

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

Meeting Place: Virtual meeting using the Zoom online system

Meeting Date: Monday July 24, 2023

Time: 6:30 PM

Call to Order: by Logan Cross at 6:31

Members in Attendance: Logan Cross, Carr Smith, Bill Snow, Sandy Bond; Peter Harding; Deanna Zastrow; Sandy Bond; Barbara Gubbin

Others in Attendance: Suzi Stone; Susan Creek

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Carr Smith made motion to approve the meeting minutes from the prior EC meeting. Carr's motion was seconded by Bill Snow. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Executive Committee

FL Chapter Meeting in Jacksonville – Update

The quarterly meeting of the Florida Chapter in Jacksonville is scheduled for Sept 23 with meeting participants arriving on Sept 22. The meeting venue, the Doubletree Hotel, is in a good location. There is a possibility to get Mayor Deegan to attend. Outing options may include a hike in a local Timucuan Park, an urban hike along the river, or a River Tour with the SJR Riverkeeper.

SCNEF Donor Social Events

We are going to rely on SC Florida to inform on donors in our area. We may want to do our own event in the future.

Visibility & Advocacy

Communications Team Update – Suzi Stone

Suzi indicated the newsletter goes out a week from tomorrow. She asked members to copy Bill Armstrong on articles. She indicated there is a need pictures and two more articles.

Bill Snow and Suzi have been in touch with Jennifer McCharon who works for National SC for South, they will meet with her to tap into her expertise. Also Suzi is in contact with Julie Brown who may help with social media.

Renew and Brews Social – Suzi Stone

Suzi indicated there is a need for members to learn more about the RenewJax Campaign, so we will be holding a Renew and Brews Social on August 8 at 6PM. She indicated it would be good for all EC members to be there along with other members.

Events and Tabling – Bill Snow

Bill indicated there was an event was held at the Garden Club with approximately 300 people. No other events scheduled now.

Political & Legislative

Political Team Update – Barbara Gubbin

Barbara indicated she will be meeting with SJ County advocates on Thursday to talk about the upcoming elections. She indicated she is checking out the possibility of fast-tracking approval for Barbara Blonder, City Commissioner. She will meet with Dave Harbinger regarding the possibility.

Bill Snow indicated he is looking at Inflation Reduction Act which will help to reduce carbon footprint. Administered at State Level but there has been no hiring of administrators to manage it.

Barbara indicated the Riverfront Parks Now Campaign has been very active. Nancy Powell and Ted Papas, have done 2 presentations to committees to make these parks happen as they are not fully funded. Donna Deegan wants these parks to happen, so this could move forward now.

COJ Committees and Boards – Logan Cross

Logan Cross indicated Mayor Deegan is encouraging citizens to serve on COJ boards. There are lists of the boards on the city website.

Membership

Membership Team Update – Bill Snow

This month's membership data:

Total Members: 1,779 Members by County: Duval: 1,017; St. Johns: 604; Clay: 158

Bill indicated the SCNEF membership increased by 6 members this month to 1,779 total members. He is continuing issuing monthly "Due to Expire Emails" and "Lapsed Emails" and New Member meetings. He indicated we have three people who have registered for the July new member meeting Tuesday, July 25.

Membership Task Force Update – Bill Snow

Bill indicated another Membership Task Force is scheduled in late August. One recommendation was to send a survey to our members for their opinions on Sierra Club membership. Bill asked the Task Force members for their ideas for questions to include in this survey.

Education & Engagement

Educational Programs Update – Lisa Williams

Lisa indicated she is working with Bill Snow on an event related to Food Waste with a movie and then got food out to needy people. Event with Barbara Blonder on August 5 at Guana. She will give a talk on gopher tortoises and Bill Armstrong will lead the hike in the park.

Lisa is working on a video to talk about native plants and importance of planting them in your yard. Having difficulty finding someone to shoot the film. Working with others to produce the Planting with a Purpose monthly.

Outings Program Update – Bill Snow

Bill indicated in July there were three regular outings conducted so far, with 58 participants. This month, we had a number of affiliate/partner outings, with the YMCA for Sierra Military Outdoors, Groundwork Jacksonville's youth "Green Team", and our cleanup of the Emerald Trail, also for Groundwork Jacksonville. We conducted 5 of these affiliate outings for a total of 75 attendees. We have 4 more outings planned for the remainder of this month and a total of 61 are signed up. We had a special service outing/program combination this month with Feeding NE Florida, Jacksonville's leading food bank and food rescue organization. We showed a movie at their facility about food waste and then the participants worked in Feeding NE Florida's warehouse packing groceries for families in need.

Bill indicated he completed an assignment from Brooke Alexander, the Florida Chapter Clean Energy Organizing Manager, contacting Jacksonville, St. Johns County and Clay County to remind them of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants earmarked for our local governments. Specifically, entities in our region receiving grants are: Jacksonville -\$845,350,

Clay County - \$231,710, and St. Johns County - \$275,490. All agencies contacted had already applied for the grants in advance of the July 31 deadline.

Financial Capacity

Financial Update

Logan indicated there were no major expenditures as of late and the bank account is in good shape.

He indicated the SCNEF Google Drive is 83% full and it will be necessary to expand the memory/storage capacity. This will represent a modest monthly expense. Bill Snow expressed support for the expansion given that he uses the drive extensively to support his areas of responsibility. There was EC support for making the expansion.

SCNEF and RenewJax Fundraising

Logan envisions the need for increasing fundraising. He feels the group should consider securing sponsors for events and activities. He contends we need to start broadening our vision on bringing in money. Bill Snow added that there is a need for clarification on what is state, national and local fundraising. This meeting in September will be an excellent opportunity to clarify this fundraising type of activity. Some ambiguity on raising money. Possibly Tom Larsen, state treasurer, can add clarity.

Conservation Priorities & Initiatives

Conservation Committee Update

No meetings recently, but some activities.

Okefenokee Swamp Mining Update – Carr Smith

Carr Smith indicated the EC approved a joint cooperation with GA group to go to National SC magazine. The GA Chapter will work on a draft article for that purpose. A GA congressman has supported a UNESCO plan. He indicated the News for Jax news crew is working on a program on Okefenokee.

Renew Jacksonville Campaign Update

Phase 2 of the RenewJax Campaign will include ongoing pressure on JEA. There is an August Board Meeting where there will be speakers during the public comments period. There will be an effort to perform a Mayoral review of the JEA Board members to confirm their openness to changing JEA's energy generation processes.

Logan is serving on one of the Mayor's transition subcommittees which will provide an excellent opportunity to influence the agenda of Mayor. Logan described some of the possible recommendations she should consider.

Logan indicated the RenewJax Campaign Phase 2 will include efforts to influence the COJ City Council.

Member Announcements:

Suzi announced that Logan has been selected to receive a SC award for particular achievement and will go to Chicago to receive an award in September.

**Next Meeting: August 28, 2023: 6:30 PM via SCNEF Zoom
Adjourn Meeting at 8:00PM**

Minutes Prepared by Susan Creek