

**Friends of the Island Parks Board Meeting 19 April 2011, 6.30 pm**

**Board Members present:** Chairperson: Barry Metcalfe

Ray Dabkowski, Nancy Dunne, Ron Geisheimer, Diane Hood, Jacques Marion, Bob Meadows, Melanie Metcalfe, Sharon Meyer, Mike Moran, Gabriella Mullins, Pat Snair, George Skalkeas,

**In attendance:** Bill Gruber, Karen Malo, Tim Marshall.

Apologies: Cindy Farris

**Minutes:** of last meeting, 15 March 2011 accepted unanimously.

Melanie to send approved minutes to Tim for posting on [www.islandparks.org](http://www.islandparks.org).

**President's Report:**

- The Friends had sent flowers with get well wishes and a birthday card to Peter.
- Barry expressed sincere thanks to Bill and his support team for stepping up so superbly for Island EarthDays. It was a wonderful nature-based event as well as being a great fund-raiser – congratulations to everyone.
- With much regret, Sally has resigned as a Board member but will continue to contribute to Friends' activities.

**Treasurer's Report:**

- George guided us through the March 2011 report, which was accepted unanimously.
- Projected profit of \$25-30,000 from IED.

Note: there are still some outstanding accounts, such as for Sharkbite Challenge, which have yet to be received.

**Park Manager's Report:**

In Peter's absence, Bill thanked his support team and the Friends for "an incredible job" with IED.

**Membership Report:**

- 9 new members; membership now at 300 (goal of 350 by December).
- Issues pending, including new brochure (see list in February minutes) to be discussed after IED.
- Spiro (Caladesi Mobile) offering to display membership brochure and quarterly newsletter.

**Programs:**

Concern at lack of space for membership meetings – serious consideration to extend RCNC. Disadvantage of holding members meetings at south pavilion: no access to exhibits, art or merchandise.

- Many thanks to Joe Malo from Clearwater Marine Aquarium for his outstanding program about "Winter", the film star dolphin. Karen mentioned that the pictures of the movie process and "stills" might be available to the Friends to display in RCNC.
- 26 April: Art opening by Susan McCubbin. be confirmed.
- 24 May: Invasive species by Cynthia Wheeler; to be confirmed.

### **Nature Centre Retail:**

Artist for Oct-Jan: Claire McCormick (Friends' member).

Artist for Jan-April 2012: Ann Warren.

American-made clothing merchandise is now very pricey / not selling well; review required of FIP policy on using American made environmental quality T's.

New merchandise: Kokopelli children's books by Michael Sterns; bamboo walking sticks.

Barry reported that all retail sales from booth at IED were to be considered as NC sales not IED income. Similarly, the silent auction sale of Susan McCubbin's donated art would go through the till.

### **Nature Centre Operations:**

With regard to funds set aside for Exhibit Renewal, Tim had identified several items for repair/replacement and also had suggestions for new exhibits. Tim to submit these to Peter. When Peter requests financing for them, funds may then be made available from the Friends.

Based on the popularity of Tim's Walk (auctioned at IED), idea of paid eco-tours could be reconsidered.

### **Island EarthDays, 16 & 17 April 2011:**

Picnic celebration and debriefing suggested for coming weekend but postponed because coincides with Easter. In interim, feedback about IED (while memories are fresh!) should be emailed to George.

***Barry stressed it was most important that all team leaders should send Thank You notes to each of their volunteers immediately.***

### **Projects:**

Barry reported that there are now 3 main projects which the Friends are working on at the request of the Park Manager; these are the Caladesi Exhibit, the Playground, and the Wildflower Garden. All 3 are included in the PM's annual priority list which is based on the Park's Unit Management Plan; a document which is officially approved by the Florida Park Service.

The priority list is updated each FPS annual budget cycle and a copy provided to the FIP.

#### **1. Caladesi Exhibit:**

- Verbal approval has been given by FPS for an interpretive pavilion with elevated viewing platform. Formal authorized approval awaited via a submitted PIP. Cost approx. \$350,000 for building.

Note: FPS awarded RCNC project a PIP grant of 40% and so Tallahassee fronted the contracts; however, since FPS is unable to award a PIP grant for the Caladesi Exhibit project, the *Friends* will now be funding this project 100% and will therefore be fronting the contracts.

- Design of building is moving ahead – architect is former president of Kiwanis and is donating his personal professional services as part of the proposed architect’s contract. (not yet signed due to awaiting formal approval.)
- Permits are being identified; noted that permit for elevator should be requested early because of backlog statewide.
- Early presentation of project to City Commission recommended.
- Working group will have much work ahead but it will be very rewarding. New members interested in *active participation* are most welcome to join the working group. Barry to prepare note of current members, plus job descriptions and a list of skills needed from potential members.

## **2. Playground:**

- Diane reported there was a booth at IED to promote the Love Fore golf tournament on 12 March 2012. (This year’s event raised \$36,000 profit for charity). Scott is chairing the 2012 committee, assisted by Country Club members including Bob, Ron and Diane.
- Playground design not decided yet but certain items are favored.

## **3. Wildflower Garden:**

- Barry had marked out “hardscape” according to landscaper’s design. Despite repeated requests for volunteers to join work party, only one person responded; sincere thanks to Shirley McMann for her enthusiasm and hard work.

*Need a leader from the Friends’ and support with working parties or else the whole project will die!*

Diane mentioned that Gisela (token seller at IED), who is head of Safety Harbor Garden Club, might be approached. Harry Bickford was also mentioned.

- Donation of \$2,000 already received. Will need more funds. Potential for (memorial) donations for trees, trellis, benches, bricks (pathways).

## **Fundraising –**

### **Benches:**

Bob reported request for a bench and a swing for Caladesi.

No more beach sites on Honeymoon – written policy to be drafted with Park Biologist.

Newly available for the donor program – fixed mount binoculars.

Potential for range of donor options associated with proposed Wildflower Garden.

### **Wills:**

It is reported that someone has left money to FIP in their will.

### **Grants:**

Harry is applying for grants for the playground and Caladesi exhibit.

### **Sponsorship:**

Pat Snair has no progress to report.

Sally Naylor arranged for Barry and herself to meet a professional contact who is considering if/how to assist the Friends with fund-raising.

**A.O.B.**

- Potential fund-raiser suggested: proposed rain barrel clinic for local charter school's PTA.

- Donation request from Dunedin's Pioneer Park re. organic garden: Tim, Ray and Barry delivered 4 complete rain barrels.

- Sharkbite Challenge: brief discussion – should it be a separate event from IED? Now a major event justifying more recognition, said Gabriella. Mike thought sponsorship could be better if event were separate.

Sincere thanks to Mike and Luanne for generous donation of \$1500 in recognition of 2011 Sharkbite Challenge.

Meeting closed at 7.52 pm.