



**Florida Native Plant Society**  
Council of Chapters Meeting 03/05/17 Minutes  
Created on 3/18/17 by Nicole Zampieri  
Gotomeeting

Dave Feagles called the meeting to order at 6:35.

**In attendance (17)**

Dave Feagles – Chair (Serenoa)  
Donna Bollenbach – Vice Chair (Suncoast)  
Nicole Zampieri – Secretary (Magnolia)  
Juliet Rynear – Executive Assistant (Heartland)  
Richard Brownscombe (Broward)  
Al Squires (Mangrove)  
Ginny Stibolt (Ixia)  
Greg Thomas (Heartland)  
Miki Renner (Hernando)  
Wendy Poag (Lake Beautyberry)  
Neta Villalobos-Bell (Cuplet Fern)  
Carol Spears (The Villages)  
Susan Knapp (Passionflower)  
Sonya Guidry (Pawpaw)  
Carol Sullivan (Sparkleberry)  
Greg Ballinger (Marion Big Scrub)  
Ben Johnson (Coccoloba)

- I. Review of Website/Forum tools and resources available:
  - a. Webpage footer
  - b. Support documents
  - c. Resources o
  - d. Handbook Wiki
  - e. Forum
- Juliet – So I keep getting e-mails – people are still confused about the volunteer hours form, where do we find it, how do we do it. So I wanted to review some of those tools and then we will look at the volunteer hours posted on the forum. Shirley has added on the website “Volunteer Hours Tracking” under Chapter Resources and Society Resources, when you scroll down all the way to the bottom. Is there anyone on this call who is unable to log in? No one? Good. A Quick review of what you find on our website. Under chapter resources we

have support documents, here is where you find business cards, we have letterheads, hour tracking spreadsheets (for keeping track of hours before putting them into the database), business type stuff. There are also documents under “Resources” at the top of the page and “downloadable documents”. Copies of our annual reports, FNPS policies, some coloring sheets you might print out to use.

- The handbook wiki is something a lot of people don’t know about. It is very helpful. Under Society resources at the bottom of the main page has the “handbook wiki”. In here you will find our bylaws, how to use the handbook, information on the council of chapters, the society, the society planning calendar. This gives you a monthly run down of everything that has to happen – most of this is for our executive committee and all their duties. You can also find interesting things like information on field trips, on the annual conference, just tons of information here.
- Al – You mentioned at our last meeting a list somewhere about demonstration gardens or native plant gardens and we are talking about checking on them. Where is that list?
- Juliet – I believe that’s under Native Plants > Gardens with natives [at the top of the main FNPS page]. So there is a map that lets you click on individual gardens.
- Dave – we are talking about two different things here
- Juliet- No I am showing him on the website where we have the native plant gardens
- Dave – The last time we met we were just talking about creating an initiative through which all the chapters could talk about all the gardens we are currently involved in. That info has not already been collected and put into it, which is why I think we are talking about two different things.
- Al – Actually we are talking about the same thing because we talked about a list that is already on the website. I thought we could get individual chapters to go out and check them, but we have to know where they are.
- Juliet – any other questions? Let us get right into the volunteer hours.

## II. Volunteer hours for 2016 – now posted on the Forum > Council of Chapters > Volunteer Hours Recording

- Juliet – click on the volunteer hours form from the bottom of the main FNPS page. Who has not used it? A reason to go through this is because there is still some confusion about how to track education and outreach hours. Briefly we discussed how to track all these meetings and speakers and workshops and a number of different outreach events. How would we go about tracking attendance and the level of our outreach? So we added something to the volunteer hours spreadsheet.

## III. 2017 volunteer hours – what is new: Education and Outreach reporting o We will enter data into the online Volunteer Hours Form

- Juliet – So I am just gonna enter hours as if I was doing it for a chapter. Click on your chapter, then click next. Then it will ask for the category. For an educational speaker for our chapter meeting, it would be chapter volunteer work. Then it says type of volunteer activity. We now have two types of education/outreach under volunteer activity. One is organizers and one is for attendees. So the people who attended the meeting will get tracked under attendees, but my hours as an organizer of the meeting would go under “organizers”. So in this case I will do attendees. Then I click next, and put in the date of the event. You don’t need an end date. Then for number of volunteers, I put in how many people attended the meeting, let’s say 33. If the meeting was an hour long, I would put 33

hours. If it was 2 hours long, I'd put 66. Then the next field is location of activity, so I'll put wherever we had our meeting. Next is description of the activity, we could put "educational talk". Then there is an option comment form. From here you can submit or go back and edit. You can go all the way back to the beginning if you want.

- [Entering hours for having an educational speaker at our meeting. Juliet ran through the motions of entering hours on the form, visible on the screen. Chapter > volunteer category: chapter volunteer work > Type of volunteer activity: Education/outreach attendees > Enter date/# of people, total number of people. > Description of activity: educational talk > Comments: optional.]
- Dave – Question: we had talked before about the fact that the people who were showing up also had drive time.
- Juliet – For attendees that doesn't really come into play. For organizers, their drive time would count too.
- Greg – It would be really hard to collect drive time for attendees.
- Juliet – Yeah and that's not really what we are trying to collect. Some chapters ask for a zip code just to get an idea of how far our efforts are reaching. But that is not something we need to track at the state level. You can do it if you want – especially when applying for grants and such. You can actually show people and the degree of your outreach and effectiveness.
- Al – I've got friends coming from Connecticut. That would be an interesting zip code to put in.
- Nicole – My chapter meetings always have an educational speaker, but our chapter meetings can easily have over 100 people at our meetings. So I am just wondering what you suggest, should I sit there and count?
- Juliet- don't you have a sign in sheet?
- Nicole – We have a sign in sheet for people to put their emails if they are not on our list, which maybe 10 people would put their name on that.
- Juliet – Yeah you could count. You should get a sign in sheet going for every meeting. That way you know who is coming.
- Donna – Nicole what we do is we have someone at a desk right at the door and she makes sure everybody signs the sheet, whether they want to provide their email or not. And at the end of the day we count how many people were there. It is pretty easy to do, just make sure everybody signs it. I did want to mention just as an example, for the people who are organizers, if they don't really care about putting in their hours individually. We have someone who sits at the front, someone who puts the food out, someone who brings the library of books, for people to check them out. We count those people and multiply it by the number of hours for travel and set up. And in that case we would use volunteer time > education/outreach> organizer. Just so you have an example of that.
- Al – Good thing we had a sign in for our chapter because we were filling the room up. By showing Sarasota county how many attendees we have we were able to get a bigger room. When we have events with multiple talks where people are walking around and it is hard to keep track of people. We have 3 or 4 people wandering around with sticky dots, and every person gets a sticky dot. Then at the end we can count how many dots we gave out and how many we have left and then we know how many people were there.
- Juliet- Just to point out I made a note on the form so people wouldn't be confused - Field trip coordination. People who arrange the field trips put their hours under "field trip coordination" and attendees separate. Field trips are important educational events.

- Al – I think that’s the best thing we have done in a long time is get those outreach hours on there
- Juliet – and just for FYI, on the forum under council of chapters you could go under volunteer hours recording to get the spreadsheet for tracking, and I also posted the total volunteer hours for 2016. I posted two late entries, Conradina and Dade so those are posted separately. If you want to use these they are very handy. You can sort the sheet to show only your chapter. I also included the overview that was given to the board of directors. Sea oats had the most number of hours reported. It also shows you the size of the chapter, volunteer hours category – how many were chapter volunteer work? How many were service on a state committee? Chapter operations and management is where most of the hours went. Attending meetings, habitat restoration... It is really helpful information so I hope you guys make use of it.
- Donna – how often will you post these? Quarterly?
- Juliet – Well I post a volunteer update monthly with my report to the board of directors. You could certainly share that at these monthly meetings. This is what it looks like when you enter your hours, there’s a time stamp and it just goes right across the board.
- Dave – So that would imply that if someone was entering hours and they weren’t clear if they already did they could tell because of the time stamp?
- Juliet – no this is only information I get.
- Dave – so can you see what you have entered?
- Juliet – I can, on this spreadsheet.
- Dave - My concern is you sit down to do this and you may not know what you have entered and what you have already done, so if I get interrupted I can know where I left off.
- Juliet – If you need that kind of information you will need to email me.
- Dave – That would be nice if we could have that feature in the future.
- Juliet – So here is the thing. We can ultimately use the FNPS database but it is not set up that way yet. Google can send a receipt that says how many hours you entered. But the problem with that is that you will have to log in every time you make an entry. Whereas right now you click on the link and can make an entry.

IV. Review of the draft Chapter Representative Description (see attached) –

- a. Review feedback
  - b. Need for more involvement of our Chapter Representatives on our state committees
  - c. Need for a better understanding of our mission at the chapter level and what we are doing in support of our mission in order to avoid “mission drift”
  - d. Most NPS are suffering from either membership loss or stagnation – most are failing to engage people below the age of 50
- Juliet – Did everyone review the draft chapter representative description?
  - Unknown – It is a little scary
  - Juliet – Yes I know, I wanted to include the number of hours people can expect to work, which was based off the hours people reported last year and the year before. I think people should have a good idea of what they are getting into.
  - Susan - I did not understand the part about where it says all chapter reps have to join a standing committee.
  - Juliet – You don’t have too, but you are asked too. Let me clarify because Donna has brought up the concern that it is too much work. Let me give you an example about the

conservation committee. A lot of people on the committee don't do anything, but they wanted to be on the committee to know what's going on. They get to be a fly on the wall for the process. I think that's important because the council of chapters as the conduit for the board and the chapters need to have that understanding of what's going on. I understand that's a huge commitment but knowledge is power. So I think it would benefit the society and ultimately the society.

- Ginny - There is a spelling mistake on the document for "ensure".
- Al - I think most of us that do land management reviews are considered being on that committee. So you don't have to spend 10 hours a month being on a committee if you don't want too.
- Juliet - Dave you're on a bunch of committees aren't you?
- Dave - Yes I am on conservation and policy. The point of this is that we want you to be involved with the society as a whole. Pick an area of interest and stay involved in it. They might ask you to do one small part, the education committee for example has a thousand objectives.... You might be involved in one of them. We are not trying to take an enormous amount of time from you. We want you more aware of the full functioning the society works, which is invaluable to you as a chapter rep.
- Donna - I just want to clarify in my statement I didn't say overall work, but that some are chapter presidents... I am concerned about that. I hear what you are saying about people being on committees, but personally I am not gonna join a committee if I am not going to do anything. Especially if it is a small committee. I wouldn't say to anyone that they can join and not do anything... they are gonna give you those action items. I would be cautious. But I did say that I support that, because I think that just being a chapter rep gives me a lot of awareness, but I am concerned for presidents of the chapter. We certainly don't want to overwhelm a lot of people. But I do agree with so many hours that people need to commit too as chapter reps, and commit to bringing back information.
- Al - I think if you add up the gotomeetings and the in person meetings, then reporting to our chapter board and chapters we hit that 100 hours real easy
- Neta - I had a couple comments about the paragraph that says "throughout the year director will be required to report".. I think Dave recently has been requesting reports from the chapters before meetings. However, when you use the words "may request" and "throughout the year" it doesn't sound very definitive, which I think is fine mostly. But the next one is kind of too lose, like the "chapter reps will report to the chapter members". It needs to be concrete.
- Al - We get information from the state that we want to communicate to our board and our chapters other than at the meetings, like in emails.
- Juliet - Okay we will try to make that clearer.
- Donna - Suggestion - What about this " The chapter representative will keep the chapter members abreast of all state initiatives and activities. " Something to that effect. That way it is clearer.
- Juliet - other comments and suggestions?
- Al - I think you did a great job, thank you.
- Juliet - I tried to include all these links too, so if you think of something else that would be helpful.
- Neta - Is there a reason the handbook is in two places?
- Juliet - In here or on the website?
- Neta - the website

- Juliet – The thing about the website is that there are things posted in multiple places, so the idea is if you forget to look one place you might remember the other
  - Dave – If they link to the same place that is not a problem. If there are two documents that could get out of sync that is a problem.
  - Juliet- There is only one handbook wiki but you can access it from different locations. Any other suggestions/comments/concerns?
- V. Some kind of orientation/training is needed for all of the new chapter representatives who come on board. This really should be a joint chapter/COC/state commitment to introducing our members to the tools that are available to them and how to use them.
- a. Need to chart a course forward and make a commitment to reach out to each new Chapter Rep before their first meeting. Who will help with this?
- Juliet – Moving on, we have had a number of people recommend some kind of orientation or training, since we have new chapter representatives coming onto the council year round, since individual chapters have their elections at different times. I think this is something we should all work on together, the council, the state.. we need to put together some kind of orientation for new people. Some of it needs to happen at the chapter level too. If you have an outgoing chapter representative ideally they would help the transition into the new position, but I think usually they run screaming
  - Neta – I think it’s a good idea to have consistent and comprehensive training, because each of the representatives is different. And if they do their own training they might say “well you don’t have to do anything just show up to the meeting and take notes” and that is all they told the new person, whereas if we have formal training everybody will have the same expectations of what it entails.
  - Juliet – and that was one of the main points of putting this document together. But it is overwhelming when you attend your first meeting and everyone is talking about all these links and the website, this that and the other thing. The first time somebody goes to the website to look at all these tools, it is like you are lost and amazed. Hopefully this makes it a little easier, there are some links to resources a chapter representative normally needs. If you can’t find your answer here, there needs to be a support group of some kind. Dave, how many questions do you normally get?
  - Dave – Maybe once? I will run things through about where things are on the forum and what they are supposed to do... the important thing is to pay attention to what is going on and make sure it is shared within your chapter. The problem is this orientation you are suggesting is a more comprehensive effort, and I completely support it. But we don’t want to do it once a month. And that’s the problem with new chapter reps coming on board at any time. My suggestion is we try to formalize where the chapter reps, if they are going to change, that it occurs at a specific time, maybe twice a year would be a good time to do it, but once a month is not possible.
  - Neta – Would it be possible to offer some thing on the web? A tutorial or something on the web? You click through and then it says completed. So at least you have some basic understanding before a meeting. Then maybe at one of the face to face meetings we can offer something, maybe twice a year in person.
  - Donna – That’s an excellent idea, a PowerPoint maybe for new representatives just to get them going, then at every face to face we can have someone who is designated at a certain time while other meetings are going on to answer questions. Whatever they couldn’t pick up from the PowerPoint or something.

- Neta – exactly something to get them through the door, to not be overwhelmed with extra meat later.
- Donna – Yes I think a PowerPoint would be very helpful.
- Dave – I think you are right, but I might have a shortcut on that, but it could be that the same thing that Juliet is doing such as going through these steps and make a recording. We can make a recording of a presentation or one similar and we can post it as a link and see this demonstrated. I didn't know until the last time I looked at one of these recordings that it records all the videos.
- Neta – I am taking a class where all of the homeworks and tests are online and it is really cool because it has tutorials where you can click through and watch a video. So I think we can put that together and embed it that way.
- Donna – We just don't want to overwhelm them.
- Juliet – and you can turn PowerPoint's into video too. that's a great idea.
- Al – do the chapters notify you and Cammie when they have a new chapter rep?
- Juliet – I am unaware of that.
- Al – It would be nice if new reps could be contacted before the next meeting.
- Dave – what I have been doing is asking at the beginning of the meeting when someone is new.
- Al – What we need to be doing is having chapters notify the state when they have a new chapter rep.
- Donna – That is an excellent idea. Then I think immediately the council chair or vice chair should contact them with information and once we have a PowerPoint or anything a link to that. So they can at least get basic information before they come to their first face to face. And a contact number if they have any questions.
- Al – or scare the heck out of them before they get to a meeting.
- Donna – well that's why I said lets not give them too much, something basic to start out.
- Juliet – just like you said emailing them and welcoming them to the council, just that personal contact opens the door for any questions they may have.
- Donna – yes and letting them know I am here to support you. Good idea
- Richard – Is the link to the council website on the document?
- Juliet – no it isn't. It should be on there.
- Greg B – I had the opposite experience. I believe I am the first chapter rep this chapter has ever had.
- Juliet – yes I have noticed your chapter has never been at a meeting. So that's good that you are here. You have a great chapter it is good that you are involved
- Greg B - We have a small chapter. We need to grow it.
- Juliet – Lots of our chapters are saying that, and of course the state as a whole is saying that, we need to grow our membership.
- Juliet – any other questions? Is the nominating committee ready?
- Juliet – I have been looking at the chat, not every chapter has a chapter representative. It would be nice if Cammie could get us the information on which chapters didn't have a chapter rep, and then we can reach out to them.

## VI. Report from Nominating Committee

- Carol – We talked in February at the annual meeting, we still need to get together, and I am sorry for that but as you all know it is hard sometimes to get people together. I did review, since I had asked Dave about how the voting occurred, because being relatively new I have

never gone through the nominating or the voting. I did read that on the forum, on how to set up a poll and have a vote so at least I know that much in addition to what I knew a month ago. But I am sorry I don't have anything new to report.

- Dave – The last time I heard you told us there was one person who was possibly suitable for the position. And you were looking for the second. So you are saying you do not have the second person?
- Carol – Well I can't say that, we just haven't met yet.
- Dave – I think Richard is on the line with more information
- Richard – I am looking at the operating procedures, and it says notice of self-nomination is supposed to occur between March 15<sup>th</sup> and March 22<sup>nd</sup>. And the upcoming election is supposed to occur between April 15 and April 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Dave – I hope that is some help to the nominating committee.
- Carol – absolutely
- Richard – if you look on the council website the operating procedures are there. It tells that framework at the bottom. Check the bottom under how to.
- Dave – Thank you very much Richard
- Carol – And so this vote is just going out to the chapter representatives?
- Juliet – Right
- Dave – the chapter representatives who are listed does not include many of the chapter presidents who act in that role. What I do is send emails to all presidents and representatives
- Donna – how come the list of chapter reps is not complete? Even if you are a president?
- Richard – because not every president has told Cammie that they are also a rep. [info@fnps.org]
- Donna – OK so if they told them, even if they are the chapter rep, you would appear on both lists
- Richard – correct
- Al – Suggestion – let us send a notice out to all chapter reps and presidents to let them know if they are a chapter rep so they will be listed.
- Richard – that's why we have this first notice that happens on March 15<sup>th</sup>. It gives people the time to put their own name in the pool if they want too. I don't think that's ever happened. In order to simulate an in person election where people can nominate from the floor, it gives people the time to put their name in.
- Dave – it has never happened with the council but it has happened with the president of FNPS.
- Carol – so you are saying that someone will put an email together on March 15<sup>th</sup> that says the floor is open for self-nomination?
- Richard - ... yes, then the April 15<sup>th</sup> notice says now it is time to vote and here are the candidates. Carol - So if there is a self-nominating person than the nominating committee would make sure that person is listed as well as the names we come up with? Who sends that email?
- Richard – Yes we send it out this way every election. well I have always done it. If someone else wants to do it that would be fine. We send it out on March 15<sup>th</sup> for self-nominations, and then on April 15<sup>th</sup> we send out the notice for the vote.
- Carol – Who sends out the email?
- Richard – I have always done it. If anyone else wants to do it –



- Carol – Well Richard if you want to talk after this via email or phone.. I would be willing to do it
- Richard – Sure! okay yeah, we already have the information that belongs in the email
- Carol – a template
- Richard – yes a template
- Dave – I just want to praise Richard because he is the one who set this up initially, and he has imagined every contingency how do we word things even when we only have a single candidate, and how to proceed. He has done a marvelous job and I just want to praise him.
- [various thanks to Richard]
- Juliet – Anything more?
- Sonya – At least in the last palmetto there are three chapters that have no chapter rep, that's why presidents would be good to notify as well.
- Dave – It turns out the list on the back of the palmetto is only one place to look. When I first got involved I found out some of the information on the palmetto was inaccurate, I asked Cammie about it and she said "Welcome to my world".
- Juliet – When you log in can you see the member lists?
- Richard – yes you can look that all up.
- Dave – but that is not the same as on the back of the palmetto
- Juliet – usually these update automatically whenever the database is updated. So this list on the website is usually very current
- Donna – Juliet, could you scroll down to the footer again? I am logged in as a chapter and cannot see that society contact list
- Nicole – No but we have "chapter member tools" which takes you to the contact lists
- Juliet – Dave do you have anything else? That was the last item on the agenda
- Dave – Thank you Juliet you are a lifesaver. I appreciate you handling this for me. I will be upgrading to an apple computer so there will be that learning curve. I hope this meeting has been some help.
- Susan – Is there any advantage to all of the chapters having elections in the same month?
- Dave – to my way of seeing it yes, but I think the society just wants to make sure they did not make too much of a presence within the chapters.
- Al – I am sure that each chapter has their own reason why they have their elections when we do. So I think we should leave it alone.
- Richard – I have always thought the differences were our strengths. They all have different ways of doing things, whether they are rural or urban I really like that every chapter has a different personality. I think it is appropriate for who they are working with.
- Susan – We have a lot of people who come during the snowbird season, and then they leave during the summer, and our membership drops dramatically. So we have started going on a hiatus in July-August. Because of the heat and humidity not a lot of people want to go out..
- Dave – Same for Serenoa
- Al – Mangrove chapter goes on a hiatus June-September
- Dave- Thank you and thanks to everyone on the line, unless there is something completely new.
- Juliet – alright thank you everyone

Meeting adjourned at 7:38 PM