



Florida Native Plant Society
Council of Chapters Meeting 04/23/17 Minutes
Created on 04/30/17 by Nicole Zampieri
Gotomeeting

Donna Bollenbach called the meeting to order at 6:35.

In attendance (13)

Dave Feagles – Chair (Serenoa)
Donna Bollenbach – Vice Chair (Suncoast)
Juliet Rynear – Executive Assistant (Heartland)
Richard Brownscombe (Broward)
Al Squires (Mangrove)
Ginny Stibolt (Ixia)
Gail Parsons (Nature Coast)
Wendy Poag (Lake Beautyberry)
Neta Villalobos-Bell (Cuplet Fern)
Carol Spears (The Villages)
Sonya Guidry (Pawpaw)
Jan Allyn (Pinellas)
Ben Johnson (Coccoloba)

1. Introductions and Welcome to New Chapter Reps and roll call
 - A. Elliot Miller (Pine Lily)
 - Donna - does anyone have anything they would like to add to the agenda? did you all read it?
 - Carol - This is Carol, I don't have anything to add to the agenda but perhaps people don't know how to mute their microphone. You need to click on the little green microphone logo.
 - Donna - is there any new chapter reps? Elliot Miller from Pine Lily is new but not here in this meeting.
2. Approve Minutes of the previous meeting. (These are on the COC forum under the meetings tab. Please read prior to the meeting.)
 - Donna - has everybody read the minutes from the previous meeting? Do I have a motion to approve?
 - **Al Squires made the motion to approve the previous meetings minutes. Dave Feagles seconded it. It carried.**
3. OLD Business:
 - A. Voting for New Director: Report on Voting (Nominating Committee or Richard Brownscombe) Voting ends 4/29. Any issues/Questions
 - Donna- Carol do you have any updates?

- Carol - I sent out the email according to the protocol on April 15th, for two weeks April 29th is the deadline. Richard set up the internet access to voting and he did it at 6:08 PM, so you have until that time on the 29th of April. There is a direct link in the email that takes you right to the voting site. Al, if you did not get it send me an email and I will forward it to you.
- Al - Okay will do, I did recently change my email.
- Carol - My email is CarolJSpears@CS.com. If anyone else did not get the email let me know and I will resend it. Thank you Richard and Dave also.
- Sonya - I did not get the email but I did find it on the forum.
- Carol - I used the list of chapter reps that was given to me. So if chapters haven't been able to update information as to who their chapter reps are it could be out of date. Or sometimes emails get bounced back.
- Al - I did have to change my email at the beginning of the month.
- Dave - Thank you very much Carol for taking care of this. I know your work with the nominating committee was made more complicated by a lack of responsiveness and you have done a marvelous job.

B. VOLUNTEER REPORTING (How is it going? Any issues/Questions)

This topic was covered at the end of the meeting under new business.

C. COC Conference WORKSHOP: Thursday May 18, American Quarterhorse Room, 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm

- Donna - Based on what we talked about at the last meeting I said I would create a powerpoint presentation. It has a different name I am still working on it - basically it will have the background on the council of chapters, the purpose, and the tools that are available to the council. The thing I had put in there that I wanted to bring and wanted input on is that when we went over what is expected of you, the letter that Juliet had put out, the time commitment and number of hours, and joining a committee. I wanted to ask if on that committee was there anybody who was concerned about the time commitment of being on an FNPS committee, especially if you are already your chapter president. I wanted to know if anyone had concerns around that.
- Neta - Yes I do have a concern because as chapter rep, I also do the programs and field trips, and put them on our website, I write articles for our newsletter, sometimes I do presentations and lead field trips. I do all these other things too.
- Donna- I know there are a lot of people, including myself who are too busy like that so I wanted to hear from you all. I had an idea to propose. Does anyone else want to comment?
- Ginny - What I worry about is putting too many restrictions and rules instead of keeping it open. I think it is hard enough to get people to fill positions. and the more that you say that has to be done will likely discourage people instead of encourage them. I know we need some kind of structure but I really worry about making it sound too onerous.
- Donna - and I agree with that as well that was one of my concerns. I just wanted to bring it up because not that many people spoke up at the last meeting. How many people on this call are already on other committees?
- Dave - I am. Policy
- Jan - I am on the communications committee but i don't actually do anything.
- Ginny - I am on the communications committee as well and I end up doing things like trouble shooting things. I do special projects but sometimes I don't do anything
- Wendy - I am on the education committee and the FNPS land management partners committee and I am very active in both.
- Carol - I am on the education committee.
- Gail - I am on the education committee.
- Al - I am on land management but the only thing I do is attend the meetings and do land management reviews, no one has contacted me to do anything else.

- Dave - Rather than saying you should be on a committee, we could simply change the language to for those who have the time.
- Donna - yes that is the way its worded is that correct Juliet?
- Juliet - Yes I think so and there is also something about not necessarily having to participate
- Donna - yes that is what I was gonna bring up today. I have been doing a lot of reading about the council probably something I should have done a long time ago, but one of the biggest thing is the communication from the members, to the council of chapters and to the board, and from the board back down to the members. part of the board is the committees. Maybe these people who are on these committees don't they have meetings? like go to meetings?
- Carol - yes the education committee does.
- Donna - Yes I saw Niki today. She did a children's activity at one our events. My thought was what Juliet said - what if we tried to get everyone to at least be a silent member. Meaning they at least listen in on these committees meeting so they can report back to the council. I am not suggest that people who are already active switch to that format, but just for those who are not already active to do it. We would clearly communicate with the committee that this person would be a silent member who would only be there to listen and report back to the meeting.
- Jan - I think the way you have it worded already, that suggesting people join a committee is already good enough. I think sort of promoting this non-participation with all that stuff you just said.
- Donna - Do you think there would be a problem asking people what committee they want to be a silent member of? so we have representation on all the committees
- Ginny - I wouldn't do it, it seems to complicated. Just ask if people want to join or not. Its too complicated.
- Donna - Okay. That's why I brought this up.
- Dave - Is it possible for all of the council members to be able to see the reports that are coming to the board of directors?
- Juliet- I don't know if we have a policy on that, maybe a question for Shirley Denton.
- Dave - that would be the place I think for that, to ask chapter reps to review some of the material than that information would be available to them to convey to their chapters.
- Juliet - also the committee chairs are supposed to be posting their reports on their committee pages too. Anybody can go in and read those reports. Alternatively since we have 3 COC members on the board if there was a report on the council as opposed to big decisions, that might be an easy way to summarize a lot of important topics
- Neta - that was going to be my suggestion. The representatives of the board should report back to us from the board meetings. So we should get feedback through the representatives of the COC and not have each of the chapter reps trying to interact and get additional information.
- Donna - Okay, that sounds fair. In other words the three people representing you on the board would review committee reports and bring them to the council meetings and bring pertinent communications to the council reps who can they bring it to their members.
- Neta - Yes that would be the chain of order for that.
- Wendy - Just a comment I think that most chapter reps as well as the general membership are not aware of what their role might be on a committee or that they are even encouraged. I just think its that nebulous thing "the committees".
- Juliet - I would add that a lot of the committees at the state level are duplicated at the chapter level. Lots of chapters have conservation and education chair. WE have attempted in the past to link them all together, it is difficult to say the least.
- Donna - So where are we lacking?
- Juliet - my assessment is that you can never communicate too much. You can be too wordy, but Donna you have been so awesome about writing these excellent summaries. Quick bullet points to summarize decisions we made or future plans, things we talked about. I think that's really helpful.
- Donna - Okay I have an idea of what everybody feels like. I think the main thing to focus on is there are a lot of people already involved on committees is let them have time to talk at our COC meetings about getting input on what is going on, as well as the 3 representatives who sit on the board

meetings bringing back information they receive. That way we can cover the idea that perhaps we are not getting enough committee information to the council and back to our members.

- Jan - are you thinking to have a committee report on every council of chapters meeting?
- Donna - No just for those people who are member to report if they have something they want to talk about like an initiative on their committee
- Richard - I just think in the spirit of what was suggested, it would be nice to take time in each meeting for the three representatives to take time to report on what happened in the last board meeting. and the council might want to say as a group - what we want for the representatives to bring to the board meeting. I think this will fulfill the communication between the two.
- Donna - Thats what I wanted to hear, how people feel we could improve the communication between the board, the council, and the members.
- Dave - I like what Richard was saying. I like that, because maybe not everyone is at the council meetings, but they all have access to the minutes and so that information will be down there too.
- Donna- it just doesn't hurt to repeat them verbally too. There is a certain percentage of people who don't go and read these things. That is a good point. we need to keep telling them its there.
- Wendy - question, I often don't know because I am not on the board, I don't get a report for each of the committee chairs. I don't know what the other committees are doing so I can't report it back to my chapter.
- Donna - that was the whole premise of my conversation. Trying to find out how we can find out more about what each of these committees are doing. and how to share it with each other and our members.
- Wendy - As the head of the council or whatever, if it was a simple sentence for each committee that was each passed on to the chapter rep on what is going on in each of these committees that would be great.
- Donna - I keep hearing it should be the chair, Vice chair, secretary responsibility to report from the meeting. so you want a short and concise way to pass down information.
- Juliet - I would just add to that - I suggest everyone needs to read the Sabal Minor, lots of good information on there. There are some great reports in there and even information from some chapters on what is going on.
- Al - Our chapter newsletter constant contact will allow whoever sends the email to tell if it has been opened. it is interested to see what percentage of your membership doesn't even bother to open it.

D. Orientation/training/welcome is needed for all of the new chapter representatives who come on board. The above workshop would be the outline switching chapter reps and would be a basis for new chapter rep training. More training can be developed as needed. Any additional thoughts?

- Donna - Working on this presentation I have discovered it won't hurt for all of us to review the SOP.
- Gail - I am wondering why item D on the agenda cannot be a part of your powerpoint presentation? I am confused on why they are not combined.
- Donna - I just wanted some feedback to include from the last meeting.
- Gail - so are we having an orientation and training?
- Donna - Yes we are for those who are new and also a review for those who have already been chapter reps.
- Gail - so when you use the word workshop, what is implied in that? Does that mean everyone is participating?
- Donna - we encourage as many people to participate - in this case that is just what they called it. It could have been whatever we wanted it to be.
- Gail - I think it should be called orientation not workshop.
- Al - if you call it an orientation older chapter reps will think they don't need to.
- Donna - How about chapter rep responsibilities and roles overview.
- Jan - that sounds good

- Juliet - So what is going into the printed program is what it is now, because it is pretty late. As long as you guys know what your meeting is about that's really all that matters.
- Gail - but won't there be chapter reps that aren't here now?
- Donna - We will send out information to all the chapter reps before on what it will actually be. It was basically what are we gonna do for this workshop and I volunteered to do the powerpoint. I will send something out about that that workshop means before the conference. Sounds good?
- Al - Sounds good to me. Your title "Your role as an FNPS chapter rep" sounds good to me.
- Donna - ITs been changed to "What does it mean to be FNPS chapter representative"
- Dave - It does seem to me that the powerpoint is an excellent idea, and the idea of it being a workshop so that we can take input to make sure we can satisfy all our requirements, it does seem like a workshop. We want all the input as possible, this is just going to be a big thrust. It really will be a workshop as I see it.
- Donna - While I wanted it to be as solid as I can make it, I wanted everyone to know that this is not going to the end of it all.

4. New Business

A. COC Council Meeting: Thursday, May 18, American Quarterhorse Room, 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm: Some suggested topics to cover.

- Results of elections for new Director
 - Request for volunteer for Vice-Chair
 - Time and Dates for COC Go-to-Meetings for 2017/2018
 - Sign-ups for FNPS committees
 - Your comments and suggestions.
- Donna - All of you know if you can't make the field trips the meeting is at 4:30 for the council of chapters meeting. Juliet how does that work? the results of the elections are not actually announced until the meeting?
 - Juliet - right the general membership meeting is on Saturday morning at 8 o'clock i believe. That's when the voting takes place.
 - Richard - You can see the results of the vote online on the 29th.
 - Donna - Okay so it is just a formality of the membership approving.
 - Richard - IT is supposed to be announced before. There is no provision that it's not official after it's done online
 - Carol - I think that's correct what's happening on Saturday is the board of directors membership vote, but the only people that vote for the COC chair are the COC representatives.
 - Richard - That's right and that is a part of the bylaws, that the chapters elect their own leaders. So after the online vote its official. I think it says that we send out an email to the reps that say the vote is official. Of course when we have one candidate its a formality.
 - Juliet - It is an announcement at the general meeting then?
 - Richard - Yes its only an announcement of what already occurred
 - Dave - yes that is my understanding as well, since it is done internally through the council. Anne Cox thinks it is important that it is validated at the general meeting.
 - Richard - from my point of view it is improper to validate it at the annual meeting. because the bylaws say the chapters elect their leaders. It doesn't need validation.
 - Dave - I am in agreement with you. Anne called for a vote at the general meeting but I don't think any of that is necessary.
 - Al - I agree with Dave that we just inform the general membership who we have elected as our chair. It does not have to be confirmed because it is our voting not the general membership voting.
 - Richard, Dave - I agree
 - Donna - Who conducts the council meeting? would you be conducting that Dave or would I?

- Dave - it should be me at this point. but actually we could do it either way. We have traditionally passed the gauntlet at the conference. but since the voting occurs at the general meeting for FNPS, but we are different. Richard is their any provision as to when the new director takes the role?
- Richard - I would have to go look at them, but of course they are voted in prior to that meeting.
- Dave - When I look at the U.S. president there is a transition period.. I think it would be appropriate for us to have a little bit of time in between the election completion and when the person takes office
- Donna - we can work together
- Richard - I will look at the SOP and see if I can answer by the end of the meeting
- Donna - One thing I would like to look at is setting times and dates for the council meetings for 2017 and 2018. Would like to get that on calendars? Juliet how many of the face to face meetings planned for the rest of the year?
- Juliet - We have 4 every year, one at the annual retreat, one at the conference, and then August and November.
- Donna - Where are we going in august?
- Juliet - the FFS training center, November is going to be - I just went blank
- Donna - I can look at it on the calendar
- Juliet - its the Melbourne chapter. on the east coast.
- Donna - When go to meetings happen are there restrictions because of other meetings that are going on as to when they are going on?
- Juliet - The only restriction is we can't hold two meetings at the same time. So you just have to look at the calendar on gotomeeting and schedule accordingly. I just looked on the wiki for the council of chapters elections - it says online forum voting should be open one month prior on April 15th, the society annual meeting should be closed after two weeks on April 29th. Results will be announced by email at least one week prior to the may 15th annual meeting. So basically you are announcing to the board who the elected representatives are and then they become board members. and that's announced at the general meeting.
- Donna - I guess then we will have to come up with an agenda for the council meeting Dave.
- Dave - ok

B. Earth Day Events: If we have time, we can hear from those Chapter who did something special for Earth Day. If not they can be included in the Chapter reports for the May meeting.

- Donna - does anyone wanna talk about earth day events they attended or put on?
- Al - Friday we went to an elementary school and spoke to different classes. They have a 17 year old native planter there. I have some pictures of different wildflowers. Bobby Rogers did a thing on water preservation. Then on Saturday I was at the district cub scout thing. And I got back from Englewood earth day that was at a park, and they had the best turn out I have seen yet. Multiple people stopping at our booth it was fantastic. Most of these people were local residents so it was really good.
- Richard - Broward chapter spoke to a large earth day event sponsored by the sierra club. But the more exciting event was yesterday the March for Science when many hundreds of people gathered and we marched through Fort Lauderdale and closed every major street. It was spectacular.
- Donna - I was at a an event for people who've adopted a native plant garden - the turn out wasn't great in total but at our booth was phenomenal, lots of interest in native plants. and yesterday we had a native plant walk at lettuce lake and it was part of the Hillsborough 100 challenge where 100 organizations were challenged to have an event in between earth day and arbor day. both turned out well with a lot of turn out.
- Sonya - pawpaw chapter has had at least 4 or 5 events this month. yesterday we participated in earth day and a science march. we have been very busy and made new contacts - we love green people.
- Jan - Pinellas chapter tabled at an earth day event yesterday and also we tabled at the green thumb festival which is a really big event in St. Petersburg both yesterday and today.

- Dave - Serenoa chapter had an earth day celebration with a plant sale and it is always successful with many vendors from many different walks of life.
- Al - I understand you had a quite a plant sale last month too.
- Dave - yes we did it was excellent a couple weeks back.
- Carol - The villages chapter also had a table at the villages earth day event last Thursday
- Donna - April is a crazy month. it sounds like everybody has had a lot of events this month.
- Dave - I am just hoping one of the outcomes of the Trump presidency is to hope that environmentalists feel that now they need to get more involved. So we are at a good time to say hey, here is how you get involved.
- Donna - personally I think that's what's happening. I think that's why we are seeing all these people coming out for the marches for science and other events like that.

C. Other New Business?

- Gail - I do have a comment I would like to throw out, I did register for the conference however I do not have a room. all the rooms were gone. I am looking for a roommate but I don't know if I am going to find one. Juliet can I get my money back if I can't find a place to stay?
- Juliet - Yes you can. Did you sign for the roommate finder service yet?
- Donna - Have you tried any of the alternate locations? are they all gone?
- Gail - I tried the fish camp but the other ones are a lot farther away.
- Juliet - was the fish camp all booked up?
- Gail - yes it is all booked.
- Donna - Okay so if there is no more new business do I have to call for a vote to adjourn the meeting?
- Richard - before we adjourn I just want to point out If I am correct 9 chapters have casted their votes for the council chair, I think there are 12 of us here in this meeting so 4 of you, as soon as you hang up need to go and cast your vote. Go to the forum, and go to the council sections, one of the topics is voting. Click there and you will see the vote there. Once you voted you will see you cannot vote anymore. It changes what it looks like.
- Dave - If i am not mistaken the place you are talking about is on the forum, go down to council of chapters, and thats where it will be. not the other places such as the bottom of the homepage where it lists the council.
- Richard - yes it is within the forum
- Carol - If you can find the email or if you did not get it. I sent a link that takes you right to that page and it takes like 5 seconds
- Gail - yes we were supposed to have received an email?
- Carol - yes as long as you are a representative on the list.
- Dave - Can i suggest that we resend to everyone with a note that says voting closes in another day?
- Carol - Well i was thinking of that but if some people didn't get it some people may not have been on the original list. so if I send it again they still might not get it.
- Sonya - I apologize I did receive the email I found it. I just didn't find the link I went straight to the forum.
- Ginny - You have on here volunteer reporting. You skipped over it.
- Donna - Oh yes how is everyone doing with it?
- Ginny - Ixia has never reported volunteer hours because Sally who was our president did that when she was working and decided not to do it anymore. So now we have a new president and now Ixia will begin reporting volunteer hours.
- Donna - how is everybody working with the new calendar? are people entering their information in the new calendar?
- Al - some how when the calendars switched over they had our meetings going from June - September. So the person handling out calendar has to go in and take them out cause we don't meet then. So she is going to go in and remove those.

- Donna - well that might be something we will think about in the future. You need to know that the only way you can access the calendar is through the link. You have to go through the link. So you should make it a bookmark. Because it is your unique calendar. am I correct in that Richard?
- Richard - yes you can bookmark it, it is a unique link. I have mine bookmarked.
- Donna - So you can bookmark it, you might want to do it and write it down because it is a specific link for your chapter to use. If people are having problems we can discuss more at the calendar.
- Dave - Maybe it should be in the powerpoint
- Donna - Yes it will be part of the powerpoint, how to access it.
- Gail - Part of the orientation?
- Donna - Yes it will be, but without troubleshooting or hands on. I hope to get more troubleshooting for individuals established somehow when we help individuals with problems they have but that's gonna have to be after the conference. So anyways thank you all, I found out I was doing this on Thursday so thank you for working with me on it. Do we have any other business before we adjourn?
- **AL - I will make the motion we adjourn. Dave seconded. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:38 PM.**

