

Friends of the Island Parks Board Meeting 19 October 2010, 6.30 pm

Board Members present: Chairperson: Barry Metcalfe

Ray Dabkowski, Diane and Scott Hood, Jacques Marion, Bob Meadows, Melanie Metcalfe, Sharon Meyer, George Skalkeas, Toni Wise

In attendance: Gloria Beauchamp, Bill Gruber, Peter Krulder, Tim Marshall, Lynn Smeraldo.

Apologies: Shane Bittaker, Cynthia Farris, Ron Geisheimer

Minutes of last meeting, 21 September 2010: accepted unanimously.

President's Report:

On behalf of the Friends, Barry presented two books to Caladesi: "Priceless Florida" and "75th Anniversary of Florida Park Service". Peter gratefully accepted the books on behalf of Caladesi.

CSO Conference, 3-5 December. Well worth attending; funds available from FIP for accommodation and travel. FPS staff unable to attend due to budget restraints.

Unfortunately, Conference coincides with Friends' AGM and Holiday party.

Treasurer's Report:

George's report accepted unanimously.

Lyn Smeraldo (financial advisor to FIP; Friends' member) was invited to comment on FIP's investments. Stressed importance of protecting monies held in public trust. Investing in quality banks meant that no money was lost in the current economic crisis but yields were very low. Lyn said that, by attending the meeting and gaining an appreciation of the time frame for the various FIP projects, she would be able to recommend certain investment strategies.

Park Manager's Report:

- Peter asked for volunteers from the Friends to participate in a beach walk on 6 November as part of Visit Florida's plan to photo every mile of Florida's beaches that day to show that they are as beautiful as ever.
- Chamber's after hours meeting, 28 October, Café Honeymoon Pavilion. All welcome.
- Halloween: need for more volunteers and more candy.

Membership Report:

- Ray reported membership has again increased; now at 264.
- Calendar: 311 qualified entries for photo contest. Any Board member is welcome to choose top 20 and notify Ray, on-line by 26 October.

Membership meetings and socials:

- Gallery Opening with Ernie Simmons on 26 October.
- AGM and Holiday party, 4 December, at Sea-Sea Riders followed by dessert at Boat Parade.

Barry asked that we “talk up” these excellent events; need to involve the membership – ensure they are pleased to be members - encourage them to bring friends – need new “blood” for the Board with fresh ideas and skills.

Nature Centre Retail:

Sharon reported September was a slow month. However, sales and profit have been generally excellent this year. On schedule for gross sales of \$40,000.

Tree ornaments in 9 designs with motifs for Caladesi and Honeymoon, now available @ \$6.95; selling well. New polo shirt for Holidays – very attractive with red cardinal on white.

Searching for artist for January – prefer Florida scenes.

Nature Centre Operations:

Tim reported on fabulous new cabinet for shell display; made by volunteer.

Problem with wireless service so no access to internet or to new weather station; provider is not responding even though they are still being paid – Tim to call Sprint.

Report on Friends’ booth at Living Green Expo sparked a lengthy and wide ranging discussion:

- how best to promote the Friends at events in order to attract new members;
- need for a proper display (lots of photos) to showcase the Friends’ accomplishments and also to show what’s on offer to members (programs, socials, opportunities to become involved);
- need folk to staff such a booth who are able to talk enthusiastically about the Friends as well as talk about the Parks and NC; Board members need to “step up” and not leave this to NC volunteers;
- agreed there is a limit to the Board’s willingness to do all this and that there is a serious need to identify and encourage folk from the general membership to participate more; approach individuals rather than “shotgun” appeal;
- organize an orientation for new members; use it also as an opportunity to ask about their skills and potential for more active involvement.

Island EarthDays 2011, April 16 & 17:

Urgently need volunteer to chair the meetings. Also need volunteers to chair individual task forces. The Friends’ are in danger of losing their most lucrative fund-raising event.

Playground:

Diane reported good progress with visits and contacts. Design to be “green and accessible”. Harry Gross, from his experience with Dunedin, considers that funds from event and grants will cover total cost (no extra fund raising needed!). Next meeting on 28 October with a playground Rep.

Barry commented that the Playground could offer new sites for memorial benches.

Caladesi Exhibit:

Cindy has created a wonderful blog but will not be released unless full support is given by FPS for elevated viewing platform. Barry and Peter to contact District and Tallahassee to bring this project back to their attention.

Benches:

So far, memorial benches have raised \$14,000. Demand continues but there are no more sites. Likely to be even more demand when article is published in SPT.

Potential for sites when Wildflower Garden and Playground are developed and if Caladesi Exhibit ever goes ahead.

Concern raised about potential commercial adverts (e.g. inscription on bench "Eat at..."); George volunteered to review contract and draft motion for by-laws.

Wildflower Garden:

Need to make faster progress especially since \$1,000 donation received already. Peter to follow up contact from Living Green Expo who may be able to design the garden.

Toni to check out butterfly garden in Hammock Park for ideas. Toni and her volunteers to start collecting (HISP) seeds now; Barry to purchase a few bags of seed compost.

A.O.B.

- Verizon Foundation: awaiting check for \$700; Sharon to be advised when it arrives.
- Kiwanis Run: agreed to hold donation at \$2.50 per entrant for 2011.
- Egmont Key: "Discover the Island" annual fund raiser, 13 & 14 November.
- Fund-raising books: now circulating among Board members; everyone encouraged to read it.

Special Presentation:

On behalf of the Friends, Tim presented to Melanie a book to be donated to the NC library in memory of her father who passed away in August. The book, "Bringing Nature Home", is inscribed "Donated by Friends of the Island Parks in memory of Dr Roy Hughes, BSc, MSc, PhD, DSc of Deganwy, Conwy, U.K."

Melanie wishes to express her heartfelt gratitude to the Friends for this most meaningful presentation.

Meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Dates for your diary:

Tuesday 26 October - General members' meeting and gallery opening. 7.00 pm. RCNC.

Tuesday 16 November – Board meeting. 6.30 pm. RCNC

Saturday 4 December – AGM and Holiday party. Sea-Sea Riders. Time tbc.