

**FTA Board of Directors Meeting
7/15/17; Unitarian Church, Tallahassee**

Present

Officers:

Leslie Wheeler, President
Pete Durnell, VP Governance
David Waldrop, VP Trails
Carlos Schomaker, VP Development
Adam Wiegand, VP Membership
Pam Hale, VP Treasurer

Excused

Jan Wells, Secretary

At-Large:

Megan Donoghue
Bill Turman
Auz Gage
Greg Knecht
Lauren Krebs
Mark Sheddan

David Denham
Natasha Caballero

Quorum established

Staff/Guests:

Janet Akerson, Admin Dir
Alex Stigliano, FNST Trail Program Director
Shawn Thomas, NFS

1. Carlos Schomaker motioned to move the May 20, 2017 minutes. Lauren Kreubs second. All in favor.

President's Report:

Educating Tallahassee - Mark Shedden

-Mark Sheddan reported on approaching all levels of support to work towards closing the gaps. He visited Matt Herndon, State representative, Ben Diamond's legislative assistant. Provided background. Supportive of amending the Florida Forever Fund to give specifics for funding for FT to buy land. Started ball rolling for political commitment from State. Will draft Leslie letter to give representatives, agency heads, county commissioners, etc. Tailor it to each recipient.

-Greg Knecht noted there's a distinction between educating and lobbying.

-Carlos Schomaker said volunteers do have leeway when communicating and educating. Mark Sheddan said he will be providing documents.

- Shawn Thomas welcomed FTA in the opportunity to educate. A good portion of the Trail was purchased with Florida Forever funds and thinks it's a good idea to try to specify it.
- Howard briefed on the history of working with legislation.

Florida Conservation Voters

-In June, Leslie went to Florida Wildlife Corridor presentation. Alike Moncrief with The Florida Conservation voters was there. Leslie asked Board permission to join FCV as a member to get more info about legislative actions and maybe team up with another group; Group membership \$25. **Carlos Schomaker made the motion to join, Adam Wiegand seconds.** Discussion: Carlos strongly recommended that this is a continuation and this group is good nexus to environmental groups. Greg Knecht said well worth it. **All In favor.**

-Taylor Stein/FSU getting ready to release new study. FSU did analysis of cost per person/per visit. Range of data from users, user types, user groups. Where to relocate the trail (measure users there), regional parking/promotional plans. 350,000 primarily day users (probably undercounting). FS invited speaker from Outdoor Afro and Leslie wants to reach out to more diverse groups.

Gateway Community Program

-We have agreements with several towns; but the Gateway Community Program has lost focus, never a consistent program. The idea is trail is close to communities. and gets communities to be welcome to hikers. Leslie will move forward by sending letters to towns. More areas are interested in becoming Gateway Communities: Lake Butler, Leslie will pursue. Also, Office of Greenways and Trail is developing their own program. Pam – maybe take ours and merge with them. Shawn did bring it up to them and it is in strategic plan. He suggested that the programs merge or be part of one another. OGT wants to coin “trail towns”. Leslie will send out fact sheet. Auz – incorporate/facilitate relationship, sponsorships, conference, footprint. Resurrect trail town shoutout in footprint mag. Alex has fact sheet he can send.

Florida Trail Coalition Update - Shawn Thomas

-Meets twice a year, partners representatives throughout the state. Working on next 5 years of strategic plan. Hoping board is aware and will be involved to help have goals that fit joint mission. 1. Complete the trail (more investment, state cycle and land conservation), The Foundation of Greenways and Trails is proposing a PACT legislation bill, parks and community trails, percentage go to development of trails but with 25 mill SUN Trail grant to multi-use. Meeting with DEP to see how to push it forward. Fear of getting lost in PACT. 2. Standards (kiosks/funding) 3. Land acquisition plan (currently have inventory of parcels in gap and who owns them/ over 2000, from there look at larger parcels and optimal boundaries in SPs). Jim Kern using “2000 gaps in trail”, which isn't accurate. Shawn will write letter to not use logo (trademark protected). The administrator has authority to issue use of logo – try to get consistent approach throughout NST. 3. Promoting connections – new users to trail (diversity, inclusion,

youth, families)

-Position to help carve out percentage of funding going to trails (similar to how SUNtrail gets funding). Sessions in Sept. SUN Trail legislation. FNST mentioned as not eligible. “these funds go towards things such as”. Allows legislature during specific years to prioritize. In Lake butler, got offer to buy RR corridor from Norfolk Southern.

-Two positions open on Office of Greenways and Trails Council – meet quarterly around state. Have to be able to travel and during week. They pay you to travel. They advise the OGT and vote on priorities and GT System. ~Member of Chapter using email list to email political messages. Update bi-laws to become more specific. Auz – offered to help work on Bi-Laws to help identify more specifics on the topic of rules and repercussion. Pam – when you sign up there’s box that says don’t share info. We are the governing body of the corporation.

VP Governance - Pete Durnell

See presentation Update Articles of Incorporation. Board Meeting minutes on website. Megan will add coalition strategic plan link on website and link to comprehensive plan. Bi-Laws are our responsibility. Could tighten up chapter charters, rework Admin manual and put on website, trails manual-trail committee, activity leader guide – being worked on, not done. Adam will be taking the lead on Activity Leader Manual. Megan add link to National Trails Act on website, Development plan, within chapters. Who’s responsible: Articles of Incorp-Leslie, By Laws-Pam, Comp Plan – Leslie, Admin Manual – Pete, Trails Manual- David, Activity Leader Guide-Adam

Review of Bylaws - Pam Hale

Plan is to tackle a chunk at a time. Pam will send copy and ask for comments back in 2 weeks. Pam will work on revisions based on comments. Then post for 30 days. Leslie – swearing in new board members. David Waldrop read swearing.

VP Outreach and Development, Carlos Schomaker

Plan for fundraising will be coming soon.

Presentation by UF Conservation Law Students - Tom Anckerson

UF Law Florida Trail Project *See presentation* Asked to look at land acquisition programs (amendment 4), to be sure trail received adequate consideration. Presented pilot, Aucilla to North of Ocala NF. Referencing parcels that trail passes through, and using google earth as interface. Migrate property appraiser data into google earth. Next board meeting Oct 21 at their office in Gainesville. Lauren Krebs will be liason.

VP Trails - David Waldrop

-Website Maintenance – FTA

Alex – Volunteer Program Coordinator now titled Community Outreach Coordinator. Trying to increase diversity of population and maintenance of FNST. Van Tran. Background working with volunteers on farms. Farm to community programming. Brings up question; what goes on the website and who takes care of it. Regional Reps need to be able to update notice to hikers, not in any one's job description to do website. Important to have consistency of voice and absence of contradictions. Who's auditing it? Van Tran will be doing FNST social media. Lauren, Utilize personal social networks. Committee that meets on phone. Person should also create guidelines for chapters. 1. Communication between people creating content. Alex -Moving FNST centric would resolve the split of responsibilities. Megan will upkeep minor edits to website.

-David Waldrop – New membership database. Member Clicks. Working to convert data to database. Have ability to view membership, etc via cloud. Individual users will have profile that can log in and modify. Up and running potentially Sept. On the topic of private conversations; Office365. How chapters can communicate among themselves. Teams will be our main focus. –

-Big Bend Reroute, Leslie/David/Shawn

Background: We *were* on timber land on Foley property. Then we became aware that there were some private land owners that didn't want the trail there. But we were still routing people that way. Had to close that section, and came up with roadwalk. Feedback RE: roadwalk. Wasn't considered certified trail anyways. Did an Optimal Location Review/ "Corridor review". Roadwalk is currently on rural road/but also logging transportation corridors with no shoulder. Opportunity to develop multi-use corridor on 90. Alternative C: Network of public lands (recommendation of corridor review team), southern route. Some challenges, but it meets or exceeds needs. Some counties are actively working to attain land. FFS, SP, FFWC all support. FFWC will develop trail in this area either way. Portion along Suwannee River could potentially be certified as a paddle trail. A little controversial, but water feature is part of comp plan. It's outside the 20 mile planning corridor. Water has been an issue that brought up; no distance more than 8 miles without water. We need Four Rivers Timber for bridge crossing. None of us liked cutting out the Aucilla, FWC said the Aucilla trail would never go away. No issue continuing to call it a section of the FNST as a side trail or FWC is open to creating a loop out of it. It would only be about 10 miles of new trail. Photo from Tide Swamp Management Unit. Some objections hearing: no base of volunteers (there wasn't any until we started doing it), Working with foundation to offer field trip with board. Shawn has sent briefing paper to Washington office and regional office. We may need to NEPA the entire route. In two different e-blazes we told people to read the ELR and had a survey (open for a month), sent to 7000 with 27 responses. More positive response to Alternative C, with significant misunderstanding. The top complaints were losing Aucilla Sinks, why don't we go back to the way the trail was? Idea that there is a corridor that can be acquired (alt. D), Haven't given up on off-road route and continue to try and close gaps. Maybe a letter from the president saying that we support acquiring land by willing seller. **David calls for a motion to support alternative C, including Aucilla Sinks spur and Leslie to write a resolution of support to the US Forest Service. Greg Knecht seconded the**

motion. Discussion waved. All in favor.

Treasurers Report - Pam Hale

Our capital from 2015 to 2016 went up 15K (spring creek*). In 2016 we made 13K (which include spring creek), without that we lost 2K 2017, as of May we are 59K in black. Have spent 635K of 680K. We seem to be successful at raising money for specific things. Ie. spring creek. Let's pull a new project for FY18. Advertising- should we push for more ads in footprint/magazine. Alex is working on getting corporate sponsors for events and gear donations. What do we give corporate donors – what do they get out of this. memberships, Would be a sponsorship/not a membership. **Board decides to remove “alliance” and “Corporate” memberships.** Bill, Auz, Carlos, and Leslie will work on material to help approach corp. sponsors. Lauren will make the flier. Operating budget will look pretty much the same, minus the additions for the building.

*Funding/availability for review for Spring Creek on hold.

FTA Staff Report - Janet Akerson

“Moisture” problem at FTA office. Building from 1942, add-ons twice. Back part of the roof needs replaced. Ceiling water damage/back office. See review. He wants to be able to say there's none left. Any wall they open, they'll have to bring it up to code. Office space in Gainesville ~5 rooms ~2k/mo + downtime, moving, networking, wiring, etc. Do we need to remediate until the guy says the issue is remediated? Or pay a contractor to come rip out bad part. David said you won't find a reputable contractor to do that without bringing it up to code. We own the building. 10-15 to demo. Options: tear it down and start over, move to office space, remediate, and keep. Quote for complete remediation (2K), demo and get a module, have to find temp. place for staff and business. Vacant government space? Would need to take on mortgage. Gofundme plan? cost of modular. Greg will reach out.

Staff Report - Alex Stigliano *Video*

Adjourned

Minutes Approved 08.31.17