



## Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway Coalition Meeting

Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center

North Brevard on SR 406 (Garden Street) 4 miles east of the A. Max Brewer Causeway Bridge

September 5, 2013; 10:00 am

### MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Introductions

**Board of Directors:**

Tim Ford, City of Palm Bay – President

Richard Stillwagon – Vice President

Marsha Cantrell, Brevard County Parks and Recreation – Secretary

Nicole Holbrook, Sebastian Area Chamber of Commerce – Treasurer

**Board Members:**

Robert (Bob) Day, MRC, Anglers for Conservation, Resident

**Members and Guests:**

Afi Fancon, City of Titusville

Bill Klein, Titusville Environmental Council

Deidre Jackson, Space Coast Office of Tourism

Elisa Kropat, Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge

Garry Balogh, FDOT

Jim Tulley, City of Titusville

Kathe Brewer, Stand Out Swag

Kelly Gaines, Costa Communications Group

Layne Hamilton, Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge

Leigh Holt, Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization

Marlys Breckle, Master Gardener

Mary Williams, Brevard County Parks and Recreation

Mike Palozzi, Shaw Environmental

Robert Finck, Jr., Atkins North America, Inc.

Sandy Mickey, Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge

2. Approval of Minutes – August 1, 2013 Meeting

**Richard Stillwagon made a motion to approve the August Minutes. Bob Day seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.**

3. Presentation – Layne Hamilton, Refuge Manager of the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex. She advised they are celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the recipe for a managing a wildlife Refuge is land, water and wildlife. Space changed the face of Cape Canaveral and Merritt Island and its communities in the 1950's as one of the largest undeveloped areas on the East Coast of FL situated on land that was ideal for launching rockets. Wildlife was a major lifestyle and the way of survival. The Class of 1890 Harvard started a hunting club called the Harvard Club on 18,000 acres, where launch pads 39A and 39B are located now, from the Indian River to the ocean, for hunting, horseback riding and fishing. By the 1920's, it wasn't used much and eventually burned down.

[www.indianriverlagoonbyway.com](http://www.indianriverlagoonbyway.com)

PO Box 560902 Rockledge, FL 32956-0902



In 1820, Douglas Dummit moved down from Tomoka and started a citrus grove and grafted and developed the world's famous Indian River Fruit leaving 6,000-acres of orange groves when he died in 1873. There were many communities and fish camps. Wildlife was a major recreational and economical activity with hunt clubs. Property was taken by the government by eminent domain in the 1960's and early 1970's for the start of the space program.

Salt Marsh mosquitos played a big role with registered bites of 500 times per minute and were controlled with spraying DDT. Brevard County was the first area that mosquitos became resistant to DDT. The mosquitos would lay eggs in the mud not in the water and with the spring rains they would hatch when it flooded. There were no fish in the marshes to eat the eggs so they dug out dikes, called impoundments, to keep the water in the marshes to cut down on the population. 51 impoundments were created and still managed today within 22,000 acres, 165 miles of levee and 350-400 water controlled structures.

The Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge and Canaveral National Seashore overlaps by 34-acres under 2 different agencies and 3 levels of jurisdiction. The legislation that designated the seashore provides that the Refuge be responsible for the management of public use and natural resources and parks services manages the cultural resources.

The Dusky Seaside Sparrow is a subspecies that occurred and were found only in Brevard County and on Merritt Island. They would nest in the marshes and after the use of spraying DDT their population fell by the early 1970's from 2,000 breeding pairs to 600. The last seen female was in 1975 and they became the first extinct species.

The Refuge has one of the top firefighting programs in the country with prescribed burns of 15,000-18,000 acres a year. They burn on a 3-year rotation with the challenge of controlled burnings around NASA infrastructure and burn bands from August to December.

Managing the Scrub Jays have become a priority as they are producing but they are fledging and not surviving. There are 3 meta-populations left in FL. After Ocala, Merritt Island has the largest population with scattered groups in FL. Scrub Jays are long lived birds, have familial characteristics and are sight loyal preferring lower vegetation but the babies fall victim to predators such as yellow rat snakes and Cooper Hawks.

The Refuge complex was opened in 1985 and has 1M visitors per year with concentration on 6 uses: hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, wildlife interpretation and environmental education. Future plans are for a transit study, new trail, deer/hog hunt, and to build a new Refuge complex. August 28<sup>th</sup> was their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and there is a Historic Art Exhibit to be displayed at the Refuge Complex from October to January, a celebration and video



premier November 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Titusville Playhouse, and a Space for Wildlife Festival on November 9<sup>th</sup> at the Refuge Complex.

#### 4. Committee Reports

##### A. Sustainability Committee – Marsha Cantrell – Sustainability teleconference on 8/28/13.

- Donor Plan – Kathe Brewer is still finalizing the kiosk and presentation and now that summer is over she'll initiate scheduling meetings with the potential donors.
- Diversified Revenue Source Planning – Tim Ford submitted to the Gannett Foundation a Grant Application requesting \$4,000 for two kiosks.
- Kiosk and Mobile Phone App – The City of Titusville has offered a 2-sided kiosk at the south end of town for use by the Coalition. Graphics are being prepared and one side of the kiosk will have information about the Titusville area and Space Exploration and the other side information about the North Loop and an overall map of the Scenic Byway.

##### B. Website Committee – Nicole Holbrook

- Kelly Gaines with Costa Communications advised they looked at our website needs. They are in the wire frame planning process setting up the elements, components and key pieces, and most importantly for nature, recreation, and culture with site navigation. It was suggested to form a subcommittee to create a needs list from the North, South and Central areas to gather writing content, photos, info and new development for the next phase. Kelly passed around two concepts of the homepage for a vote with the majority preferring option A's functionality but with the blue features in option B. Kelly will marry the two concepts and email it for final approval. A test page will be programmed to add the subpages. Documents such as minutes will be located in a Member's section. It is designed in Word Press which is easy to use, much like Word, and training will be provided. It will also be made smart-phone friendly. It was suggested to have a Board of Directors password protected section and it was agreed to look at that once all the other improvements were completed.
- On-line store – Waiting on the website changes for Kathe Brewer to finalize.

##### C. FDOT Scenic Byway Coordinator – Garry Balogh – For over a decade the Federal Highways provided \$3M a year for the Americas Byway Resource Center but the funding is gone. Their resource info is housed on the web at [www.byways101.org](http://www.byways101.org). It has the Strategic Plan for National Scenic Byways Foundation, vision and mission, core values, brand and organizational development. Garry advised the State 5-year work plan is in review and moving forward and is down from a 36-page plan to a 5-page plan.

#### 5. Reports of Officers

##### A. President – Tim Ford – No Report.

##### B. Vice President – Richard Stillwagon – Introduced Jim Tulley, Mayor of the City of Titusville, who is here to attend the Northern Extension Kick-Off meeting following the Coalition meeting.

##### C. Secretary – Marsha Cantrell –



- “Adopt” a Meeting for 2013 – Kathe Brewer adopted the October 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting with a Brevard Zoo presentation. Charlene Neuterman with the City of Cocoa has adopted the November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting at the Cocoa Civic Center with a presentation pending. Vince Lamb has adopted the December 5<sup>th</sup> meeting with a presentation from Lisa Roberts, Executive Director of the Florida Wildflower Foundation. Sueann Thompson has agreed to adopt the January meeting at the Front Street Civic Center in the City of Melbourne. The 2014 Calendar is being worked on and will be distributed. Garry Balogh suggested the National Elephant Center for a future meeting place and tour.
- D. Treasurer – Nicole Holbrook
- Status of Bank Account – Nicole reported an account balance of \$724.08 with no change since last month. The \$72 hosting fee is now due and the new budget starts in October so she needs approval to pay.  
**Bob Day made a motion to approve payment and Kathe Brewer seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.**  
The brochure changes were made. We’re printing 5,000 brochures for \$2,500 (IRL TDC funds) and should receive them in early October. We also have an electronic file of the brochure for future use.
6. Old and Unfinished Business
- A. North Byway Extension – Bob Finck reported there is a kick off meeting today after the Coalition meeting.
  - B. Level 2 Accreditation – Tim Ford reported he submitted some information that applies to criteria for Level 2 and Level 3. He will follow up.
7. New Business
- A. Facebook Status – It has been successful and receiving notices every day. Many thanks to Beth McMillen at MRC for her work on the page!
8. Public comment
- A. Elisa Kropat, Merritt Island NWR, is working on the transit study for the Refuge with the USDOT Technical Center for the next 8-9 months to improve the visitation to the Refuge and the connection with the region. She will be reaching out to all the stakeholders.
  - B. Bob Day reported the Annual Florida Coastal Cleanup is on September 21<sup>st</sup>, see <http://www.keepbrevardbeautiful.org/> for more info. September 28<sup>th</sup> is the Hands and Kayaks Across the Lagoon to raise awareness of the Indian River Lagoon.
  - C. Tim Ford advised he is working on the annual report and one of the big changes is the condition of the lagoon and the bad publicity about the pollution and animals dying. He reminded everyone the election of the Board is in January and he will be appointing a subcommittee to recommend nominations.
9. Adjournment at 11:33am

**Next Meeting is: October 3, 2013, 10:00 am**  
**The Ted Moorhead Lagoon House – 3275 Dixie Highway NE, Palm Bay, FL 32905**  
**Presentation – Amy Fenwick Reaume, Conservation Coordinator, Brevard Zoo**