

Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee



**1424 Blakely Dam Road
Royal, Arkansas 71964**

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD: Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee Minutes

DATE: August 5, 2013

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m. by Arnie Habig

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Stacy Sigman, Resource Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Bill Jackson, Supervisory Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Jason Mothershed, Facility Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Amy Shultz, Park Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Members Present:

Bill Barnes	Robert Cavanaugh	Arnold Habig	Walt Sitter	Jerry Williams
Phillip Carr	George Dooley	Larry Raney	Rick Stokes	Howard Wright
Tom Butler	Al Gathright	Jerry Shields	Dan Watson	

Minutes in Review: The minutes from July 1, 2013 meeting were approved as written.

Opening Remarks: Arnie H. stated he would like to express his appreciation for all the work Dave D. did for FOLO in creating the 501 (c) (3) status, and furthermore, much of the success of FOLO can be attributed to the hard work done by Dave D. and his dedication to see FOLO succeed as it has through the various projects the group has accomplished. Although Dave D. could not attend this meeting, he will be missed by members of the LOCFC and FOLO.

Friends of Lake Ouachita (FOLO): Al G. related the FOLO board members would remain after the LOCFC meeting to discuss winter campground schedules and the business plan Rick S. has been developing for the campground operations. Arnie H. inquired if there were any updates from the Corps concerning the request made by FOLO to expand their cooperative agreement and add additional campgrounds to operate? Al G. stated, as of this date, there has been no response to the request submitted to the Corps. Rick S. relayed that Robbie Hancock has verbally agreed to assume the position as Campground Coordinator for FOLO's operations at Crystal Springs and Tompkins Bend. The proposed salary for the Campground Coordinator position has been determined to be a pro-rated salary of \$300.00, per area, per month for a total of approximately \$12,000 a year, once the Denby Point and Twin Creek Recreation Areas have been included in the Cooperative Management Agreement.

Duties for this position include coordination with FOLO contract fee collectors, oversight on collection procedures and coordination with the National Recreation Reservation Service (NRRS). The contract terms and start date have not been fully determined by FOLO yet, but will be completed soon. Rick S. stated he had discussed with Brenda M. about the placement of an honor vault in the Twin Creek Recreation Area, one that would have individual slots for each campsite, to allow for campers to make their payments in that manner. Final approval for the installation of the honor vault will stem from the approval of the Twin Creek area being added to the cooperative management agreement.

FOLO Campground Business Plan: Rick S. related that after seven revisions of the proposed FOLO business plan, the final draft has been sent to all the FOLO members for their review and approval.

Benches/Swings: Rick S. related the contractor hired to install the playground equipment had agreed to return in mid-July to install the additional two sets of swings at Crystal Springs Camper's Beach. Two benches will be installed on the east end of the beach and a third bench installed on the west end of the beach. Dave D. will contact the contractor to determine when the final work can be completed.

Ouachita River Valley Association (ORVA): Rick S. related he would be representing FOLO at the ORVA convention in Camden, Arkansas on August 27, 2013. He and Arnie H. have been working on a 15-minute presentation concerning FOLO's accomplishments and activities on Lake Ouachita. Rick S. provided a printed copy of the presentation for the LOCFC members to review and make comments.

Wireless Network (WI-FI): Jerry S. provided information concerning his recent contact with the Kharma Consulting Inc. Agency from North Little Rock, Arkansas, who work with area hotels and other establishments in providing wireless network (Wi-Fi) capability for customers and guests. Representatives from the agency visited Crystal Springs, Tompkins Bend, Denby Point, and Twin Creek Recreation Areas to determine what internet service was current available in those areas. Upon completion of their evaluation of the recreation areas, they will provide FOLO an estimate for the installation and maintenance of the system for these areas.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Lake Ouachita Vista Trail (LOViT): Jerry S. shared that the Trail Dogs had been very busy cutting and removing trees from across the trail left by recent storms that passed through the area. Jerry S. continued in stating that he and Robert C. had removed more than 20 trees on the Little Bear Mountain section alone. Jerry S. provided an update on the final section of the LOViT trail, in that he had received approval of the archaeological review and upon receiving the "order to proceed" from the Arkansas Department of Highway and Transportation to begin soliciting bids for the construction of the final section of trail. Jerry S. estimated it would be approximately one month before the solicitations could be sent out and must be advertised in a statewide newspaper for one month, before the contract can be awarded. Jerry S. continued in stating that the contractor used previously on the Little Bear Mountain section of trail had the LOViT project "penciled" in for November and December if they were fortunate enough to be awarded the construction work. The goal is to have the final section of the trail completed as early as January 2014. Jerry S. stated work is being done on the bidding process and the U.S. Forest Service had provided a copy of the trail construction specification sheet to aid in the

development of the contract specifications needed for the trail construction. The evaluation process will take into account past experience in trail construction and specific equipment used for the construction. Robert C. distributed the copies of the LOViT trail maps recently developed as tear-off sheets for the public. Robert C. and Jerry S. both expressed appreciation for the help provided by Tracy Phillips, Lake Ouachita Field Office Civil Engineer Technician, in her assistance in the development of the map. Robert C. was able to get the maps produced at Legacy Printers at a cost of 31cents each. Dan W. was able to copy the map to a CD and requested the map be added to the Lake Ouachita Field Office website for visitors to download. Robert C. further related that The Cranford Johnson Association, the photographers who took recent photos of the trail for the Arkansas Department of Tourism, had provided a \$500.00 donation to the LOViT trail account.

Aquatic Vegetation: Tom B. related that he had spoken with Johnny C. about purchasing the materials needed to construct additional exclusion cages to be placed at various areas around the lake. Bill J. stated that there is approximately \$4,300.00 remaining from the Fisheries Grant funds received earlier this year that could be used to purchase the cage material. Al G. remarked that, supposedly, potting soil had been purchased for the pots to plant trees recently donate and didn't know if the funds from the Fisheries Grant had been used or if the Corps had paid for the soil. Al G. asked if Bill J. could find out who actually paid for the soil before commit the remaining funds to the exclusion cage project.

Al G. shared his difficulties in attempting to re-register FOLO's SAMS account and the issues he is having with the new system. Al G. continued that August 16, 2013 is the deadline to re-register FOLO's account and because of the issues he has run into, he will be making contact with representatives from Senator Mark Pryor's office to make them aware of the issues and see if they can provide any assistance. Tom B. asked if all the cages constructed had been placed in the lake? Bill J. related that only 90 cages had been installed and as soon as the lake level drops, Johnny C. plans to install 150 additional cages at various areas around the lake. Bill J. further related the proposed Black Willow and Bald Cypress tree planting project was never able to get established and due to the difficulties, had been abandoned.

Bill J. provided the information from Johnny C. concerning the aquatic vegetation projects on Lake Ouachita. The current lake levels are still 5-feet above where they were on December 11, 2012 when the first 90 cages were placed around the lake and *Southern Vallisneria* plants were planted in the cages as "test" sites for the establishment of the plants. Johnny C. stated, in his message, that he is hoping to be able to get a view of these cages when the lake levels drop, an additional 2-3 feet, so that we can determine the success/growth of the original plants that were planted. In addition, plans are to install approximately 150 more cages as the lake levels continue to drop. Volunteers are being sought to assist in the placement of the exclusion cages and establishment of brush piles around the lake.

Fisheries: No report.

Campground Cleanup: Arnie H. stated letters of appreciation had been completed and upon being signed by Brenda M., would be mailed to Mr. Richard Osburn, New Age Distributing and Mr. Wayne Shewmake, Arkansas Wildlife Federation for their recent assistance on Lake Ouachita.

Comments: Amendments to LOCFC by-laws: Dan W. proposed various amendments changes be made to the LOCFC by-laws. After discussion, a vote was taken and the proposed amendments were unanimously approved. Dan W. will provide a copy of the revised by-laws to the Corps to be updated on website.

FOLO Financial Reports as of July 31, 2013

Assets		
Month	June 30, 2013	July 31, 2013
Cash-Trail Account	\$6,135.00	\$6,186.00
Cash – Miscellaneous	\$943.00	\$1,043.00
Cash-Crystal Springs	\$119,710.00	\$136,055.00
Cash-Tompkins Bend	\$34,294.00	\$48,619.00
Total Assets:	\$161,082.00	\$191,903.00

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:05 P.M.