainability, and resilience within our region.

Next Meeting: April 22, 2024: 6:30 PM via SCNEF Zoom

Minutes taken by Lisa Williams.