

Big Bend Environmental Forum Meeting Summary
March 18, 2010

1. Roll – Executive Secretary, Kent Wimmer, Janet Findling of the League of Women Voters of Tallahassee; Terry Tenold of Florida Trail Association, Steve Urse, Unitarian Universal Church Green Committee; Elizabeth Platt, Apalachee Audubon; Holly Davenport, The Nature Conservancy; Stephen Hogge, Council of Neighborhood Organizations; Ariana Marshall, FAMU Environmental Sciences Student Organization.
2. Agenda approved and Jan 21 Meeting summary approved noting Elizabeth Platt attended the meeting.
3. Old business:
 - a. Candidate Forum – no change: August 5, 2010 for August 24 and **Thursday October 7** for the November 2 general election. These will be held from 6:00 to 9:00 PM in the Commission Chambers at City Hall in Tallahassee. **Marshall will ask at FAMU if they can videotape the forums.** FAMU students should be asked to practice writing questions for the candidate forums.
 - b. **Treasurer's Report** - Kessler reported prior to the meeting that the BBEF has a balance of \$1982.39. Howard has emailed an invoice to all member organizations. All organizations are asked to check to follow up to see that their organization pays their dues. Since the meeting, Kessler has confirmed that a check for \$301.40 has been mailed to the City of Tallahassee to pay for reserving the City Commission Chambers for candidate forums. Action item: **Wimmer will check with Kessler and Kevin McGorty to see where the BBEF Post Office mailbox is and confirm that we need to keep it.**
4. New Business
 - a. Review of BBEF Organizational and Operational Guidelines – this was distributed prior to the meeting. There was no interest in reviewing it at this time. The BBEF Operational Guidelines are attached.
 - b. Appointment of Nominating Committee. **Wimmer appointed the following members to the committee: Steve Urse, Neil Fleckenstein, Holly Davenport to present a slate of officers for 2010 at the April 15 BBEF meeting.**
 - c. Legislative Report

- 1) Florida Forever. Davenport reported funding for FF is in the Governor's budget, but it is neither in the House nor the Senate's budget. It is hoped that the Legislature will add funding in for FF as additional revenue sources are confirmed (federal Race to the Top and Medicaid and Seminole Gaming). Environmental programs are on the chopping block if no additional revenues are identified. Senators Constantine and Dockery are supporting funding, but no champions have been identified in the House. FL Forever supporters need to let their Legislators know how important this funding is.
- 2) Oil Drilling. Hogge suggested that the City and County Commissions be asked to adopt resolutions in opposition to oil drilling off of the Florida coasts. Does anyone know if the League of Cities and the Association of Counties are opposing oil drilling? It was suggested organizations send letters to the Commissions (the letter from the Apalachee Audubon Society is attached).

d. Local Government Report

Proposed county preemption of environmental regulation before the county charter review commission. Hogge reported the review commission is considering preempting City environmental regulations. He stated that the CONA Board opposes the proposed revision as drafted and is speaking in opposition to the proposal at this evening's public hearing (March 18). In a story printed prior to the public hearing held on March 18th, the Tallahassee Democrat quoted the County Administrator as saying that the proposal would allow the city to adopt more stringent regulations, but Hogge indicated that the proposal makes no such allowance and that the city would be pre-empted. Hogge also indicated that the CONA Board had not taken a position on another proposed charter revision, one that would create a County Utility Board.

e. Reports of activities and news by our member organizations

- 1) Hands Across The Sands" Rally, February 13, Platt reported that Rick Minor gave a campaign speech. The event was not well-coordinated.
- 2) ESSO at FAMU – hosting the FAMU 2010 Focus on the Environment, Working Towards a Sustainable FAMU -Climate Change, March 29 - April 2 (information emailed to BBEF prior to meeting). They are trying to activate members, get wider participation – outreach to campus environmental groups and to the community surrounding the FAMU campus. The FAMU President supports sustainability. They are hosting Earth Day activity in the community.
- 3) FSU Campus Earth Day, March 24, 11:00 to 2:00 PM

- 4) Florida Trail Gateway Communities and National Trails Day, June 5, 2010. Wimmer reported that a morning NTD event will be held at Wakulla Station Trailhead along the Tallahassee-St. Marks State Trail in Wakulla County. Sopchoppy, St. Marks and Wakulla County will be recognized as Gateway Communities to the Florida Trail. BBEF members are invited to have an information table at the event. Wimmer will send information.
- 5) Clean Energy Advocates & Offshore Drilling Opponents Citizen Action Day at the Capitol, Mon. March 22 - Tues. March 23, For more information contact Toni Reale, 843.641.0600, toni@cleanenergy.org
- 6) Clean Energy Advocates (Chris Bird) are supporting legislation to impose a carbon fee and dividend back to consumers, and they opposing cap and trade legislation. They are meeting with Senator Nelson's staff next Wednesday. CEA next meeting is April 3rd at 12:30 PM at Wood Plus Partners office on Copeland and Madison.
- 7) Florida Forever Day will be Wednesday April 7 at the Capitol's Waller Park (dolphin statue area) from 10:00 to 3:00. Davenport invited organizations to set up tables, but must RSVP by Monday March 22. As school will be out, it would be great to have children at the event. April 22 is DEP's Earth Day at the Capitol (Waller Park). Audubon of Florida will have a table at this kid-centric event.

f. Ideas for potential forums.

Biomass power. Is the truth getting out? Urse stated that the Tallahassee Scientific Society did a good forum. We have heard a lot of rhetoric, not well-informed. Opponents use targeted words (bio-mess, killing babies). Do people ever mention bad stuff already being spewed out at existing coal plants like the one at Sneads). There needs to be a broad forum on energy focused on clean, cleaner, cleanest ways to generate power.

- g. **Next BBEF meeting: Thursday April 15, 5:00 PM.** at the Florida Trail Office, 325 John Knox Road, Building F, Suite 100 (enter frosted glass door on northeast side of building (facing John Knox Road).