

MINGO SWAMP FRIENDS MEETING

April 12, 2016

Call to Order: The April meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by Vice President, Amanda Mossman.

Attendance: The meeting was attended by three members and two Refuge staff - Amanda Mossman – vice president, Bruce Beck – secretary, and Rachael Hember – treasurer, Ranger Peter Rea and Assistant Refuge Manager Corey Kudrna. President Sharon Tuschhoff was absent due to a business engagement.

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the January 12, 2016 quarterly meeting were read by Bruce Beck. One correction was made – there were three hunters participating in the HOOHA Hunt, each bagging two deer. Motion by Beck second by Hember to approve the minutes with the correction. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Read by Rachael Hember. The ending balance for the Bookstore is \$1,173.09 with \$492.83 in deposits and \$1665.92 in expenses on inventory. The balance for Friends operations is \$334.99, having sent \$250.00 to North American Wetlands Conservation Act as the Friends' share of the Mingo Basin improvements. \$54.00 was spent to renew the McAfee security software. There were no new memberships. A printed copy was provided. Motion by Beck, second by Hember to approve the report as printed. Motion passed.

Committee Reports

Swamp Friends Website: No changes to report.

Swamp Friend Facebook Page: The number of responses to Facebook postings varies from day to day and week to week, but responses are numerous. There was discussion of making a seasonal calendar of events and news to post. Kudrna and Mossman will work on the calendar.

Bookstore: Hember says that new items have been ordered in anticipation of the seasonal increase in visits to the Visitor Center.

Old Business

Ag Expo: Held January 15 and 16 in Poplar Bluff, the Ag Expo was a good event for Mingo. Kudrna, Rea, Beck and Mossman manned the booth and were able to interact with many dozens of attendees. Rea requested a visit with the Butler County University of Missouri Extension Council next September as sign-up begins for the 2017 Ag Expo. Perhaps the Refuge

and Friends could coordinate and share activities with the Missouri Department of Conservation, Ducks Unlimited and other nature-related organizations.

Insurance Renewal: Property and liability insurance for Mingo Swamp Friends Bookstore is due for renewal. Beck offered to visit with the local insurance agent, Mark Crisel to answer questions about coverage. Beck will report to the members at the July meeting.

New Business

Officer Nominations for the Coming Year: The group discussed possible nominees to be voted on at the Annual Meeting in July. Beck and Mossman will communicate on a list of nominees to present at the Annual Meeting.

Canoe Rental: There was discussion of the desirability and feasibility of renting canoes at Flat Banks. For example, canoe rental could be paid at the Friends Bookstore, with paddles and life jackets provided there. A safe box at the boat ramp at Flat Banks would allow for return of the items. Beck will look into the purchase of canoes, paddles and life jackets. The refuge staff will discuss refuge regulations and liability issues. This will be business to discuss at the July Annual Meeting.

Educational Meetings: Saturday evening educational programs might be open events to draw attendance and interest in the refuge and in Mingo Swamp Friends participation. This will be considered then discussed at the Annual Meeting in July.

Nature Playground: Rea and Kudrna proposed a “nature playground” of natural items and materials between the parking lot and the Visitor Center. Activities and items may include a walkway of stumps, a wicker tunnel and a swing. More will be discussed later.

Staff Updates

Peter Rea reported on the following activities:

School groups Are scheduled to come to Mingo on April 29 and May 6, 9, 12 and 14 from Greenville, Jackson and Chaffee.

Diana Douglass will be leaving Mingo on April 23 for a job at the Everglades. Volunteer help will be needed for educational activities.

International Migratory Bird Day will be April 30. Paddle rides are scheduled for that day.

Family Fishing Day is scheduled for June 4th. Rea will seek local sponsors/donors for bait and prizes.

Pilot Knob Hike will be May 14 on a prior reservation basis only.

Student Conservation Association Internship has been applied for by the Refuge. The student would work 40 hours per week, receiving a stipend and housing on the refuge.

Newsletter by the staff is almost finished and will be sent to Beck to send on to Swamp Friends members and to Mossman to post on the Friends' Facebook page.

Next Meeting: The Annual Meeting of Mingo Swamp Friends will be July 12th at 6:30pm at the Mingo Visitor Center. Election of officers will be the main item of business.

Adjournment: Motion by Beck, second by Hember. Motion passed. Adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Bruce Beck, Secretary

April 21, 2016