

Rails to Trails of the Withlacoochee Citizen Support Organization
Membership Meeting, April 21, 2016
5:30 PM, Lakes Region Library, Inverness, FL

The Rails to Trails of the Withlacoochee Citizen Support Organization's Membership Meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Interim President Dennis Reiland with the Pledge of Allegiance opening the meeting. Officers in attendance were Dennis Reiland, Interim President; Pam Atkinson, Administrative Officer; Kerry Smith, Treasurer; and Board of Directors members Steve Diez, Chris Moling, Norm Peterson, and Linda Reiland. Dianne Drye, Park Services Specialist, also attended.

Appreciation: Denny expressed appreciation to the Clean Air Ride for their donation of \$395. to the RTW CSO from the March 26, 2016 event. Also, the Park Staff hosted a Volunteer Celebration for trail volunteers on April 12th. The Annual Bike Ride was noted as the "Event of the Year" and there was recognition of Don Zutaut and Kerry Smith as trail work party coordinators and their crews. Minutes of the previous Membership Meeting on February 18, 2016, were approved unanimously and to be filed.

Treasurer's Report: Kerry reported that income as of March 31, 2016 was \$3500. with expenses of \$4700. Expenses usually exceed income at this time and include \$490. for Volunteer t-shirts and sweatshirts, \$900. for Website development, and \$214. for maintenance. He has received \$4225. in sponsorship funds for the Ride and a new presenting sponsor is Crystal Chevrolet.

Announcements and Updates: Denny noted the following: _

- 1 A reminder to be courteous on the Trail and respect the STOP signs.
- 2 An increase in individual donations in support of the Trail.
- 3 A board established a By-Laws Committee to review/update by-laws and Articles of Incorporation. Steve Diez, Kerry Smith and Jeanna Smith agreed to serve on this committee.
- 4 A thank you to Board and members who have worked to "make things happen" including improvements in Floral City from the restroom to a parking lot in progress and Volunteer work party that upgraded the work area at the Inverness/Apopka Trailhead.
- 5 An approval from the DEP for a Partnership in Parks (PIP) proposal. This is a long term improvement plan for the Inverness/Apopka Trailhead which would include an events building with covered space, a cook area, event equipment storage, etc. A PIP committee will be formed in the fall to work toward raising funds for this.

Merchandise: As Al Cairns, Merchandise Chairperson, was not at the meeting, Rich Roussel reported that \$700. in merchandise was sold at the Clean Air Ride. Al has researched and requested the purchase of a 10X15 canopy tent at a cost of \$1700. to replace the 10X10 which is too small. The new canopy will have permanent signage on it and has a 3 year warranty. Following discussion, Kerry moved to allocate up to \$2500. for purchase of the larger canopy tent. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously by the membership.

Nominations Committee: The Nomination committee of Rich Roussel, Jerry Willert and Jim McLean presented the following Slate of Officers:

Officers	President	Sherry Bechtel
	Vice-president	Rich Roussel (nominated from the floor)
	Treasurer	Kerry Smith
Board of Directors		Dennis Reiland
		Linda Reiland
		Ken Spilios
		Don Zutaut

This Slate of Officers was elected by acclamation with office terms officially beginning at the end of this meeting.

Achievement Awards Presentation: Jerry Willert presented 2 awards to deserving recipients as follows:

1. Lifetime Achievement Award: Trail enthusiasts, activists, volunteers, committee chairpersons, and officers, Linda and Dennis Reiland, were deservedly recognized. They continue with their tireless efforts for Trail improvement both locally, regionally, and statewide.

2. Gerald Clark Award: This award was created in 1994 to recognize outstanding service on the Withlacoochee State Trail. This year's recipient is David Sullivan who has served as a Volunteer on the Wednesday crew for the past 9 years, is active with the Ride as a SAG stop worker, and has recruited other volunteers to work on the trail.

Trail Updates: Dianne Drye reported that the work on I-75 overpasses will start in August, but that the Trail will not be shut down. Also, next week an invasive plant treatment program is being conducted along the trail.

Membership: Jamie Roussel reported 159 paid members.

Wednesday and Friday work crews: **Wednesday:** Don Z. reported that his crew was working on Apopka area improvements and on the covered benches. **Friday:** Kerry reported taking down 5 covered benches and replacing the benches with tables at 2 mile intervals. This is an ongoing project.

Newsletter/Publicity: Bonnie Peterson reported 1157 Likes on Facebook.

Program: Dianne Drye, Park Services Specialist, presented a program on American Disability Act (ADA) requirements and Guidelines for Assistive Devices on the Trail. Dianne reviewed the DEP policy which is committed to accessibility for those with disabilities. Traditional devices such as canes, walkers, and wheelchairs are permitted. Devices allowed include battery operated wheelchairs and scooters, as well as 2, 3, or 4 wheeled Segways. She cautioned us to remember that a physical disability is not always visible and that Park Staff must not ask a visitor using an approved device about the nature and extent of the park visitor's disability. Mobility devices must meet certain criteria:

- A. May only seat 1 occupant
- B. Must not exceed 34" wide, 62" long, more than 550 pounds in weight or a speed of 5 mph.

If you see someone on the trail with a vehicle you're not sure of, please:

- 1 Say nothing to the person.
- 2 Call the Park Office (352) 726 0315.
- 3 If possible, take a picture.

Electric bikes are not allowed, unless there is a pedal assist with a maximum speed of 20 mph; also, they are not considered mobility impaired devices. The status of a golf cart needs clarification. Any gas assistance for any device is illegal.

Dianne answered questions from the audience. For further information, contact her at (352) 726 0315.

Thank you, Dianne: We appreciate the interesting and relevant program.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Pam Atkinson
Administrative Officer, RTW CSO
Next Meeting is September 15, 2016.

