

Mingo Swamp Friends Annual Meeting
January 14, 2020

Present: Amanda Mossman, President; Leroy Romine, Vice President; Bruce Beck, Treasurer; Debbie Koenigs, Visitor Services Refuge Ranger; Tara Brown and daughter Emma, guests

Call to Order: President Amanda Mossman called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

Minutes of the October 8, 2019 meeting were approved as presented.

Financial Report: Bruce Beck presented the fourth quarter treasurer's report. It was approved as presented.

Committee Reports

Facebook and Website by President Mossman.

Bookstore Report by President Mossman featuring sales from September 2019-December 2019.

Photo Contest Report by Bruce Beck. The current schedule is as follows:

October	November	December	January	February	April
Cape Nature Center	Sikeston Depot Museum	Dexter Public Library	Poplar Bluff Municipal Library	Puxico Public Library	Powder Valley Nature Center

Locations are still needed for March, May, and June.

Pavestone Report: One new pavestone has been ordered. Stephen Sutter is still working on the wording for the John Toll pavestone.

Old Business

- Discussion of adding a professional category to the photo contest has been tabled indefinitely. Focus will be placed on gaining more youth entries.
- President Mossman presented her budget document. More discussion at future meetings.
- Discussion of plants around the visitor center. This will be addressed again at a later date.
- The Ag Expo will be held January 31 from 1-8 p.m. and February 1 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Black River Coliseum in Poplar Bluff. Koenigs will set up the booth to feature both the refuge and Swamp Friends. She is planning a fishing theme. It was agreed that we purchase fishing rods (child and adult) to be given away in a drawing each day.

New Business

- Photo contest director expectations were presented to Tara Brown. She will review and forward her stipend thoughts. A final decision will be made at the April meeting. It was suggested that the contest open earlier to encourage more youth entries (before the school year ends, and that a likeness release be included in the entry form (USFWS has a standard one).

Staff Reports

Refuge Ranger Debbie Koenigs:

- Manager Mense hopes to add a Pathways intern this summer (not advertised yet). The refuge is back down to one maintenance staff member (Matt Fox).
- Deer season was decent, duck season was better. Now feral hog control can resume in high gear. There will be an aerial hunt that will close the refuge some time during the week of January 20-25 (depending on weather conditions). There were approximately 900 hogs killed on the refuge in 2019 (1100 including Duck Creek and private land).
- There has been a regional realignment. Mingo NWR is now part of the Mississippi Valley Region.
- The budget has been signed for the coming fiscal year.
- More work needs to be done on Sweets Cabin and trail. The refuge is considering using recreation fees for trail improvements and a mowing service for around the visitor center.
- Koenigs recommended an earlier start time for the quarterly meetings. A copy of the bylaws was reviewed and Beck made a motion to meet at 5:00 p.m. on April 14. Romine seconded the motion and it was approved. Other members will be notified by email.
- Koenigs will be working on more signage for the refuge, including signs that emphasize the Friends support.

Next meeting: April 14, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. in the Mingo NWR visitor center

Motion to adjourn: Beck made a motion to adjourn. Second by Romine. Motion passed. Adjourned at 8:10 p.m.