

**Minutes of the Mingo Swamp Friends Annual Meeting
July 23, 2013**

President Sharon Tuschoff called to order the Annual Meeting of Mingo Swamp Friends at 6:30 pm in the Council Room of Puxico City Hall.

ATTENDANCE

In attendance were thirteen Friends members, two Mingo Wildlife staff and one guest:

Bruce Beck	Leroy Romine
Gary Beacham	John Stanard
Raymond Dickerson	Sharon Tuschoff
Betty Greenlee	Brad Watkins
Ray Greenlee	George Vail
Danny Holloway	Eddie Tuschoff, guest
Doug Holloway	Ben Mense, Refuge Manager
Gretchen Pendley	Peter Rea, Visitors Services Park Ranger

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The minutes of April 9 quarterly meeting were read by Bruce Beck. Motion to approve the minutes made by Brad Watkins. Second by Gary Beacham. Passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Gary Beacham read the following treasurer's report.

**Financial Report April 1, 2013 through June, 2013
Mingo Swamp Friends**

Balance April 1, 2013	\$13,821.38
Deposits	
Transfer from the Mingo Swamp Friends Photo Club	162.15
Swamp Friends Bookstore sales	51.00
Memberships	125.00
Total Deposits	\$338.15
Debits	
Postage for mailing Photo Contest photos	22.78
Total Debits	\$22.78
Balance July 1, 2013	\$14,136.75

Submitted by Gary Beacham, Treasurer
July 23, 2013

Motion to approve the treasurer's report made by Doug Holloway. Second by Leroy Romine. Passed unanimously.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

President Tuschoff stated that the current officers had all agreed to serve again in their current positions and presented them to the members for approval -- President Sharon Tuschoff, Vice President Brad Watkins, Secretary Bruce Beck, Treasurer Gary Beacham.

Motion to approve all nominees by acclamation made by John Stanard. Second by _____. Passed unanimously.

NEW BY-LAWS

Secretary Bruce Beck presented the recommended change in by-laws to the members, noting that the "Classes of Members and Dues" needed to be changed in order to agree with the Membership Form.

Motion made by Brad Watkins to amend Article III, Section 2 to change the annual individual membership fee to \$25, the family fee to \$40 and the life membership/Battling Bucks fee to \$1,000, and to add the following three categories – Heron \$75, Owl \$150 and Eagle \$300. Second by Gretchen Pendley. Motion to amend passed unanimously.

Motion to accept the new by-laws as amended made by Brad Watkins. Second by Gretchen Pendley. Passed unanimously.

ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS

President Tuschoff placed the names of Leroy Romine and Danny Holloway before the members as nominees to the Board of Directors. Motion by Watkins, second by Beacham to accept Leroy and Danny as directors. Passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1) **Photo Club Report** – Sharon Tuschoff and Peter Rea reported that Photo Club chairman Aaron Horrell had e-mailed them that he recommended that the photo contest be cancelled this year. Sharon and Peter replied to Aaron that they and the refuge staff believe strongly that the contest should proceed.. There was discussion about how to continue. Peter said that he would talk to Aaron to see how much work Aaron would be willing to do on this year's photo contest. Sharon said that she had a good response to her request for funding from Wal-Mart in Dexter for the Youth Fishing Day. She believes that sponsors could be had for the photo contest as well. The photo contest announcements did not specify what kinds of awards nor how much money would be awarded for contestants. Swamp Friends could reduce the monetary awards and provide bookstore gift cards.

Motion by Beck that the contest still be held, with President Tuschoff naming a new chair of the Photo Club if necessary. Any changes would be approved by the Board of Directors.. Second by _____. Passed unanimously.

- 2) **Pavestones** –Beacham reported that four new applications have been received since the last quarterly meeting.
- 3) **Mingo Swamp Friends Website** – Brad Watkins reported that the Swamp Friends website has been updated to include the by-laws and the minutes of all meetings. Thanks to Lindsey for her work.
- 4) **Bookstore** – Peter Rea reported that the Bookstore Committee consisting of himself, Gretchen Pendley, Regina Mense and Bruce Beck, should meet before September to finalize the orders for bookstore items. All of the \$5,000 grant from Toyota must be spent on sale items by March 31, 2014. Items can be stored in the new Visitors Center even before the center is officially open.

The committee will also need to make recommendations on acquiring a computer and software to keep track of income, expenses and inventory, a system to use credit and debit cards.

A cash register and many sale items are already on-hand in storage.

Peter emphasized that the Friends will need more volunteers to help with the bookstore when it opens. He also stated that it will be permissible for refuge staff to take payment for sale items in the bookstore, however, staff may not count the cash nor deliver for bank deposit.

NEW BUSINESS

Food Plots.

There was discussion on planting food plots. It was agreed that winter wheat be planted in September, followed by over-seeding clover in late winter. Gary said that he would seek donated seed and offer to buy seed cleanings at a cheaper price. Ben Mense said that Lindsey should be consulted on procedure and locations.

Motion by Brad Watkins, second by Danny Holloway, that Gary Beacham be authorized to acquire the seed in the way he deems most appropriate. Passed unanimously.

STAFF UPDATES

Refuge Manager Ben Mense reported.

- 1) Completion of the new Visitors Center is now scheduled for September 30. At that time the staff may begin moving into their new offices.
- 2) The new displays for the building are almost completed. It should take about four weeks to install the displays in the building after the building completion date.
- 3) Grand Opening date of the new Visitors Center could be as early as November 1.
- 4) The refuge budget for the current fiscal year (October 1, 2012-September 30, 2013) was cut but 8%. It is expected that the 2014 FY budget will be cut an additional 3% to 5%.
- 5) The Ozark Highlands Route should be open this fall. The asphalt on the hills and all culverts are being replaced. The wooden bridges are yet to be replaced. New gravel will be spread on the road. Travel along Ditch 6 will no longer be open to the public. The new route instead will extend to Ditch 3 and on to Red Mill Drive.
- 6) The Spillway will be replaced in July, 2014. The new structure will allow about three times as much water to pass through during periods of flooding. The construction period means that the Ozark Highland route will be closed 4 to 6 weeks next summer.
- 7) The new Hunt Plan has been approved by the regional and national authorities. It will come into effect once it is printed in the Federal Register later this fall.
- 8) Access to bow hunting areas along Ditches 4, 5, 6 and 11 has been improved with expanded parking facilities.

Friends members had questions about boat ramp accessibility within the refuge. Members recommended that two-way traffic be allowed from the bow hunters parking lot to the pump station on Ditch 2.

Refuge Ranger Peter Rea reported:

The spring Youth Fishing Day went very well.

Upcoming activities:

- 1) National Public Lands Day, Saturday, September 28.
- 2) Mingo River Paddle Ride, Saturday, October 19.
- 3) Wonderful Waterfowl, Saturday, November 23.

Friends are invited to make their recommendations for additional programs.

Peter requests that Friends be present again for the 2-day Youth Hunt in the fall.

He reported that Refuge Biologist Brad Pendley is working on a "Wounded Warriors" activity for wounded veterans.

Volunteer Hour Reporting. Peter reminded members to keep their volunteer hours up-to-date. A timesheet was provided to members last year.

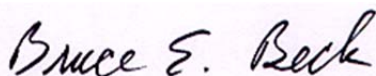
NEXT MEETING

The next Quarterly Meeting of Mingo Swamp Friends will be Tuesday, October 8, 2013 at 6:30 pm. Meeting place to be announced later.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Watkins to adjourn. Second by _____. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjourned at 8:05 pm.



Bruce Beck, Secretary