Hillsborough River State Park Preservation Society
15402 U.S. 301 N., Thonotosassa, FL 33592
CSO President Wade Prevatt - Phone: (813) 952-4739
https://www.historyandnature.org/

General Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, 11/4/2026 6:30PM, Administrative Building

Executive Board members present: Wade Prevatt, Sue Moulton, and Tricia Demers.
CSO Board members present: Cary Ann Prevatt, Gary Fields, and Harry Lindenmuth.
Park Representatives present: Elaina Pia, Michael Schuchhardt, and Partick Waddell
CSO Members: Robert & Barbara Schneider.
CSO Members via phone: Marie, Miranda Brigham and Roger Bouffard.

Meeting called to order: 6:30PM EST

October 7th HRSP CSO Meeting Minutes approval – Cary Prevatt motioned for approval; Harry second the motion. Meeting minutes passed & will be available online.

After Action – Haunted Woods Event:
Friday night final funds: QR = $840.00 / Cash = $2,000.00
Saturday night final funds: QR = $4,983.00 / Cash = $3,600.00
Final numbers on visitors: 620 adults & 212children
Total Admission: $11,423.00

HRSP Merchandise: $373.00
Food trucks: $540.00
Donations: $121.00
Total additional income: $1,034.00

Event Expenses:
Insurance: $1,495.82

Volunteer foods:
Potbelly's: $462.09
Additional food & candy: $256.54
Supplies: $858.10
Light Towers: $1,500.00
Port O Potty Cleaning/Prep: $300.00
Total Event Expenses: $4,872.55

Haunted Woods Net Profit: $7,584.45

Armwood ROTC was a tremendous help on Saturday and overall, they did a great job.

Scare trail kids did a good job. DJ was awesome (& free). There was 1 incident during the event. FWC took care of everything, and Park Managers made sure attendee was attended to and provided trail guidance. Several attendees came up to volunteers and voiced desire to participate next year.

We were told to contact some of the bigger supporters earlier for Trunk or Treat participation (Home Depot, Lowe's, Florida Aquarium & Zoo Tampa). Advised reaching out to them at least 4 months in advance so they can plan and order supplies.

Under consideration for next year's event – start the trail later in the evening (wait for it to be darker). Maybe 7:30pm would be better – 7pm was too early, still daylight.

Need chairperson for each of the areas of the event. It is too much for one or two persons to take on. Will need chairperson for Trunk or Treat, Scare Trail, Food Trucks, Volunteers, Donations, Volunteer food, etc.

Open floor for round table discussion & feedback post-event.

Kid's area not needed with the Trunk or Treat going on as well. There is no money coming in from this area and it is an expense only.

How many zones did we have during the event? 12 zones – we can have as many as we need / want and could easily accommodate more zones if we have the people support.

Parking went very well with ROTC. No complaints from Ranger James or Ranger Stephanie.

There were NO injuries but a few bug bites (first aid attended) and 1 cut finger (first aid attended).

Walkies for assigned volunteers would be helpful to communicate with volunteers scattered throughout event and with park rangers – would be helpful if incidents occur and just overall needs. Only parking had walkies.

Park Manager Chris Sardinas had a few thoughts he wanted to be shared with the committee and board members from guests.

- Scare trail was too short – guides were rushing the visitors
- A scare actor used profanity – need to remind for next year to watch the language
- Some folks were asking about moving the event to the weekend before Halloween – in the past we didn't want to compete with other events in the community – we have scheduled it in the past for the weekend before Halloween and there were complaints about scheduling issues from family events to school events

Miranda noted that she too had to speak with one of the scare trail actors about language and behavior (rough housing)

Wade stated that he went down the trail a few times to hand out water and did not hear or see anything regarding behavior or language.

Park Ranger Michael suggested we could do a pumpkin patch for two weeks and then at the end of the two weeks have the Haunted Woods event.

The Rec Hall is cleared out of all Haunted Woods items. Working on getting rid of pallets now.

Next year Haunted Woods suggested dates: 10/22- 10/23 – vote from all in attendance passed.

Someone mentioned that we need to have a conversation with the guys at the smoke house to not take down his display too early. Next year a volunteer will go with the last group down the trail so that volunteers will know that the trail is over.

Strongly recommend no strollers / wagons through the maze. The way the maze is made / designed it will not accommodate the large wagons that families are using and jammed up the line.

There is some discussion this evening about admission tent processes. Recommend

splitting up the volunteers and one takes cash and the other does QR codes. Also, suggestion to count out the bands ahead of time and know that when that stack is used up that number of adults / children have been admitted.

Some ideas being discussed for other options to admissions to help with long lines and keep record of numbers / monies.

Committee member inquiry about insurance. Wade clarified that the insurance in place covers for 99 people or less. For the event we have to get supplemental to cover the increased numbers of people on property.

Suggestion of separating the tents for admissions. One tent is QR and one tent is cash only. A stamp option instead of bands – quicker for visitor and volunteers. Different ink color each night and even different stamp design for each night.

Committee member mentioned that during preparations for the event some visitors to the park dressed in suits went into the Rec Hall and took pictures. Were any of the park rangers aware? There was nothing cleared or discussed with the park rangers regarding visitors taking photos inside the Rec Hall.

Treasurer Report:
General Account:
Total QR code deposit with Zeffy: **$8,280.00**

Ranger Station (QR)
Firewood bags: **$**1260.00
Ice: **$**300.00
Stickers: **$**280.00

Campground (QR)
Firewood bags: **$**90.00
Singles: **$**20.00
Ice: **$**15.00
Cart Merch: **$**7.00
Merch Tent Sales: **$** 229.00
Donations: **$**26.00
Membership: **$**15.00
HW QR income**: $**6,038.00

Campground (Cash)
Merch Tent Sales: **$** 144.00
Donations: **$**121.00
Membership: **$**2,515.00
Recruitment Day**: $**110.00
HW cash income**: $**5,600.00
Total Cash Income: $8,490.00

Expenses Reported:
TECO: **$**61.01
Paper Pusher – QuickBooks: **$**281.40
Insurance: **$**1,495.82
HW Light Towers: **$** 1,500.00
HW PortOPotty: **$** 300.00
Firewood: **$**840.00
Haunted Woods **$** 1,576.73
Ranger Training Day Pizza: **$** 45.97

Total Expenses: $6,100.93
Total Income: $16,770.00
Net Income: $10,669.07

Ending Balance: $35,030.44

<u>Fort Foster October Treasury Report:</u>
Beginning Balance: $12,013.20
Expenses:

Total Income: **$0.00 (Blue Star Family Merchandise)**
Net Income: $0.0

Ending Balance: $12,086.20

Old Business:
Firewood sales are starting to pick up – order placed and we should have a delivery this week.

Bob Shultz has been our firewood splitter in the past. He is on the calendar for January. He will be a big help – lots of pine in the pile. In the past he has had a helper but due to health issues helper may not be able to assist Bob.

Park rangers will communicate about smaller portions and request for oak. If possible, can we get Bob trained on chainsaw for the park firewood?

Ice vendor issues – Cary bartered with new vendor and got the cost down to $1.50 per bag. The ice bags will be smaller (7lb. bags now) was 10 lbs. and we can keep them at $5.00/bag. Other options out in retail for example – Dollar General has 3-4lb bags, and they are overstuffed and it is far away to drive. New ice vendor has on the schedule for delivery every Friday.

We need some help with ice sellers in the park. Michael will have Jolyn speak to some people to see if they are interested in helping. There are a few good candidates soon that may be available to help with selling ice.

New Business:
We have changed Port O Potty service providers. The previous vendor was difficult to work with on scheduling the cleanings and on billing and was rude. The new vendor will clean all the Port O Potty stations and is significantly cheaper.

CSO Christmas Party – where and when? December 19th suggested as date. CSO provides the meat and everyone brings a dish. Elaina mentioned using the Ybor location if it is available. It has garden, bathrooms – large infrastructure for event hosting. Back up date December 20th. Start time will be 6pm and we will have the White Elephant gift exchange again. Dollar range for white elephant gifts will be set at minimum of $20.00 and maximum of $30.00.

<u>Fort Foster:</u>
The dates for the candlelight will be December 12th and 13th. Chris asked if we could make a change to the flyer regarding scheduling for the weekend events.
Chris and Harry need to meet up and discuss schedules for those two days and get

confirmation on what will work best for everyone. Chris wanted more stuff scheduled on Sunday to engage more people. Saturday night will be the candlelight experience. There will be a few cannon firing demos and musket firing demos and then the battle.

Low count for reenactors available for the battles. Need to get some younger people involved to carry on the traditions. Suggestion of the ROTC kids being reenactors but there is an issue with age and being under 18 using the muskets.

Park ranger Elaina has some ideas of people that want to participate in the Fort Foster candlelight experience. Will reach out and see what response she gets.

Need a band – pay or free options available. Needs to be period era music to keep with the reenactment.

In the battle we usually have 2-3 cannon shots with minimum of 5 shots.

Volunteer food – will have cider and cookies during candlelight for the visitors but what about feeding volunteers? Option from Sue's contact in Zephyrhills to come out and cook at the event – confirm that it is period era correct food.

Once the schedule is firmly decided on for candlelight experience weekend, the flyers will get prepared and will be ready to distribute.

Fort Foster Days (different from candlelight experience) was too long at 10am – 5pm. Suggestion from park rangers to shorten it to 10am to 3pm.

Harry needs to get the equipment (leather belts and uniform items) to the Rec Hall – all of the cartridge boxes have been oiled and are ready. Need inventory taken and all equipment put together. The park rangers will set up the day before.

Park ranger asking of the candlelight experience – beds/mattresses in the block house need to be refurbished – use moss or straw (historically it would be Spanish Moss) – suggestion to use fake moss (no bugs and lasts longer). The cloth outer lining is deteriorating on the mattresses and will need to be given some proper attention for Fort Foster Days. Need measurements of the beds – inside the wood 6' x 4'. The upstairs at the fort is being used for storage only – no visitors allowed – not safe. So, no sleeping or staying in the upstairs part of the fort. The floor of the second story is warped, and the infirmary is bad as well.

The movie crews moved things around and did a lot of cleaning – it made some of the water damage visible, and it is more apparent now that the flooding damage is worse than originally thought. To save some money – have 1 mattress with fake moss exposed on one corner so that visitors can see the historical setting and representation.

Need to take inventory of candles and lanterns. Found some LED candles that look historically accurate and will provide some aesthetics.

The historical Florida map needs to be replaced. Found that it would cost around $35.00 to have a historical map replica made and we can replace the deteriorating one in the case.

Park Ranger Update:

Officially in spending freeze. Reminder to let the CSO know what you need. Currently

need a new lithium conversion kit for one of the carts. Will review with Wade the specs on what is needed to get it ordered. All financial needs will be communicated from Chris to Wade.

Michael – audit completed by district and we are delinquent on visas / paperwork. Need to update the roster and the deadline is November 28th. Understanding that 70% of the CSO are the transient hosts that come and go with the seasons.

Need some folks to complete the Volunteer Agreement.

Michael will work with CSO to update and get all of the paperwork and training completed and complete the requests of the district office.

Michael will email you if anything is missing or needed from you – will provide instructions and guidance.

Round Table:

Suggestion to meet up before the Fort Foster Candlelight event to finalize the details and discussions from tonight. November 19th will be follow-up for Fort Foster Candlelight.

At the next CSO monthly meeting on 12/17, we need to elect board members.

Fort Foster meeting November 19th at 6:30pm
CSO monthly meeting December 17th at 6:30pm

Cary motioned to adjourn meeting; Gary second the motion. Meeting adjourned at 8:35pm

Minutes recorded by Tricia Demers, Secretary