



**Florida Department of Environmental Protection
CITIZEN SUPPORT ORGANIZATION
2021 LEGISLATIVE REPORT
(pursuant to Section 20.058 Florida Statutes)**

Citizen Support Organization (CSO) Name: Friends of Kissimmee Prairie Preserve Inc.

Mailing Address: 33104 NE 1922nd Ave, Okeechobee, FL 34972

Telephone Number: (863) 462-5360

Website Address (*required if applicable*): www.kissimmeeprairiefriends.org

Check to confirm your Code of Ethics is posted conspicuously on your website.

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.

YOUR MISSION AND LAST CALENDAR YEAR'S PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

CSO's Mission: *Consistent with your Articles and Bylaws*

Mission Statement: The **Friends of Kissimmee Prairie Preserve, Inc.** was formed in 2011 to to work for the preservation, protection, interpretation and promotion of and in the best interest of Kissimmee Prairie Preserve. The Friends organization is a Florida not- or-profit 501(c)(3) corporation and relies on membership fees and private donations to pursue activities on behalf of the Preserve.

Describe Last Calendar Year's Results Obtained: *Brag! List or discuss the past calendar year's accomplishments and contributions. Cite specific support from last calendar year's Annual Program Plan.*

Although 2020 was a difficult year for all, with the Preserve closure and cancelled events, Friends of Kissimmee Prairie Preserve still managed to make contributions to the park, conduct business and hold our quarterly board meetings throughout the year via conference calls and Zoom, and ended the year strong.

We began the year with Preserve representation at the Okeechobee Outdoor Expo in January, and we hosted our annual Prairie Days event geared toward the local community in February. Though other events were cancelled due to COVID-19, including our sold out Butterfly Walks and Spring Wildflower Walks, many of our wonderful members and supporters came through for us and donated their registration fees to the CSO. And a plea for membership support and donations on Facebook during the closure had good response. Once the Preserve re-opened for events, we planned and sold out two smaller, COVID-safe versions of our Fall Wildflower Walks in October.

We continue to raise revenue and supported the Preserve by stocking and reselling firewood for the campgrounds, which were busier than they had ever been. We purchased a new clothes dryer for staff and volunteer residents, and we paid the shipping on a customized PlayCleanGo Boot Brush station which was installed at the head of Prairie Loop trail. We supported the Preserve's prescribed fire crew by providing customized Kissimmee Prairie tee shirts, and we continue to provide a prepaid credit card for ice.

We maintained our membership in the Okeechobee Chamber of Commerce and have a good relationship with the Okeechobee County Tourist Development Council. Our active Friends' Facebook page has grown to 1.5K members and allows us a forum to provide information, promote events, and is a popular place for visitors to post photos of the Preserve.

Describe the CSO's Plans for the Next Three Calendar Years:

We plan to continue working to raise awareness about Kissimmee Prairie Preserve, add members and solicit donations in Florida, nationally, and internationally. We will continue holding events, including Wildflower Walks and Butterfly Walks, to introduce new people to the preserve, encourage repeat visitors, and raise funds for Friends projects to benefit the Preserve.

Once COVID is in check, the Prairie Days event will be held annually again to increase local interest, involvement, and friends for the Preserve. And we plan to hold specialized educational swamp buggy tours with visiting experts as leaders. We will continue to support Kissimmee Prairie Preserve as a Dark Sky Park with outreach events, by providing needed equipment, and by hosting astronomy programs/events with the Florida astronomy community once it is safe to do so again.

Our CSO will continue to do all we can to help the endangered Florida Grasshopper Sparrow at the Preserve, through use of our FGSP fund, and by educating the public through our web site and social media pages. We will keep the Preserve's three species checklists (Birds, butterflies, and plants) updated, providing them in print and online, and plan to add a species checklist for reptiles & amphibians. We are working on an information campaign to reduce the Preserve's road kill numbers and will help provide new signage toward that end.

Other goals we continue to work toward and discuss are: partnering with more Florida organizations and educators to promote the Preserve. For example we hope to partner with the Florida Native Plant Society to help voucher plant species in the Preserve for Okeechobee County, filling a large data hole in the USF Florida Plant Atlas. We would also like to develop an iNaturalist project with Preserve staff to record useful data about sightings in the Preserve.

Long term goals include an outdoor covered amphitheater for educational programs, research housing for visiting scientists, a new, larger eco-friendly swamp buggy for visitor tours, and new interpretive displays, including displays for the upcoming 24-hour access astronomy area being developed at the Preserve entrance.

CSO's LAST CALENDAR YEAR STATISTICS:

Total Number of CSO General Membership: 97

Total Number of Board of Directors: 7

Total Volunteer Hours for the Board of Directors (*Hours from VSys. Work with your parks' volunteer manager*): **689**

PARK & CSO RELATIONSHIP:

Keep the summary simple. Save time. Don't duplicate by describing accomplishments and contributions in the summary. Brag in the above Results Obtained. Describe the relationship here.

Park Manager's Comments on the CSO & Park Relationship and Support:

Provide your perspective on

- *Changing developments of the park provided by the CSO.*
- *Effectiveness of the organization in fulfilling their purpose to support the park(s).*
- *Effectiveness of the Board of Directors in completing their Annual Program Plan.*
- *The relationship between the park and CSO What went well? Are there areas of improvement?*

The relationship between Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park and the Friends of Kissimmee Prairie remains very healthy. It's almost cliché to say that this past year has been unusual and difficult in many ways for many people, but the Friends of Kissimmee Prairie have adapted well to the new challenges and helped the park get through a tough time.

The CSO has been effective in supporting the park. This year they've supported staff morale through a tough time by funding tee shirts for our prescribed fire crew and an open-air painting class.

The board has been surprisingly effective in completing the annual program plan. Group sizes and procedures were adapted to meet Florida State Parks guidelines for safe group events.

Communication between the park and the Friends of Kissimmee Prairie has remained effective through phone and online video meetings. If I could suggest any improvement going forward it would be a stronger focus on fundraising for the larger objectives the CSO has its eye on such as a new swamp buggy for tours or constructing a new picnic pavilion area.

CSO President's Comments on the CSO & Park Relationship and Support:

Provide your perspective on the relationship between the park and CSO. What went well? Are there areas of improvement?

Despite setbacks and difficulties in 2020 due to COVID-19, the Friends of Kissimmee Prairie Preserve maintained a productive working partnership with Preserve staff. With the help of conference calls and Zoom, we met and made plans quarterly, completed as much of our Program Plan as possible under the circumstances, and provided encouragement, support and help for each other where needed. I was especially pleased with the way we worked together to plan and hold safe events later in the year, and believe the experience may even help us improve our events in the future.

One area of improvement I'd like to see is more frequent communication between individual Friends' board members, and between board members and park staff as we move forward with our many plans and ideas. Overall, I'm encouraged and optimistic about our future and what we can accomplish in the next few years to fulfill our mission in the best interest of Kissimmee Prairie Preserve SP.

SUMMARIZE FINANCIAL ACTIVITY FOR LAST CALENDAR YEAR, SPECIFIC PARK(S) SUPPORT:

Program Service Expenses are costs related to providing your organization's programs or services in accordance with your mission. For CSO's provide expenses that directly support the park(s). For established nonprofit organizations, program service expenses generally represent most of the overall expense of the organization. For the last calendar year provide totals \$ for each that apply.

Building improvement, construction or renovations	\$
Cultural resources (e.g., historic structure restoration/ renovation)	\$
Natural resources (e.g., native plants, natural lands restoration)	\$
Maintenance equipment (e.g., mowers, chippers, blowers, chainsaws)	\$
Other facilities and landscape maintenance	\$
Vehicles (e.g., trucks/cars, UTVs, golf carts, accessible devices, etc.)	\$
Amenities (e.g., water fountains, benches, picnic tables, recreational equipment, kiosks etc.)	\$
Park employees or volunteers support (e.g., interns, training, uniforms, awards, or recognition)	\$ 1,290
Big ticket visitor center exhibits or interpretation updates	\$
Park exhibits, displays, signage	\$
Park publications, brochures, maps, etc.	\$
Programming/interpretation support material purchases	\$
Other program services	\$
Total Program Service Expenses	\$ 1,290

Total Operating Expenses (Overhead including fees, memberships, postage, rent, utilities, etc.) **\$ 3,043.29**

Visitor Services Revenue



Park gift shops, craft stores and concession sales	\$
Merchandise sales (e.g., plants, firewood, ice, t-shirts, hats, etc.)	\$ 1,570.92
Programs and Special Events (e.g., fundraising workshops, seasonal events, concerts, etc.)	\$ 4,685.00
Vending (e.g., drink machines, penny press, laundry, Wifi, etc.)	\$

Rentals (e.g., bikes, canoe, kayak, SUPs, etc.)	\$
In-park donation boxes	\$ 5,592.57
Other visitor services revenue	\$ 61.28
Total Visitor Services	\$ 11,879.74
Net Assets	\$ 7,476.48

CSO AUDIT:

Total of Last Calendar Year's Expenses (including grants) \$ 4,333.29

Section 215.981(2), Florida Statute requires an independent CPA audit using Government Audit Standards ([U.S. AO Yellow Book](#)) when the CSOs annual expenses are \$300,000 including grants. The audit is **due by September 1** (9 months after the CSO's calendar year ends) to the Florida Auditor General and to the Department.

This information is complete to the best of my knowledge pursuant to Section 20.058 Florida Statutes			
Title	Name	Signature	Date
CSO President	Christina Evans	 Digitally signed by Christina Evans DN: cn=Christina Evans, o, ou, email=chromagrafx1@tampabay.rr.com, c=US Date: 2021.05.29 22:51:08 -05'00'	05/29/2021
Park Manager	Alex Creager	 Digitally signed by Alex Creager Date: 2021.05.30 10:28:56 -04'00'	

X CSO's Code of Ethics is attached

X CSO has attached the most recent Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N Receipt. All IRS Form 990's must be *complete* with Part III Program Service and *all* appropriate Schedules (A, O and others as appropriate). If filing an IRS extension, attach the IRS 8868 receipt and the most recent 990 and schedules.



Code of Ethics

PREAMBLE

- 1) It is essential to the proper conduct and operation of Friends of Kissimmee Prairie Preserve (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 Kissimmee Prairie Preserve 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.

Form 990-N

Electronic Notice (e-Postcard)

OMB No. 1545-2085

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

for Tax-Exempt Organization not Required to File Form 990 or 990-EZ

2020

Open to Public Inspection

A For the **2020** Calendar year, or tax year beginning **2020-01-01** and ending **2020-12-31**

B Check if available

- Terminated for Business**
 Gross receipts are normally \$50,000 or less

C Name of Organization: **FRIENDS OF KISSIMMEE PRAIRIE**

PRESERVE INC

**33104 NE 192nd Ave,
Okeechobee, FL, US, 34972**

D Employee Identification

Number **45-3684228**

E Website:

<https://www.kissimmeeprairiefriends.org/>

F Name of Principal Officer: **Shayna Jacques**

**2220 Pennwood Dr,
Melbourne, FL, US, 32901**

Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Notice: We ask for the information on this form to carry out the Internal Revenue laws of the United States. You are required to give us the information. We need it to ensure that you are complying with these laws.

The organization is not required to provide information requested on a form that is subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act unless the form displays a valid OMB control number. Books or records relating to a form or its instructions must be retained as long as their contents may become material in the administration of any Internal Revenue law. The rules governing the confidentiality of the Form 990-N is covered in code section 6104.

The time needed to complete and file this form and related schedules will vary depending on the individual circumstances. The estimated average times is 15 minutes.

Note: This image is provided for your records only. Do Not mail this page to the IRS. The IRS will not accept this filing via paper. You must file your Form 990-N (e-Postcard) electronically.