



Florida Native Plant Society

Council of Chapters Meeting Minutes 08/23/2020

Online GoTo Meeting

taken by Melanie Simon – CoC Secretary

Kara Driscoll called the meeting to order at 06:30 PM

In attendance (19) – 14 of 33 Chapters

*** indicates proxy or guest**

Citrus – Gail Taylor
Citrus – Athena Philips*
Conradina – Martha Steuart
Cuplet Fern – Mark Kateli
Cuplet Fern – Rory Trumbone*
Dade – Kurt Birchenough
Eugenia – David Martin
Hernando – Janet Grabowski
Lake Beautyberry – Patricia Burgos
Martin – Dianna Wentink

Naples – Kara Driscoll **CoC Chair**
Nature Coast – Diane Caruso
Passionflower – Melanie Simon **CoC Secretary**
Pawpaw – Karen Walter
Sarracenia – Jeannie Brodhead
Sarracenia – David Rodenberry*
Suncoast – Virginia Overstreet
Wayne Baker **CoC Vice Chair**
FNPS President – Bonnie Basham

➤ **Regular Agenda Items**

- **Minutes from previous meeting (June 28, 2020)** - Mark K. motioned to approve, Diane C. seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- **Reminders:** Next meeting scheduled for September 27 at 6:30.
- **Board News**
 - FNPS license plate still on hold awaiting signature by the Governor.
 - Lobbying – Bonnie urged chapters to use talking points developed by FNPS Policy Committee if getting involved in issues at State level, since lobbying is much more effective when there is a consistent message. For lobbying on local issues, Chapters and members are urged to touch base with the Policy Committee and can download an excellent guide from the FNPS website - [Policy/Advocacy Handbook](#).
 - Endowment/Grant – Grant for up to \$1,500 per year is primarily for Chapters and member groups who are conducting research on understudied plant species, especially if that research is focused on improving management practices. Description and qualifications for grant are being written now and will be rolled out as soon as possible (probably not in September). Council will be asked to help advertise this.
 - Sumter Chapter has been dissolved. Members have been given contacts in nearby chapters.

➤ Old Business

- **Student/Young Professional Conference Scholarships**
 - Gail T. assembled a list of potential recipient names (available for Chapters to sponsor for the Conference) so we can all work to get more people involved with FNPS and native plants.
 - Gail and Athena drafted a letter and agreement document based on what Citrus is doing, although each chapter can handle things differently. Chapters do not have to participate, and are not restricted to sponsoring someone from this list, locked into a certain level of support, or have to handle the payment in the same way. Citrus budgeted \$300 and decided to reimburse expenses after receipts are submitted instead of a lump sum.
 - Follow-up: Chapter Reps should take the letter and draft agreement to their Chapters and invite their Chapters to consider participation.

- **Inter-Chapter Disaster Relief Initiative**
 - Athena P. provided an update on this initiative. Chapters are under no obligation to participate, but this is a way we can support each other. If a Chapter wants to participate in the program they need to get into the program by pledging support.
 - Mark K. and Athena P. worked together to draft a draft pledge document. Chapters can edit the pledge document to suit their needs.
 - Chapters can pledge financial support – a one-time pledge (no required amount) or annual pledge (amount and a specified accrual limit up to the Chapter). Chapters will hold the pledged funds in their own account until needed.
 - Support does not have to be financial. Services can be pledged - a Chapter may need someone to temporarily help out with Treasurer duties, social media, or other tasks while their officers and members are recovering. Goods can also be pledged – this might include driving 100 miles to deliver promotional materials.
 - Cuplet Fern has offered to keep track of pledges and coordinate requests, so participating chapters need to let Mark K. know if they are making a pledge. If there's a disaster, the affected Chapter would contact Cuplet Fern and Mark would coordinate with the Chapters who have pledged support.
 - Follow-up: Chapter Reps should take this information and the draft pledge document to their Chapters and invite participation.

- **SOP Revision**
 - Melanie S. reported that it was decided that since the Council is a committee, not a separate business, there is no need for a formal SOP and that a guidance document would be more appropriate. To consolidate and simplify documentation (and therefore updating) the new Council Guidance Document will replace what is currently in the FNPS Handbook and the SOP on the Council website.
 - The subcommittee has drafted and distributed a [Council Guidance Document](#) for review by all Council members.
 - The guidance document sets up two standing subcommittees (Administration headed by the Council Secretary and Orientation & Training headed by the Council Vice Chair) to ensure the guidance document is reviewed annually and new Chapter Reps get information.

- Follow-up: Please read the draft document and email corrections and comments to [Council Secretary](#) by September 15th so they can be incorporated and a final document can be approved by the Council at the September meeting.

- **Council Website and Communications**

- Melanie S. reported she has started working on updating the website and will work on consolidating and organizing the resource documents which are found in a variety of places.
- Preliminary Website Outline (formulated in part based on 2019 website subcommittee report) has been partially implemented with a sidebar added and pages initially cleaned up (except “How To” and “Resources”) so we can work on content.
- Melanie showed the revised website pages. Two items for future discussion are whether putting the Council calendar on the Meeting page (instead of a separate page) is okay and whether we should archive some of the meeting minutes (they go back to 2014). Feedback is welcome.
- Need a clear strategy for communications - table shows preliminary concepts of what each communication tool would ideally contain and be used for.

| Where | Access | What |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Council Website | No restrictions | Information, links to other sites, current Council documents, examples/templates, Council reports |
| Forum | Login to contribute | Notices, discussions |
| Facebook | Closed group | Informal communications |
| Council Google Drive | Password or sharing required | “working” documents, archives (including Field Trip Waivers) |
| FNPS Website | Chapter login required | Email lists and Chapter resources |

- Council Google Drive would be best place for archives. Not all Chapter Reps have a login for the Council Google Drive – Melanie will work on that.
- A location for Chapter resources (things that will help Chapter events and operations) was discussed. These are in numerous places, but should all be in one place to make them easier to find and easier to maintain and update. It and agreed that makes sense that those should on the FNPS website since more Chapter officers and members will then have access.
- Follow-up: Send comments on website updates and strategy to [Council Secretary](#) . Also advise if you are willing to help track down and evaluate resource documents so they can be consolidated.

- **Council Logo**

- After discussion it was decided to table designing a Council logo as we have no need to advertise and the Council has other things to worry about.
- Image used on website is old (may have been developed for Native Landscaping brochure) but shows the whole state, regions, and chapters.

➤ **New Business**

- **Diversity and Inclusion**

- Bonnie provided the Diversity and Inclusion statement that the Executive Committee has approved and is forwarding to the Board. Bonnie will create a task force to determine what next steps are

and develop an action plan. She would welcome suggestions (has some from Facebook post) and has an intern who will be working with the task force to develop a plan. Melanie will distribute the statement with the minutes.

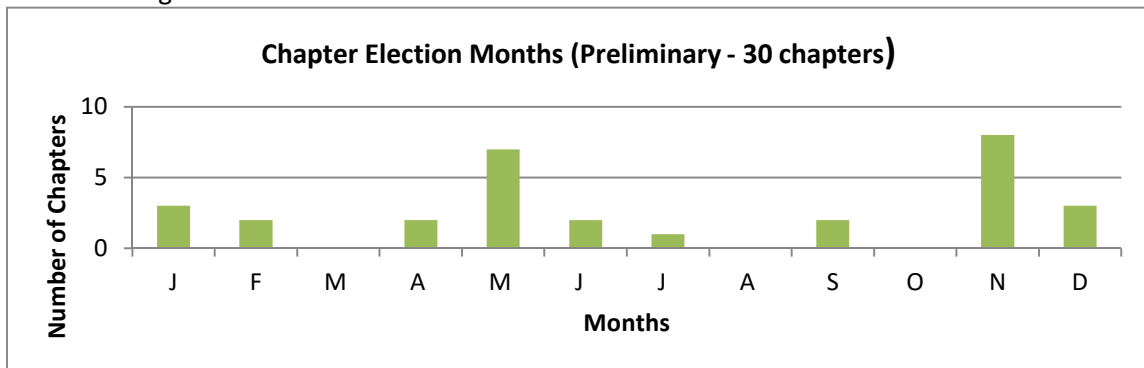
- Wayne B. reported that he and Kara D. are investigating services that can be used to caption educational videos. This will be discussed at the Board level. Athena P. asked if captioning will be available for Chapter videos as well as Society videos. Wayne responded that would be determined by the availability of funding, but would be something to strive for.

- **Strategic Plan**

- Kara D. posted a link in the chat to the FNPS Strategic Plan (on the Forum under Strategic Planning) <https://www.forum.fnps.org/index.php/topic,1440.msg2831.html#msg2831>
- We need to think about what our Council strategic goals will be Kara said we also need to provide strategic plan feedback for the overall Society as well.
- Bonnie pointed out that the plan contains both Operational goals and Aspirational goals, so the Council needs to come up with ideas for both.
- *Follow-up:* Come up with operational and aspirational strategic goal feedback and ideas for discussion at the next Council meeting.

- **Open Floor**

- Diane C. asked about the purpose of the election month poll. Poll was done to inform Council election timing, but also informs new Chapter Rep orientation and training timing as new Reps may be joining the Council throughout the year. Diane pointed out she got no orientation and Wayne said he would be addressing this.



- David R. asked about whether it was still planned to have regional meetings. Melanie explained there is a working group developing a template for regional meetings and that the topic will be revived once we can go back to in-person meetings.
- Kara asked that if anyone has items to discuss at the next meeting, please contact one of the officers (emails on Council website).

Wayne B. made motion to adjourn.

Pat B. seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:48 PM