

**MINUTES of the Friends of Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park
Annual Membership Meeting – January 11, 2016**

Board Members in attendance: Marcia Byrd, Kathy Foster, Phil Nye, Ann Petrillo, Kathe Rasch, Valerie Thompson

Board Members Absent: Larry Beer, Joe Gagnier, Gabriella Miyamoto

Staff Members Present: Bob Steiger

Call to order: The Annual Membership Meeting of the Friends of Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park was held in the CSO Room at Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park, Naples Florida on January 11, 2016. The meeting convened at 10:06 AM by Ann Petrillo, president. A quorum was established.

The minutes from the November 9, 2015 meeting were read and approved.

The first order of business was the election of the slate of directors – all the same directors remain and were voted in unanimously.

Reports from officers and staff:

Ann Petrillo -

Ann compiled a list of accomplishments made by the Friends in 2015 and an abbreviated list was read. The first Coastal Forum will be held on January 12th. The bulletin board has the postings of all the forums to be held here and at Bentley Village. A volunteer signup sheet was posted and all areas needing assistance were filled in by the end of the meeting. The Coastal Forum is a partnership with the Estuary Conservation Association and we hope to gain memberships, sell t-shirts, and bring awareness to the park. Proceeds from any drawings by chance will be split with the ECA.

Kathe Rasch –

Kathe gave the monthly report. Income was good in 2015 and our balance is up from the previous year. Gate donations were high in November. Artists' enrollments at \$50 each have brought in additional income. Ice cream brought in the most money at the Nature Fest. A \$240 contribution toward t-shirt income was made by the mother of one of the Children's Art Show winners. Kathe said she will have an audited report from the accountants next month. Today's report is attached to these minutes.

Bob Steiger –

Bob thanked everyone for coming. He reported on the two new methods of access into the park as required by Collier County. The county wants to alleviate congestion at the entrance to the park, and one method was to open up two lanes of access. This method worked pretty well and required one additional person to collect entrance fees. The second method was to have folks pay as they leave. Bob reported that at one time there were 250 cars in line to pay their way out, so while alleviating congestion at the entrance, it caused a long line of cars exiting and paying at sunset. Now the county wants the staff to conduct a third trial where everyone in line will be allowed in the park even if the park is at capacity. There are concerns about illegal parking and folks

wanting their entrance fee back if they cannot find a place to park. A shuttle from Connor park is another recommendation but that has not been suggested by Collier County yet. In conclusion, our park is just one small stretch of beach in Collier County. There were 3 million people visiting our beaches in 2015 and more are expected in the coming years. On a positive note, the park was approved to rebuild area 1 boardwalks, ramps, etc. to bring them up to code.

Due to technical difficulties our speaker was not able to present his program before the meeting. At this time, however, the problems were resolved and the program began.

Speaker – David Sidars, park ranger and former ranger at Gettysburg National Military Park, presented a very interesting power point program titled *How the Civil War affected us here in Florida*. He spoke about the Civil War, Florida during the war, and the Battle of Fort Myers. Florida was just a territory until 1845 when it became a state but in 1861, Florida seceded to join the Confederate States of America. David pointed out that the Civil War was fought over slavery and states' rights with opening shots fired at Fort Sumter, SC, beginning the war on April 12, 1861. The Union blockaded many of Florida's ports to try to cut off supplies to the confederate troops. About 16,000 Floridians fought in the war and about 5,000 were killed during the war. Most battles were not fought on Florida soil however the largest one occurred near Lake City called the Battle of Olustee where nearly 3,000 soldiers died. The battle was won by the Confederacy. David mentioned another battle in Fort Myers which was a small engagement and the most southerly land battle. David got interested in U.S. history when he began looking at his family tree. He recommends getting students interested in our history.

Committee Reports:

Art Show:

Valerie Thompson and Kathy Foster reported that the Art Show has very good support but help is needed at the end of the day for cleanup and assistance to the artists. They have asked all who will be working to park somewhere else and carpool to area 3. Jones Food Shack will be the food vendor for the event. There is a nice variety of art at this show including fused glass, ceramics, jewelry, and the usual paintings and photographs. Three more artists have just signed up. They thanked Lori and Bob for all their help.

Children's Art Show:

Marcia reminded members that the Children's Art Show will be held February 27-28, 2016. Volunteers will be needed. Six schools are currently signed up and the committee hopes for more. More details will be at the February meeting.

Membership –

Renewal forms were available and gate passes will be processed to any who have renewed or joined the Friends.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 11:10 AM

Respectfully submitted, Marcia Byrd, Secretary

Date of Approval _____