



Cypress Chapter of the IWLA (CCIWLA)
APPROVED MINUTES
ANNUAL MEETING June 18th, 2025
ZOOM

Call to order: 7:05 PM by Marshall Jones

Attending:

Name	Position	In attendance?
Marshall Jones	President	YES
Mike Elfenbein	Executive Director	YES
Tom Oates	Treasurer and Secretary and Board Member	YES
Brett Fitzgerald	Projects Chair and Board Member	YES
Jesse Lee	Chair shooting sports and Board Member	YES
Betty Osceola	Board Member	YES
Heather Cleckler	Board Member	
Diamond Bergeron	Board Member	YES
Nora Demers	Director of Science and Outreach and recording secretary	YES
Mike Chenoweth	member	
Daniel Watson	member	
Gretchen Hoke	Member (Rain Frog Ranch)	

1. Annual meeting Elections for 2025 (Nominees)

- a. requirement to have Director's on 3-year staggered term- proposed:
 - i. 2025 Osceola
 - ii. 2026 Oates
 - iii. 2027 Cleckler
 - iv. 2025 Jones
 - v. 2026 Fitzgerald

- vi. 2027 Lee
 - vii. 2025 Bergeron
- b. Board members nominations.

Motion by Tom Oates to elect the following to 3-year term. Seconded by Brett Fitzgerald motion passes unanimously

 - i. 2028 Osceola
 - ii. 2028 Jones
 - iii. 2028 Bergeron
- c. Officers- Nominations

Motion by Tom Oates second by Marshall motion passed unanimously

 - i. President: Marshall Jones
 - ii. Vice-President: Betty Osceola
 - iii. Treasurer/Secretary: Tom Oates
- 2. By-laws revisions for vote ([see proposed CC IWLA by-laws revisions and justification here](#))

Motion to approve By-law revisions as presented Motion by Tom Oates second by Brett Fitzgerald motion passes unanimously.
- 3. Approve DRAFT Minutes of May 14, 2025 meeting ([click here to see](#))

Motion by Marshall Jones second by Betty Osceola motion passes unanimously
- 4. President's Items (Marshall Jones):
 - a. We are in an extended borderline severe drought in his area. First time this dry since mid June 2009. He is starting to see tremendous strain in the mammals in the Everglades due to lack of surface water. One week more the drought will be worst since 1980's. He'd like to get some water sharing between #A and 3B. He's asked Drew Bartlett to get some water into 3B. That said, the lower water has helped Lake O in improving water clarity and lower water levels.
 - i. Betty says traditional experience/knowledge is that once the coastal areas get their abundance of rain it will move inland. The sawgrasses are a good indicator of the system.
- 5. Executive Director Report (Mike Elfenbein): Welcome and thanks to all attending
 - a. Restoring deer to the Everglades: he has been having conversations which led to someone offering to address this and make a documentary (Cabella Family Foundation- (all of his stories include hunting and value hunting as a critical piece of conservation). Many thanks to Jesse Lee who has worked over the last three years to introduce hog to the reservation lands. The project would not be possible without the Miccosukee Tribe. Mike E prepared a powerpoint with explanation and justification for doing this project now. (Now have a prey base to offer a buffer to protect the deer upon release. Proposed methods to relocate minimum of 5 Bucks and 20 Does. Several entities have offered to contribute deer for the project from a variety of locations to assure genetic diversity. Jesse Lee continues to provide technical expertise for the project. In the event of a high-water event, Jesse suggested planting a high-quality plant along the levees. Funding coming from the International Order of Teddy Roosevelt. This project will be the third documentary. Work starts in mid-November in about 7-10 days. He asks for participation from the entire board. Jesse and Mike E are preparing a budget to IOTR
 - b. Attended the FWC meeting in Ocala- Bear hunt, proposed closure to fishing and recreational access to protect a spawning aggregate of bonefish not previously identified. He would like to convene a conversation -perhaps through social media.
 - c. Bear hunt is tentatively approved.

- d. Flamingo Garden Ranch tour. One of the staff there has a permit to band Bald Eagles and will do so on Eagle Haven. They will also put webcams on the nest. That will happen soon.
- e. Seminole Tribe triennial review of WQ standards-some of those standards are under review.
- f. Lake Istokpoga trip to brainstorm on how to continue project on Lake Kissimmee
- g. Corridor Connect meeting- lots of synergy and collaboration. He introduced Talbot to the Corridor Foundation. Several break out sessions, one moderated about recreation in conservation spaces and another about payment for ecological services.
- h. Lake O meeting- comments about getting muck out of Lake O. Mike E was able to reconnect with a AC
- i. Everglades Summit in DC
- j. Mineral rights advocacy in DC valued at \$247,467,000. Working for money from the DoI land and water fund.
- k. He is very happy with all the progress and conversations about what occurred in DC that week. Diamond mentioned that Mike E included wilderness designation in conversations and several congresspersons are interested in writing a bill.
- l. Attended FWC meeting about Bear attack in Jerome. Three bears were killed. Evidence showed all three bears were included in the event.
- m. Nora working hard on Pistol Pond project
- n. July 1-3 scrub jay observation at Eagle Haven. Looking for grant from USFWS for this and similar projects.
- o. July SFWMD
- p. Environmental summer school in Marco Island.
- q. Mike is working on scheduling more Python hunts in Everglades for legislators and staff.
- r. Mike shared a letter of opposition to the Alligator Alcatraz proposal for an ICE Detention center and transport station. Mike asks for approval of the letter.

Motion by Tom O, second by Marshall, motion approved unanimously.

- 6. Financial Report (Tom Oates): Tom is finally authorized to have access to the "endowment account". The accounts have money.
- 7. Delegates to [2025 IWLA National Convention July 18 & 19](#), Green Bay Wisconsin one plus an alternate (typically President, incoming President, alternate). Mike C spoke of how much value he has had over the years by attending. Pam Pierce offered to be the Delegate for CypressIWLA. Pam expressed her willingness to be representing such a vibrant group. The paperwork needs to be in by June 30th Mike C will email a form to Marshall to sign and send to the National office. Mike C mentioned he'd like to have the mid-winter meeting in February instead of the more recent switch to zoom, and perhaps it could be in Florida.
- 8. Committee reports: none
- 9. Member comment: Marshall says thanks to all, and, as his grandma told him 'keep on keepin' on'
- 10. Public comment: none
- 11. Adjourn at 8:15 PM

Next meeting September 17th ZOOM 6:45 gathering
Call to order at 7:00 PM

