

FRIENDS OF CEDAR CREEK, MAY 18, 2019

The annual meeting of Friends of Cedar Creek met at 9:00 a.m. for a breakfast brunch at the Dustin Preserve. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Dave Van Gilder, President. The sign-in sheet was passed around while the agenda was being reviewed. Minutes were read and amended to reflect there were approximately 60 people in attendance at the March meeting. Some of Dave's students were there helping to cook the pancakes.

Faith Van Gilder presented the treasurer's report. Dues can be accepted: \$15 for a single person, \$20 for two in a family or more. Donations are also accepted. A large expense is the printing of the brochure. Faith brought tee shirts with the logo and embroidered caps. Tee shirts are \$15 each or a special of 2 for \$20. There was a discussion of the banking fees charged. Faith will check with the bank and other banks regarding fees for our organization. Karen Griggs moved acceptance of the report. It was approved. Karen Griggs moved, Gretel Smith seconded approval of a donation to ACRES for the use of the facility, and a donation to Heather Baker for her webmaster services. Both were approved. Dave Van Gilder asked for nominations for officers. All current officers were willing to extend their services. Karen Griggs moved all be renominated: Dave Van Gilder, President, Fred Feitler, Vice President, Mary Anna Feitler, Secretary, Faith Van Gilder, Treasurer. Susan Till, seconded the nominations. Susan Till, Gretel Smith, and Heather Baker offered to serve on the Board of Directors. Matt and Christy Kuziensky and Samuel Schwartz also offered to serve. Joel seconded. All were elected.

Responsibility for programs and projects: we would like newer people to help. Faith related the Canyon Creek controversy which engendered much publicity partly because of the sewer line under the creek proposal. Gretel noted we need to remain aware of pressures on the Creek and its environs.

Dave noted he has attended three meetings in the St Joe/Maumee River watersheds which are looking for better coordination between county and municipal entities on farming practices, sewage and municipal discharges. No one group is working to protect the waters of Lake Erie. Algal blooms are a greater problem and result from what comes down the river(s): phosphates and sediments. Cedar Creek is the upper end as it flows into the St Joe River and on to the Maumee River and Toledo, OH and Lake Erie. A question on how to coordinate: money/grants to help projects? Would FOCC like to remain part of the larger group? The only cost might be in putting in seed money for research. Karen Griggs was concerned about the CAFO threats in Ohio which leak into ditches going to the Maumee. Could the USEPA enforce the law regarding the pollution? Gretel Smith moved that Dave Van Gilder continue to attend what will be the Maumee River Basin Alliance. Karen Griggs seconded the motion which then passed.

Gretel Smith brought up the topic of the Michindoh aquifer. The mayor of Pioneer, OH wants to tap the aquifer (for a privately owned business) and sell the water to communities outside Toledo (not within the aquifer area or recharge area). No particular concern in MI at this time, just in IN and OH.

Invasive species management will require a regional approach for southern, central and northern Indiana invasive. Sam Schwartz spoke about the future of the water supply out west; seven states and Mexico have agreed to work on the problem. For our area, the Great Lakes Compact is operating with Governor Holcomb of Indiana chairing. Allen Haynes, DeKalb County SWCD, spoke to the issues: until a permit is filed, no litigation can be filed. (Ohio DNR has a person to handle the permitting). Sam Schwartz also noted in southern Florida algal blooms are affecting the Keys. He noted we have adequate water, but keeping it clean is important. Education is important to overcome the lack of overall planning for water resources, here and elsewhere.

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Dave Van Gilder brought up a discussion on how the Cedar Creek is regulated. In DeKalb County north of County Road 68, it is a regulated drain under the purview of the DeKalb County/Cedar Creek Joint Drainage Board. South of County Road 68 Cedar Creek is under the Natural, Scenic and Recreational Rivers control. The Concerned Citizens of DeKalb County, a lobbying group, published an article about the drainage problems in the Recreational River part and was urging that the blockages be cleared as if they were part of the regulated drain. Dave Van Gilder was called by Theresa Brown, Allen County Commissioner, to talk about issues in the Cedar Creek. Allen Haynes noted there were lots of issues which might be worked on by good flood mapping and a flood plain study. Recreational use of the Cedar Creek would be enhanced by a trails group mapping a canoe trail with connectivity. Note that ACRES has some properties south of Auburn within a canoe trail area. Gretel Smith noted (re: CCDCC) that much of their issues are related to tax issues, such as a \$39MM bond issue for schools in DeKalb Central United district. She also noted David Powers is no longer in charge of the lobbying group. There would need to be some way to clear log jams which are a recreational hazard for canoes using the Cedar Creek. Doug Nusbaum, on Cedar Creek near ACRES just south of County Line Road, is looking to clear out his own creek bed but not the Creek with a grant. An oxbow has some cut logs and debris blocking the flow. In a discussion of blockages, a philosophy of let nature take its course/manage for recreation only/don't touch. A suggestion to work with professionals to see what can be done was offered.

Faith Van Gilder reminded us Jason Kissel of ACRES challenged us to be a leader on Cedar Creek. People and groups able to cooperate include Allen Haynes, SWCD DeKalb County, surveyors of Allen and DeKalb County, agriculture educators, DNR, and sheriffs and police for collaborative work. A bold suggestion by Gretel Smith was to change state rules on drainage boards for costs and assessments. A challenge to members of FOCC: what can each of us do for the organization? Suggestions include sharing the website with others, in and out of the Cedar Creek area, distribute the new pamphlet (libraries, etc) and Hoosier State Science Association brochures, invite teachers to Facebook.

Wildlife observations included a Pileated Woodpecker on the deck at Randy Roberts' home. Sam Schwartz had one at his home; he also noted that a white pelican was seen at the Swinney Homestead. Bald Eagles in the area and cormorants! Matt Kuziinsky had a ground hog on his roof. Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Anna Feitler, Secretary