

Jacksonville Reef Research Team Meeting Minutes - June 20, 2007

Sue Wilcox called the meeting to order at 6:35PM and the 12 members and five guests introducing themselves. Of the five guests present: two were referred from the Earth Day booth, one was a co-worker referral, one was a member referral and the last one was an unknown referral.

PRESIDENT

- The Training group presentation was postponed until next month's meeting. One trainee, Jenny, was in a car accident the previous night.
- No agenda was prepared because Sue thought the presentation would take up most of the meeting.

VP / DIVE COORDINATOR

- Last weekend's dive was supposed to be two fish counts with five people. Visibility was bad at only 15 feet on the first dive. On the second dive the boat was first in the wrong place, then when it found the correct place there was virtually no visibility. One team, Sue W and Jim D, had to feel their way to the bottom. There was a lot of sediment in the water. The dive was aborted due to the bad conditions.
- We aren't scheduling any future dives until the Grant contract execution (or lack of) is resolved (see below); we currently have no active funding source. Mike Barnes suggested we all pay a portion for dives. Each dives costs about \$800.
- Since we had trouble filing the boat the last few dives, a guest asked if the boat might be opened up to future trainees or those interested in JRRT to fill the boat? That may be a possibility but we first need to try to get JRRT members to fill the boat so we can do fish counts, etc.
- The Dive Coordinator was told by Atlantic Pro Dive that if we can't fill the boat and tell them ahead of time, we'll only have five divers, they can try to fill the other slots and only charge us per diver. As of now we're paying a set price, even if fewer divers are scheduled / show up. That may be an option to spending less when we have fewer diver volunteering for each dive. This year it's been harder to fill the boat on team dives.

TREASURER

- Balance Sheets were handed out showing some money in surplus. If we lose last year's Grant money, because we can't get the contract signatures by June 30th, it would pretty much deplete our surplus money.
- Phil did sell about \$105 worth of Jax Spots books to a dive shop.

SECRETARY

- The Secretary was not in attendance. Linda Daley is taking meeting minutes in her absence.

GRANT ADMINISTRATOR

- FWC Monitoring Grant - there was a problem with the signed Grant contract not being received by the State office for last year's Grant. It was sent via a non-

tracking method (regular USPS) and the state office that should have received it, says they never did.

- Sue is working on getting a new copy of the contract re-signed and pushed through the system by the June 30th deadline.
- Worst case scenario is that we won't be reimbursed for expenditures we have already spent thus far this year, which is about \$6,000.
- Another problem with this delayed signature, if it's done by June 30th, will be the later date of last year's Grant pushing back this year's FWC Grant contract date. You can't have overlapping FWC Monitoring Grants in effect at the same time.
- No dives will be scheduled until this resolution is known.
- Geographic Information System (GIS) Grant – Mike Barnes is working on writing this new GIS Grant proposal. This software would help track multiple variables regarding our dive sites. We can put fish counts in the software, GPS location of reefs and site information. It will also help us more quickly update our Jax Spots book.

SAFETY OFFICER

- Jim Davis suggested that every JRRT dive-buddy pair have one line-reel between them, along with their lanyard lines. This is a necessity due to low visibility.
- It's also suggested for divers to have a light, again since some of our dives have low visibility.
- Ed LaBlanc is concerned that we're not getting a dive master from the dive shops on our latest dives. We're using a team member as a dive master. He feels it could be a safety issue if a problem arose and the dive master was / had been diving too.
 - He was told that this was a team decision, not the dive shops. When we had more team divers on the boat one could stay topside and act as a dive master. Lately we've not had as many divers so all divers are descending.
 - The JRRT Board is going to address this issue at their next meeting.

TRAINING

- Mike Barnes reported that the 2007 Training Expedition in Deerfield Beach, Florida on June 8-10 went well. Thirteen divers went on the trip.
 - Larry Davis recorded new video footage of training processes / exercises.
 - Visibility was not as good as last year so we were not able to do all the tasks we had hoped.
 - We'll have the training classes' presentation at next month's meeting.
- In July Mike will be holding an underwater photography class.
- This summer, next year's training class will be working on prerequisites for the JRRT training, to prepare them for a September start of training classes.
- CPR and First Aid can now be taught by Mike Barnes and Larry Davis, who recently became dive instructor certified. Jim Davis can also provide this training.
 - They're hoping to do two year separate certifications for CPR and First Aid, rather than the current one year and two year certificates.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Phil Harville deposited \$105 to the team's account for Jax Spots books sold.
- He's working on getting an accurate, complete JRRT e-mail grouper list together including all those with interest in JRRT from the Sportsman Show, the Earth Day event and any other individuals who have shown interest in being trainees / members. It was mentioned that some interested parties aren't getting meeting e-mail notifications.

WEBMASTER

- Jose Zouain is the JRRT's new Webmaster. He replaced Rob Bronson who is doing a summer program in Bermuda for his biology degree.

OTHER

- Active permitting of reef placements for the City of Jacksonville is in the final stages of fruition. We are very close to having active permitting allowed again.
 - The problem is that if placement is again allowed, per the State of Florida, the City of Jacksonville has to have a designated person to run the program. The state won't let any reefs be deployed until there is a person named to administer the program. Thus far the city does not have this person named.
- Mandarin High School has reef balls ready for placement and is schedule for them to be deployed in Flagler County in 2008. If anyone wants to see a Reef Ball, they can drive by the school (they are on the school grounds).
- St. John's County and Nassau County currently are actively permitting for reef deployments.
- The person from the Navy who wrote JRRT asking for help in deploying some artificial reef materials was told Duval County isn't actively deploying artificial reefs and he should check with Nassau or St. John's Counties. He said it's too far to move the materials. It was some kind of materials used for docking Naval boats when they came in for upkeep / repair work. We weren't able to help him at this time.

FUTURE EVENTS

- 11TH International Coral Reef Symposium is being held in July 2007 in Fort Lauderdale
- Jacksonville Scuba Center is getting together a live-aboard trip for September 2007. It'll be four days in the Dry Tortugas - \$750 includes all. Call Jacksonville Scuba Center for more information.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:40PM