Minutes, Wakulla Springs Alliance Board Meeting Via ZOOM – May 22, 2020

Present: Albert Gregory, Bob Deyle, Tom Taylor, Dan Pennington, Jim Stevenson, Howard Kessler, Doug Barr, Debbie Lightsey, Cal Jamison, Jim Davis, Terry Ryan; Lindsay Stevens joined late due to another meeting.

Bob Deyle called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Bob asked for any proposals to amend the agenda. There were none.

Minutes –

Debbie moved to approve the minutes from February 10 and 28; Jim Stevenson seconded. Motion carried.

Financial Report –

Jim Stevenson moved to accept the April financial report; Terry Ryan seconded. Motion carried.

Directors and OfficersInsurance –

Bob presented his findings on a Directors and Officers (D&O) Insurance policy. He has a quote from Carolina Casualty through Earl Bacon for $1174. He has tried to get a quote through the Brown and Brown agency, but little response. A third agency reported that no carriers were interested because of the kerfuffle over the Hines Family Aquafresh Fish Farm, which has come to nothing so far. That was the first private action ever challenged by WSA. Any policy we obtain at this time will not cover any action from the Hines family. The Earl Bacon agent reported that she could find no carriers willing to write General Liability Insurance for the WSA “because of the diversity of our activities. General liability insurance will not cover events such as field trips; we would have to procure separate event riders on a case-by-case basis.

Doug asked the limit of liability on the Carolina Casualty policy. It is $1M with a $1K deductible.

Jim Davis said that in his experience, some people will not serve on a board without D&O insurance.

Bob asked for direction and other recommendations. Terry suggested contacting Rogers, Gunter, Vaun/HUB. Bob will continue his research.

Debbie made a motion to approve purchase of D&O insurance with final selection to be made by the executive committee. Tom seconded and added a friendly amendment that we set a cap of $1400. Approved as amended.

Terry asked if we have funded any private research. Bob responded that we always look for someone else’s money to fund the research.

Proposed Annual Budget -

Bob presented a preliminary annual expense budget. Terry made a motion to approve and Dan seconded. Motion carried.

Big Bend Environmental Forum –

Motion to pay $100 dues (every other year) by Debbie and seconded by Jim S. Motion carried.

Motion by Tom T. for Dan Pennington to be our Representative; seconded by Jim Stevenson. Motion carried.

Clarification on the WSA representative to the Florida Springs Council. Sean was our rep, but we decided in February that Bob would be our rep as chair of the Alliance. Sean will continue to serve on the Council Board under a separate appointment independent of representing an individual spring advocacy organization.

Membership Dues –

Tom and Terry presented a proposal for membership levels and some benefits. Much discussion. We will need a source of some income going forward. Right now, we receive the occasional donation.

Jim mentioned that he had switched income from his tours from WSA to the Friends of Wakulla Springs but is considering shifting them back to the Alliance. At one time he asked about free entry to the park, but the manager said no so the entrance fee is built into the tour price. He would like some recognition for the tours he takes out because he and Cynthia, who runs Palmetto Expeditions, put in their own time and money. The tours are valuable to all who go on them.

Bob encouraged all of us to acknowledge the work that Jim Stevenson does to protect and bring attention to the springs. He also noted that we now have the means to publicly express acknowledge contributions to the Alliance via the Appreciations page on our website.

Tom stated three questions:

1. Do we need to have memberships?
2. Do we need to have benefits?
3. If we vote to have memberships what should the amounts be?

We do have a place to donate on our website.

Jim and Doug and others agree that the larger donations deserve recognition.

Tom moves to revise categories and Debbie seconds. Motion carries. To be reviewed at the next meeting.

Dark Water Report –

The new brochure which addresses the question of why the water is dark is almost finished. This is a separate brochure from the first one on *Let’s**Protect Wakulla Spring*. Debbie Lightsey arranged for VancoreJones to do the layout for free. The NWFWMD completed the map and reviewed the text. Also reviewed by Cal, Sean, Jeff Hugo, and Bob Thompson.

Bob Deyle explained the issues with getting data and analyses from Sean for the final report. He has resisted completing the analyses he previously agreed to conduct or to provide the data required under the contract he signed. We are past several deadlines he had agreed to meet, and the grant is set to expire at the end of June. Bob Deyle feels we can get another extension on the grant if needed. Sean has provided good data in the past. He sometimes refuses to have any communication with Bob. We cannot speculate on what the problems are at this time.

Tom moved and Debbie seconded that Bob Deyle draft a letter to Sean over Doug’s signature to be reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee indicating that he will be paid for prior sampling and analysis work if he submits an invoice by a specified date and that Bob will approve an additional payment of $1000 if he provides a copy of the full data set as required by McGlynn Laboratories Inc contract with WSA by the specified date. The letter should make clear that MLI’s contract with WSA will conclude at the end date of the Alliance’s grant from the Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida. The letter should acknowledge that under MLI’s contract with WSA, Sean has the right to use the data from the project for his own purposes but that the final project report is to be prepared by Bob Deyle and that any reports prepared by Sean should not be represented as reports for or by the Wakulla Springs Alliance.

Debbie wondered if Sean does not produce the data required under his contract or the analyses he previously agreed to conduct then, where is WSA with regard to our obligations under our grant from the Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida? Bob Deyle said that the grant final report provides for explanations of circumstances beyond our control or unforeseen circumstances.

Jim Stevenson does not see the situation with Sean improving any.

Lindsay will review the WSA contract with MLI and draft language for the letter.

Ferrell Property –

Today’s meeting was to be a presentation on the new addition to Wakulla Springs followed by a field trip which would be by vehicle. Cannot take more than 10 vehicles meaning some people might have to carpool which was acceptable to only a few. Bob asked about Board member interest in participating and offered to discuss a separate field trip with Park Manager Amy Conyers.

Cal’s Springshed Report –

Wakulla Spring had a salinity spike that exceed potability standards when the Spring Creek springs were in reverse flow. The flow is reversing again.

* Talquin has been having problems with tannic water. They say it is a filter problem. Not sure where the water is coming from. There is only small flow from Lost Creek into its sink.
* We have had good visibility depth readings of 50 and 72 feet. Now 30 feet and green.
* We have had a lot of rain. Cheryl Sink was clear, Fisher Creek #1 was not flowing. The water may have all percolated into the ground.
* Bob Deyle noted that Kathleen Coates, Paul Thurman and other WMD staff have reported discoveries from the minimum flows and levels study that the total volume of combined flow from Wakulla Spring and the Spring Creek springs has not changed over recent decades but total Spring Creek flow has gone down and Wakulla has increased. Rising sea level and changes in rainfall patterns may affect this. Tannins may be coming from different sources and storage areas.
* Cal talked to Casey McKinlay. The WKPP has found that there is a new link to the Ferrell property winks from Turner Sink.
* Turner and Sally Ward Sinks have had sample tubing vandalized. Divers will help repair or replace the tubing. We need it for sampling.
* Bob Deyle reported that river boats still not running because of coronavirus hazard. Staff running one boat a day. Wildlife surveys still happening.

Website and Facebook Page -

* Bob has updated website and added new material
* Rob Gelhardt had been helping pro bono.
* Check out the historical timeline started by Dana Bryan. It is a research resource with links. All of the WSA and others’ research documents have been added. There is a new “What’s New?” section on the homepage that includes new and announcements and a “Photo of the Week” by Bob Thompson.
* Bob also updated the Facebook page where he shares river boat stories weekly.
* Encourage everyone to go to the site.
* Jim Stevenson asked Park Manager Amy Conyers to show the WKPP’s diving videos on the Lodge TV.
* Bob noted that there is a collection of videos on the WSA website including these videos.

Adjourn at 12:02.