

Friends of the Wapsi Center Minutes
Thursday, Oct. 17, 2019
Wapsi River Environmental Education Center

Attendees: Naturalist Becky Baugh, Norm Nichols, Carol Rogers, Jolinda Burr, and Joy Sheeley.

Treasurer Report: The current bank balance is \$15,663.54

Staff news: 4H AmeriCorps member Faith Heinrich has accepted full time member service for the next year, starting in November. Faith attended Natural Disaster Response training and Wapsi Center director Dave Murcia attended ALERTUS (active shooter) training during the past month.

Center staff will attend the Fall IAN meeting Nov. 6-8.

Grounds: The garden is still producing green tomatoes and gherkins, along with carrot greens that the cockroaches and turtles enjoy.

Facilities: Concrete work outside the old dormitory has been completed. Demolition continues indoors, with floor choices still being considered.

Education: In August, onsite programs were given to 11 groups totaling 713 people, and off-site programs were given to 20 groups totaling 596 people. Two programs were cancelled.

Four hatchling turtles have been acquired from the DNR; two soft shell and two stinkpot. They are being kept in the lab for the time being.

The observation hive failed to make a new queen this season, so new bees will need to be ordered next spring. Wax worms were also a problem in the hive.

The baby fox snake has begun to eat, and has adapted well to being handled.

Wind turbine kits have arrived; Becky thanked the Friends group for purchasing them. These items are used to teach student groups how wind energy is generated.

Becky is still in need of 1 or 2 volunteers to help with the Wild Edibles workshop on Nov. 16. This would involve helping with the hike to search for mushrooms, and helping to prepare the mushrooms that are found.

Old Business: Thank you to Lucia and team for updating the gift shop. Lucia will purchase 6 pumpkins for the upcoming Halloween activities.

New Business:

Norm will contact the persons in charge of the Lyodellbasell grant application to request an extension for our application. This \$2000 grant has been awarded to the Center in the past, but now must be completed by the Friends group as is is meant for organizations with 501c status.

A "Friends of Conservation Summit" will be held at Jester Park Nature Center in Polk County on Nov. 9. This event is intended for volunteer groups who support public conservation organizations in Iowa.

We considered a request to add handcrafted cedar birdhouses to the gift shop offerings, but tabled the proposal until more members are present to discuss it. Extra Cocoa Picasso paintings will be stored in the cabinets under the gift shop shelves, where they can be rotated into the display area as needed.

We have received a \$400 endowment from Caroline Kimple for feeding wildlife. Becky suggested that we use this to pay for our winter bird feeding supplies from Wild Bird Unlimited.

Becky announced that Bald Eagle Days will take place Jan. 10-12, and invited group members to sign up for a shift if possible.

The Center is in need of newspapers for the bird cages.

Becky thanked hosts, program volunteers, and all who assisted with Ecology Day.

The group will meet next at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 21 at the Wapsi Center.