Homosassa River Alliance

April 13, 2023, Meeting Minutes

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Prior Meeting Minutes:** Motion was made and approved to waive the reading of the minutes of the March meeting.

**Treasurer’s Report:** A beginning balance as of 3/1/23 was $29,795.07. Deposits of $6.00 and debits of $1,004.47 provided an ending balance as of 3/31/23 of $28,796.60.

**Announcements:**

**Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve** – the management plan for the preserve was approved by DEP.

**Springs Protection Zone** – FWC hosted a public meeting for the Weeki Wachee Springs Protection Zone. Approximately half of those attending were not supportive the plan to create a protection zone. HRA will carefully observe the progression of this plan.

**Bow Fishing** – has recently been observed by several members in the blue water area where only hook and line fishing is allowed. A community education project may be considered in the future.

**Annual Awards:**

* **Water Warrior Award –** presented to Don Hiers for his diligent work on the septic to sewer initiative in the Blue Water Cove & Blue Water Forest neighborhoods.
* **Blue Water Award –** presented to Brent Strange and Alecia Runyon for their volunteer support and contributions toward the HRA.

**Guest Speakers:**

**Lieutenant J. Bergen and Deputy J. Sudlow, Citrus County Sheriff’s office**

Highlights of their comments include:

* The Sheriff’s office has only three marine deputies. Hiring efforts for patrol staff have been successful recently. There are currently no open positions in the marine unit.
* They have made a concerted effort to have a presence on the Homosassa River recently and HRA members have noticed their positive impact. They plan to be on the water every weekend through the summer, especially July 4th weekend at the beginning of scallop season.
* They have a good working relationship with FWC and coordinate efforts.
* They are already educating individual boaters about the noise ordinance but need signage to create awareness more broadly.

**Projects Status:**

* **Noise ordinance** – signs cannot be placed on existing poles in the river and will say only Quiet Zone. FWC has approved the permit for the signs. Coast Guard approval is pending.
* **Homosassa River Restoration Project (HRRP)** – currently waiting on Army Corp of Engineers permit for the next section of the river. They have not yet begun maintenance of the sections of the river previously restored but expect to begin soon.
* **Septic to Sewer** – the County Water Resource Manager has applied for federal funds which may reduce the financial burden to homeowners impacted by the project. Progress on the project has been slow because easement agreements have not been returned by all owners of private roads.

**Upcoming Events:**

* Mullet Toss is scheduled for 5/6

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm. The next meeting will be on May11th.