



Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday, July 16, 2024 7:00 p.m. Remote via Zoom

Present: Ellie Bailey, secretary; Jim DeWolfe; Bill Gette; Peg Gould, vice president; Kevin Komiega; Lynette Leka, treasurer; Ted Olsson, president; Sandy Tilton; Dave Williams; Matt Hillman, refuge manager; Ella Weber, visitor services; Peter Hickey.

I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Ted Olsson.

II. Secretary's Report. The minutes of the June 18 Board meeting were accepted. A review of action items showed that some had been completed or were in process and some needed to be carried over as action items.

III. Refuge Staff Update.

Ella Weber reported as follows.

- *Thanks to the Board for donating an extra pass as a prize.
- *The summer program for children begins the week of Aug. 12.
- *Thanks to Lynette and Bill for garden care and watering. Bill and Lynette commented that the current watering system is cumbersome and needs improvement. Matt Hillman stated that the staff will work on improvements.
- *The environmental ed. position is open and will be posted soon. It is an Oct. - Aug. internship.
- *Soon a glow-in-the-dark sidewalk mural will be installed outside the Visitor Center. It will have an astronomy focus and will be accompanied by related programming.
- *Programs have had good attendance. Volunteers are welcome.
- *Copy for July/Aug. programs is due. Send to Ella.
- *Volunteers are also needed to install new signs and to help with oiling guard rails. Let Ella know if able to help.

Matt Hillman reported as follows.

- *Bob is finishing the Lot 1 platform.

*On July 31 the staff is going to the Wapac Refuge. Friends are invited to join them. It's a four mile hike.

*There will be two open houses for bidders who have registered with the GSA auction of the Pink House.

*A letter to the Daily News from Matt regarding the Pink House will appear on July 17.

*Rochelle J. had offered to donate \$5,000 to the Friends for Pink House maintenance if the auction stops. Matt has declined her offer.

IV. Treasurer's Report: Lynette sent her report prior to the meeting. She noted that there have been sizable memorial donations to the internship fund. Regarding the problems with the donations function on our website, Lynette continues to work with PayPal to correct them. The Board agreed that if the problems persists, then Kevin and Lynette will either close the Friends' present account and reopen it with PayPal or switch to another service.

V. Technology: Kevin reported on problems with "Go Daddy", our internet provider. Kevin is working with them to recover from a website "outage" and to redesign the site. He expects this work to be done by the weekend.

President's Report: Ted Olsson reported as follows.

A. Thanks and appreciation to all who worked on trail maintenance.

B. Regarding the \$1500 grant award received from U.S.F. & W. Retirees, the Friends will hold the grant funds and the Friend's contribution (\$500) until needed by the Refuge.

C. Update on Walk for the Wild. Our application was accepted and we have moved into advertising and registration via the WFTW page. We will offer the following events. Oct. 13, 10 - 3: Stage Island History Hike (Ellie); Refuge Road Bike Ride (Ted); Dike Hike & Scavenger Hunt (Bill & David); Hellcat Trail Nature Hike (Peg & Lynette); Visitor Center Garden Tour (self guided); Off Site Event Oct. 13 - 19 (Ted).

D. Pink House. After a discussion with Board member, Sandy Tilton, regarding a recent letter that she sent to Matt Hillman regarding the Pink House, a letter that Ted and others found "concerning, threatening and ominous", Ted read Article II, paragraph one of the Friends' By-law which states that *Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, Inc. is an independent, non-profit corporation dedicated to supporting the primary purposes for which the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge was established: For use as an inviolate sanctuary for migratory birds; for the protection of natural resources; for the conservation of endangered or threatened species; and for the development of incidental wildlife-oriented recreation where it does not interfere with the primary purposes of the Refuge.* Ted stated that all Board members need to be committed to the purpose of the Friends and if Sandy can't commit, then she should resign from the Board. Sandy responded that she will send her resignation to Ted in the morning.

Also regarding the Pink House, Ted stated that once the house is gone, the Friends will have an opportunity to consider whatever use is planned for the site by the Refuge staff and to offer support.

E. Major Donor Appreciation Event: The event will be held on Oct. 1 (rain date Oct. 3) from 9:00 to 12:30. Assignments are as follows: Invitation & Hospitality - Lynette, Peg, Ellie; Mailing List for guests/Tour Leaders - Ted/Bill; Tour Description - Bill; Matt, Nancy & Ella will join if possible with Ella available to drive a Refuge van. After a social hour, guests will carpool to the Refuge for a special tour.

F. Future Events

Date	Date	Status
Aug. 22 @ 5:00 p.m.	Swallows & Egrets program at Hellcat (Bill & Dave)	Confirmed
Aug. 23 @ 5:00 p.m.	Swallows & Egrets Rain Date	Confirmed
Sept. 28	Coast Sweep & National Public Lands Day Bill in charge of Coast Sweep	Confirmed
Oct. 1 Oct. 3 Rain	Donor Recognition	Confirmed
Oct.	Introduction to Birdwatching (Bill & Dave)	Date/Time t.b.d.
Oct 26	The Plum of Islands Poetry Project (Peg)	10 a.m.- 12 noon
Oct. 13 - 19	Walk for the Wild/National Wildlife Refuge Week	Application approved
Nov. 16	Dave Williams on Backyard Bird Feeding	Time needed
Nov.	Cranberry Walk	Planned but not scheduled Bill, Ellie, Lynette to lead.
Later in 2024	Hawk Migrations or Bald Eagles (Paul Roberts)	In idea stage. Pd. speaker
Later in 2024 or early 2025	James Russell	Proposed
2025	Kristine Malpika	Suggested
May 10/11, 17/18, 24/25	Outreach table at Lot 1 from 10 - 2 daily on middle two weekends.	Suggested

G. Next/Future Board Meetings

Tuesday, Aug. 20 @ 7:00 via Zoom

Monday, Sept. 9 @ 7:00 via Zoom

Action Items

- *Ella will send names of new hires to the Board.
- *Lynette will purchase and deliver summer camp snacks before Aug. 12.
- *Lynette, Matt and Ted will create a “Big Check photo.”
- *Kevin will send Ella archived photos from the website.
- *Bill and Ella will contact Ben Flemer re: bird banding hike.
- *Matt Hillman and the Refuge staff will work on improving the watering system for the pollinator garden.
- *Members interested in volunteering to help with programs, please email Ella.
- *Members interested in volunteering to install new signs & oil guardrails, please email Ella.
- *Lynette will create an invitation for the Oct. 1 event and send to Ellie and Peg for comments.
- *Bill will write an Oct. 1 tour description.