

## SAVE THE HOMOSASSA RIVER ALLIANCE MEETING

1/10/2019

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m. at the Homosassa Civic Club

President Kapocsi welcomes guests and members.

### Treasurer's Report:

Beginning Balance	\$11,743.47
Deposits	551.00
Checks/Withdrawals	675.85
Ending Balance	\$11,619.62

Report was approved and seconded.

### Minutes:

Minutes were read and approved.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Follow up:** Ken Cheek, speaker at last meeting, suggested that homeowners on the Blue Waters address their concerns to the BOCC regarding moving them up the list in the sewer project. It's up to the county government to make those decisions.

**Scallop Signs:** More signs have been ordered and there should be close to 90 signs on the river at the beginning of the next scallop season. Anyone wanting to express how they feel about the present scallop season activities can go to the FWC website.

**Minumum Flows and Levels:** Brad Rimbey brought us up to date on MFLs and the Florida Springs Council. A report is due in March regarding the reduction of water flow in the rivers. This report will be given to a panel for consideration. This panel is comprised of individuals from out of the state. He is not very optimistic. We may have another fight similar to the one had several years ago re the amount of reduction which will degrade our waters, allowing more salt water intrusion.

**Florida Springs Council:** Groups such as the Alliance are challenging the DEP regarding the fact that rules need to be followed regarding the nitrates in the rivers. Nitrates cause algae DEP is supposed to come up with an action plan which will address this problem. These groups are seeking to have a judge be sure that DEP follows the law and checks the right boxes.

**Homosassa River Restoration Project:** Steve Minguy gave a report on the progress of his project. The project has not received any funds yet. None of last year's pot of money has been distributed. His project is in line to get some of the money. He has the support of Senator Simpson and Representative Masullo. We need to get started so we can address the lack of vegetation in the Homosassa River.

Steve also mentioned that he had just had a meeting with the Riverhaven Garden Club. He had a good response from them regarding his project.

Natural Gas Export – Crystal River: Maxine Connor reported that natural gas export from Crystal River can be a problem. This is a hazardous material and has to be handled in a special way. The situation has become serious because there are gaps in the jurisdiction and the lawyers for a particular company – Strom, Inc. – are aware of these gaps. There is the problem of deregulation and this should be watched carefully to protect the public.

Shrimpalooza: We will have a booth at at the Shrimpalooza on March 26. Vote was taken and seconded to purchase shirts and ask for \$15 donations for each shirt.

Team Progress: Gordon Colvin reported that teams have been created. We have team leads and now we just need more members to join the teams. As of now, these are activities the teams have been implementing:

Education: Judging Science Fair in January  
Scholarship award to a graduating senior for college tuition  
Working with a liaison in the school system to get students involved in environmental issues.

Outreach: Getting information onto our website  
Forming a team for the Newsletter  
A River Alliance Facebook page

Also, considering the implementation of an online chronicle of daily activities on the river. People who live on or visit our area can join in on that and document their daily experiences on the river.

Gordon then asked that those interested in joining teams stay after the meeting to meet with team leads.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Two major violations on the river recently. FWC officers have caught shrimpers and gave citations for shrimping too close to shore, i.e. shrimping in a closed off area. Also, citations given for oyster harvesting off an island, which is not allowed. You can only harvest oysters over a live oyster bar, not an island. It was found that 66% of the oysters were undersized and they were also failing to protect the oysters from contamination. All four were issued citations. **Note:** It was mentioned in the Chronicle that these people were only fined \$316 each. FWC said they have no control over that issue.

Speckled Sea Trout and Red Fish: Survey on FWC website regarding putting sea trout on a game fish status. As of now, commercial fishers can catch 50 sea trout per day. With Red Fish, only 5 are allowed. We need to change this; the speckled trout are showing a decline in this area. He encouraged members to check out the survey.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20.

Respectfully submitted, Iris A. Rose