

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

**Meeting Place:** Virtual meeting using the Zoom online system

**Meeting Date:** Monday August 26, 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, Karen Austro, Al Tilley

, Logan introduced to share information on Planetary Health Diet

**Approval of Meeting Minutes;** Motion made by Larry Zwain; 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter Harding; all approved

### **Executive Committee**

#### SNEF Leadership Change

Logan indicated three Executive Committee will need to be reaffirmed by the group members this fall to continue serving on the EC. Logan announced he is planning to step down from the EC by the end of the year. He suggested we identify a vice chair to learn and prepare for the transition. We need to identify candidates who might be a good chair. Logan will continue serving as a resource and will focus on leading the Renew Jacksonville Campaign.

#### EC Member Election – Candidates and Timeline

Logan indicated the EC elections and reaffirmations need to be completed by the end of the year. Thus, the Nominating Committee must be reformed and identify candidates for the EC. EC members were asked to assist with identifying candidates.

#### Social Media and Website Administration Contract

Logan indicated Julie Brown's contract will be adjusted to compensate her for the additional responsibilities she has assumed. Lucille has been involved in making the adjustments. Suzi indicated the contract has been adjusted to give her \$13 for special projects. She has done a great job and will see how much time she devotes to extra time. She has been very valuable to us; she has stepped up on graphics on endorsements and posters.

#### Open EC Meetings and Meeting Minutes

Suzi Stone indicated that every ExCom should be open to anyone who wishes to participate. She indicated there are two different ways to handle it. One is on campfire where people register and then get sent a zoom link. Loxahatchee does this. Tampa and Suncoast has a note for an individual who wants to attend, you send an email and will receive a link, but agree to stay muted until the end of the meeting.

Logan indicated he created a consolidated folder with all of the meeting minutes from the four years he has been chair. Karen commented on why she would like to see minutes and have more communication from ExCom. Peter stated he doesn't see a need for all minutes to be available, but maybe the most current minutes. There was discussion on ways to update our newsletters and improve communication.

#### Sierra Club Planetary Health Diet Campaign

Al Tilley indicated he has been participating in a SC National Campaign on a Planetary Health and will be overseeing regional efforts to promote the campaign. Al indicated about 33% of our emissions are from meat and its production. Al indicated we need to look for ways to inform people about this and why you might want to do the diet.

Suzi stated that she can give AI space monthly in the newsletters. Julie is looking to have certain things on certain days of the week on Instagram. For example, every Wednesday, he could post something on this. We could also add to our website. Karen Austro indicated she would love to be involved with this. She and her family have been plant based and would love to be involved. She has done an event with vegetarian themes.

## **Visibility & Advocacy**

### Communications Team Update

Suzi Stone indicated the past week has seen a flurry of activities with endorsements and with the parks issues. Julie is working on establishing a schedule for events; suggestions are welcome, contact her. Newsletter goes out on Sept. 2. AI will add something. If everyone lets her know what is going on, send photos and text. Send everything to Suzi

### Riverfront Parks Development

Barbara Gubbin indicated the COJ City Council members are trying to sideline some of the parks funding. It is becoming very political. Riverfront Parks Now (RPN) put together an excellent paper A Roadmap to “Do It Right, Do It Now, Do It All” , which urged the mayor, the city and DIA (Downtown Investment Authority) to move forward faster and focus on just two projects: simplify them, set aside major building projects, and complete just a park on what is being called Riverfront Plaza, and build the extension to the Riverwalk along the north bank of the St Johns River from the Hyatt Hotel to Metropolitan Park as one project completed as soon as possible. The current scenario is for each development along this section of the river to build its own section of the Riverwalk – the Four Seasons Hotel, the new MOSH, the Shipyards Park and so on, stretching out the completion date far into the future.

Barbara indicated we need people to regularly speak at City Council meetings and meetings of the DIA. Our Group needs to identify people willing to do this. The message is simple and focuses for now on Riverfront Park and completion of the Riverwalk.

## **Events and Tabling**

Bill Snow indicated the SCNEF tabled at Solidarity Sunday yesterday, Angie Nixon's monthly community event on the Northside. We plan to table there every month. We talked to several people who were finding out about the Sierra Club for the first time. We have several outreach events coming up in September.

## **Political & Legislative**

### Political Team Update

Barbara Gubbin indicated the Florida Chapter has issued a press release stating its opposition to Amendment 2 “Right to Hunt and Fish” which will appear on the November ballot. She learned this during a Saturday “chat” on Google Meet with Susannah Randolph, who is planning to hold these chats at least monthly. Larry Zwain was also on the chat. There is almost no mention of this on the Chapter website beyond a July press release. Opposition is largely based on the wording that makes hunting the preferred method to manage numbers of animals in the wild, recalling the unfortunate consequences from the open season to hunt black bears recently, and the fact that there is already legislation and regulations to permit and regulate hunting and fishing in Florida.

### Candidate Endorsements and Election Outcomes

Barbara Gubbin indicated the SCNEF endorsed Tracie Davis, State Senate District 5 and Angie Nixon, State Representative District 13 and included notice of these endorsements in our August newsletter with recommendations of how to get involved in their campaigns. Both had opposition in the Primary election held on August 20, 2024, and both won. Angie Nixon defeated her opponent Brenda Priestly Jackson by 62 points, an unexpectedly strong showing! In an interview on First Coast Connect (WJCT 89.9) Angie mentioned the Sierra Club as one organization which provides her with information about the environment.

Barbara indicated Suzi Stone and Julie Brown did great work on behalf of the candidates. Suzi sent out a press release to over twenty media outlets and Julie, using the Chapter produced graphics, created posts on social media. If anyone saw any media reporting on these endorsements, please let Suzi and me know. And, as Suzi is encouraging us, re-post our social media posts to your own social media to get the message out into the community.

Later in August we were notified by the Chapter that they had approved our endorsement of Adam Morley, State Representative District 19 and Rachel Grage, Suzi will be sending out notification to our members very shortly about the Morley and Grage endorsements with recommendations of how members and supporters can get involved and support their campaigns.

A special shout out to Mimi Wahlman who held a fundraiser for Adam Morley! Adam has been active in sponsoring signage around the opposition to the DEP plans to build in Anastasia Island State Park and this has provided a good opportunity on social media to tell people he is endorsed by the Sierra Club and the only pro-environment candidate on the ballot!

## **Membership**

### Membership Team Update

Bill Snow indicated the SCNEF decreased by 20 members this month with 1,560 total members. We continue to get out and promote but keep losing numbers. Some people have expressed that in person meetings might help to get people more interested.

## **Education & Engagement**

### Educational Programs Update

Lisa Williams was not present to provide an update.

### Outings Program Update

Bill Snow indicated four regular outings were conducted in July, with 55 participants. We also conducted a cleanup of the Emerald Trail for Groundwork Jacksonville, which had a total of 14 attending. In addition, we had 1 SCMO outing with 10 attending. We held our monthly leaders zoom meeting on August 21. The SCNEF gained a new outing leader this month, Scott Durland. This will help fill the gap left by the departure of Dolly Penland a couple months ago for personal reasons.

Bill indicated we successfully raised the funds to pay a historian to speak at our next urban hike in Durkeesville on September 4. We will be making plans and budgets for expanded outings offerings that will help increase access for those with fewer resources, including youth, to allow more people to attend our outings.

Members were encouraged to read the written report to the EC for more details.

## **Conservation Priorities & Initiatives**

### Anastasia State Park Management Plan Amendment Opposition

Logan Cross reminded the members of the effort to develop multiple state parks and how the group should act to oppose the effort.

### JEA Water Purification Efforts

Larry Zwain indicated he participated in a meeting at JEA to learn about its water purification initiative. Larry was pleased JEA seems to have a vision and purpose for the initiative. The ultimate goal of the initiative is to return water to returning water to Floridan aquifer. Larry was impressed that they were considering water purification using some sophisticated methods and training efforts to meet goals.

## **Renew Jacksonville Campaign Update**

Logan Cross provided an update on the status of the Renew Jacksonville Campaign, its next steps, and future steps.

**Member Announcements**

Susan asked about the possibility of doing a fundraiser for Adam Morley. This will be looked into.

**Next Meeting: September 23, 2024: 6:30 PM via SCNEF Zoom Account**

**Adjourn Meeting**

**Adjourn Meeting at 8:13PM**