



Florida Department of Environmental Protection

CITIZEN SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

2017 REPORT

(pursuant to Florida Statute 20.058)

Citizen Support Organization (CSO) Name: **FRIENDS OF WEEKI WACHEE SPRINGS STATE PARK, INC.**
Mailing Address: **6131 COMMERCIAL WAY, WEEKI WACHEE, FL, 34606**
Telephone Number: **352-592-5656** Website Address (if applicable): **www.friendsofweekiwachee.com**

Statutory Authority:

Section 20.2551, F.S., Citizen support organizations; use of property; audit; public records; partnerships. In summary, the statute specifies the organizational requirements, operational parameters, duties of a CSO to support the Department of Environmental Protection (Department), or individual units of the Department, use of Department property, audit requirements, public records requirements, and authorizes public-private partnerships to enhance lands managed by the Department.

Section 258.015, F.S., Citizen support organizations; use of property; audit. In summary, the statute defines a CSO, requires authorization by the Division of Recreation and Parks, and specifies the use of property. This statute authorizes the Partnerships in Parks (PIP) program for state parks, the program's operational parameters, CSO's operational parameters, and donor recognition.

Brief Description of the CSO's Mission:

To generate and create additional resources and support for the Park through events and activities, including but not limited to the following: preservation, protection, interpretation and promotion of the Park through special work projects, programs, events, outreach, educational activities, special exhibits, interpretative programs, fund-raising activities and events, and other exciting projects designed to meet the needs of the Park. To promote and educate the public about the Friends of Weeki Wachee Springs State Park and how we provide for the needs of the Park.

Brief Description of the CSO's Results Obtained: Friends funded the following projects/activities: Yard Sales, Sirens' Camps, Mermaid Calendar, Halloween, Christmas, Recognized the Sirens of the Deep, new mermaid tails for aquarium trips, funded underwater headsets for the Mermaid Shows, funded the costs for a Board Member to attend two CSO trainings, new tails for Halloween/Christmas, new mermaid costumes for staff mermaids on tour and performing in the park, additional landscaping and associated materials, park-related merchandise sales, in which the profits are specifically used to support repairs or rebuilds for the Park. Planted several different Florida native plants in and around the Wildlife Center, also planted around the guard shack. Sale of the Annual mermaid calendar, stage rental for SwampFest and fund expenses for nine weekend Siren's Camps. Donations and membership fees accepted through the website. Landscaping/weeding done at various times of the year with recruited volunteers and Board members; Recruited volunteers for grounds maintenance, clean-up, and planting for NPLD at the park. Continuation of the BFF Brick program and the Memorial Bench Program. Continued with updating and funding our brochures and website/Facebook to promote FRIENDS and how the public can help the park. Continue to recruit volunteers and fund associated costs for annual fund raisers. Sponsored the annual Halloween and Christmas events.

We received a \$1,000 grant from the Tourist Development Council, secured annual grants from the Walmart Foundation for river cleanups with donated use of kayaks from the Park Concessionaire.

Brief Description of the CSO's Plans for Next Three Fiscal Years:

Continue to recruit and develop board of directors with necessary skills/talents, as well as volunteers and members. Continue annual fund-raising events, activities and partnerships to facilitate funding of construction of capital improvements consistent with the Unit Management Plan/Master Plan and to support the Park as needed. Continue to seek donations and grants and to support the Park in landscaping maintenance, restoration of historical props (statues), and additional fencing around the staff areas and administration buildings. Continue to repeat annual events and activities requested by visitors, while developing new and creative fund-raising projects.

- Copy of the CSO's Code of Ethics attached** (*Model provided; see CSO 2014 instructions*)
- Certify the CSO has completed and provided to the Department the organization's most recent Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N/Annual Financial Statement**

FRIENDS of Weeki Wachee Springs State Park

Code of Ethics*

PREAMBLE

(1) It is essential to the proper conduct and operation of Friends of Weeki Wachee Springs State Park, Inc. (herein "CSO") that its board members, officers, and employees be independent and impartial and that their position not be used for private gain. Therefore, the Florida Legislature in Section 112.3251, Florida Statute (Fla. Stat.), requires that the law protect against any conflict of interest and establish standards for the conduct of CSO board members, officers, and employees in situations where conflicts may exist.

(2) It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state that no CSO board member, officer, or employee shall have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or incur any obligation of any nature which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his or her duties for the CSO. To implement this policy and strengthen the faith and confidence of the people in Citizen Support Organizations, there is enacted a code of ethics setting forth standards of conduct required of Friends of Weeki Wachee Springs State Park, Inc. board members, officers, and employees in the performance of their official duties.

STANDARDS

The following standards of conduct are enumerated in Chapter 112, Fla. Stat., and are required by Section 112.3251, Fla. Stat., to be observed by CSO board members, officers, and employees.

1. Prohibition of Solicitation or Acceptance of Gifts

No CSO board member, officer, or employee shall solicit or accept anything of value to the recipient, including a gift, loan, reward, promise of future employment, favor, or service, based upon any understanding that the vote, official action, or judgment of the CSO board member, officer, or employee would be influenced thereby.

2. Prohibition of Accepting Compensation Given to Influence a Vote

No CSO board member, officer, or employee shall accept any compensation, payment, or thing of value when the person knows, or, with reasonable care, should know that it was given to influence a vote or other action in which the CSO board member, officer, or employee was expected to participate in his or her official capacity.

3. Salary and Expenses

No CSO board member or officer shall be prohibited from voting on a matter affecting his or her salary, expenses, or other compensation as a CSO board member or officer, as provided by law.

4. Prohibition of Misuse of Position

A CSO board member, officer, or employee shall not corruptly use or attempt to use one's official position or any property or resource which may be within one's trust, or perform official duties, to secure a special privilege, benefit, or exemption.

5. Prohibition of Misuse of Privileged Information

No CSO board member, officer, or employee shall disclose or use information not available to members of the general public and gained by reason of one's official position for one's own personal gain or benefit or for the personal gain or benefit of any other person or business entity.

6. Post-Office/Employment Restrictions

A person who has been elected to any CSO board or office or who is employed by a CSO may not personally represent another person or entity for compensation before the governing body of the CSO of which he or she was a board member, officer, or employee for a period of two years after he or she vacates that office or employment position.

7. Prohibition of Employees Holding Office

No person may be, at one time, both a CSO employee and a CSO board member at the same time.

8. Requirements to Abstain From Voting

A CSO board member or officer shall not vote in official capacity upon any measure which would affect his or her special private gain or loss, or which he or she knows would affect the special gain or any principal by whom the board member or officer is retained. When abstaining, the CSO board member or officer, prior to the vote being taken, shall make every reasonable effort to disclose the nature of his or her interest as a public record in a memorandum filed with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who shall incorporate the memorandum in the minutes. If it is not possible for the CSO board member or officer to file a memorandum before the vote, the memorandum must be filed with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting no later than 15 days after the vote.

9. Failure to Observe CSO Code of Ethics

Failure of a CSO board member, officer, or employee to observe the Code of Ethics may result in the removal of that person from their position. Further, failure of the CSO to observe the Code of Ethics may result in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection terminating its Agreement with the CSO.

***Adopted on August 19, 2014**