



**Florida Native Plant Society**  
Council of Chapters Meeting 05/18/2017 Minutes  
Created on 05/21-2017 by Nicole Zampieri  
FNPS Annual Conference at Westgate River Ranch

Donna Bollenbach called meeting to order at 4:43

**In attendance (29)**

Chapter Representatives

Donna Bollenbach - Council Chair (Suncoast)  
Nicole Zampieri - Council Secretary  
(Magnolia)  
Richard Brownscombe (Broward)  
Carol Spears (The Villages)  
Ginny Stibolt (Ixia)  
Carol Sullivan (Sparkleberry)  
Al Squires (Mangrove)  
Jan Allyn (Pinellas)  
Wendy Poag (Lake Beautyberry)  
Athena Phillips (Citrus)  
Elliot Miller (Pine Lily)  
Gail Parsons (Nature Coast)  
Ina Crawford (Sweetbay)  
Greg Ballinger (Marion Big Scrub)  
Lucy Keshavarz (Palm Beach County)

Ellen Broderich (Cocoplum)  
Neta Villalobos-Bell (Cuplet Fern)  
Miki Renner (Hernando)  
Sonya Guidry (Pawpaw)  
Susan Knapp (Passionflower)  
Martha Steurt (Conradina)  
Sandi Saurers (Paynes Prairie)

Chapter Presidents and other

Kim Zarillo (Conradina)  
Jon Pospisil (Passionflower)  
Patty Phares (Dade)  
Cammie Donaldson (FNPS Admin)  
Joan Bausch (Cocoplum)  
Gail Taylor (Citrus)  
Lauren McFarland (Sparkleberry)

1. Introductions and Welcome to New Chapter Reps and roll call

Donna thanked the council for electing her.

- Donna - I'm really looking forward to it. Please let me know if you have any thoughts or ideas. Are there any new chapter reps here today?

Greg Ballinger from Marion Big Scrub

Elliott Miller from Pine Lily

Susan Knapp from Passionflower

2. Approve Minutes of the previous meeting. (These are on the COC website under the Meetings tab. Please read prior to the meeting.)

**Al Squires made the motion to approve the minutes. Jan Allyn seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.**

## **OLD Business**

A. Outgoing Director: Dave Feagles

B. Incoming Director: Donna Bollenbach

C. Orientation/training for new chapter representatives. Presentation was reviewed during the previous timeslot (3:30 -4:30). Will provide quick summary for those who could not attend workshop and on line copy for those to review as well.

**Appended** are notes and suggestions from the orientation/training powerpoint.

## **NEW Business**

• Set up a schedule for all COC meetings in 2017-2018. Do we want to continue (second) Sunday at 6:30 pm (on those months when we have a GoToMeeting) or a new day/time for GoToMeetings? Have 3 choices ready and we may be able to decide this at the meeting through a quick survey.

a. June: None

b. July 2017: Go-to-Meeting

c. August 12, 2017: In person Meeting: Florida Division of Forestry Withlacoochee Training Center, 24059 Childs Road Brooksville, FL 34601 Brooksville

d. Sept: None

e. October: Go-to-Meeting

f. Nov 4, 2017: In Person Meeting: In person: Enchanted Forest Sanctuary; 444 Columbia Blvd. Titusville, FL 32780

g. Dec- None

h. Jan 2018: Go-to-Meeting

i. Feb 2018: In Person Meeting: TBD

j. March: None

k. April 2018: Go-to-Meeting

l. May 2018: In Person: Annual Conference; To be held in Miami. Working on Florida International University and nearby hotel/conference facilities. This will be a Southeast Regional Conference and all Southeast Chapters are asked to let their members know that we will need their ideas for a theme, speakers, and will need local and regional volunteers for the conference committee. In addition to our usual conference offerings, we are also hoping to attract the public with special events offerings in addition to a big fundraising dinner event that will be open to the public.

- Donna read over the meeting schedule directly from the agenda. Go to meetings will be scheduled the month before the in person meeting.
- Donna - So, when we did have a meeting we were meeting on Sundays at 6:30. How many like that? Raise your hands.  
\*The majority in the room raised their hands in favor of this meeting. 4 were opposed. Donna asked for explanation from the opposition.
- Unknown - Sundays are bad for me, I work all week and this is part of my week. I spend weekends with family and friends.
- Donna - a problem with meeting during the week is that chapter meetings meet on different days of the week, so no matter what someone would miss one
- Miki - doesn't ever chapter have a backup?
- Donna - I wish my chapter had a backup

- Unknown - only talking about 4 a year gotomeetings, and only about 4 people in this room were opposed, so we should just stick to it.
- Donna - How many people like 6:30. We are gonna stay with Sundays at 6:30. Does anyone care - or I can set this - a preference for first second or third Sunday? no? Then I will just send the schedule when I finalize it. 6:30, Sundays, and I will pick which one.
- Al - just please keep the same Sunday for each month
- Donna - yes I will keep the same per month
- Miki - just one last suggestion - our board meetings are the first of the month.... so that's consistent, maybe avoid that week.
- Donna - I am thinking it will be the second or third. The annual conference - I did want to bring up that we are working on FIU in Miami, and just to mention that regional chapters in that area are going to be approached about helping with that conference. That is 2018. Let's get these things scheduled.
- Juliet - 2019 we are working on Northwest Florida, panhandle. In Niceville. We are in negotiations right now because they want a lot of money for that facility. Next year Miami, then after that we are shooting for the panhandle.
- Donna - I want to bring up something - on the committee - this year was a little tough because it didn't have the regional chapter support really. We did get people picking stuff up - like sun coast, we are not really in the region but we did some things and other chapters did some things. But if we can really get this regional chapter model working, it would be so much easier for everyone. I know the committee worked very hard because it is a lot that they have to do. I just thought I would bring that up.

## COUNCIL DIRECTION

- Donna - in 2014 did a brainstorm session on the whiteboard type thing and on the council website under initiatives there are pictures of what you discussed. So I want to here your thoughts on what direction we need to go this year. Here is one of the highlights.  
\*Donna read aloud directly from the agenda, discussion follows.

This will be an open forum so I can hear your thoughts on the direction the Council should take in the next year. You may have new ideas, which is fine, but below in BOLD, I have paraphrased some things determined to be important during a 2014 brainstorm session (the complete phrasing is under the initiatives tab on The Council website) and added some new ideas.

1. In 2014, the Council said" It is time to focus more on actions that move us & the public to help native plants. **It is time to do what you have always thought FNPS should do. The Council should take A Fresh Approach to Something: ACTION, PROJECT, PROGRAM to benefit native plants.**"

Thoughts: It would be great if the Council, Chapters and State could work together to come up with a strategy so that we can do a better job of fulfilling our mission. With no funding in the state budget for Florida Forever and developers kicking into high gear, many of the last examples of endangered plant communities will be lost forever if we can't get more of our members and more of the public to work on land preservation strategies and plant community conservation initiatives. If we don't preserve what remains, it will soon begin adversely affect the native plant sales industry and our ability to restore degraded landscapes. IN 2014, the Council suggested such actions should be...

**a) Chapter Centric**

**b) Integrated with Board Committees**

**c) Establish ways to work together that produce accomplishments during a set time frame.**

2. In 2014, the Council **CHALLENGED the group to communicate more as a group between faceto-face meetings. Some methods of communication you suggested were emails, Phone calls, Regional Meetings.** I will add Social media. How are we doing? Too much? Too little? How can we improve this?

3. IN 2014, the Council asked for **LEADERS WILLING TO LEAD: Ask, assign, set deadlines, encourage creativity and generate excitement, joy, satisfaction and pleasure from our accomplishments.** What are your thoughts on this? How do you want to be led into the next year? How can we all work toward the goals we set without burning out any one person or group?

**This discussion will determine our focus at our next in person-meeting in August.** As we do not want to get stuck in planning limbo, in August we will also have one concrete item (workshop, speaker, project initiation), but we can also spend some time dissecting this discussion and narrowing down our strategic planning if needed. In addition, any unfulfilled needs (many are still asking for technical training) my thought is to set a goal and work toward it each time we meet, so we can feel the joy of accomplishment.

- Al - before we get involved in this, from the bylaws it says the silver palmetto is awarded by the president to members from the board of directors. we are not members of the board of directors anymore. instead of doing a bylaw change i am suggesting that we get approval from the BOD that the director of the COC is able to award a bronze palmetto award to council chapter presidents.
- Juliet - that's a great idea. that's doable.
- Ina - was that a motion?
- Al - Yes I will make the motion.
- Ina - I'll second it
- Donna - All in favor of proposing to the board that the council of chapters have a bronze palmetto award that would be awarded by the director? any discussion?
- Greg Ballinger - That the exec committee of the council of chapters (the three officers)
- Donna - Okay we need to amend then.
- Al - do you agree Ina [to the amendment]?
- Ina - yes I will agree to that.
- Donna - any more discussion?
- Joan - I have been working on the name "lethal bronzing...." for a Texas disease so I don't know if that's gonna come into this...
- Juliet - the name bronze might not be good
- Donna - So name it something different then?
- Al - traditionally it is gold, silver, bronze...
- Donna - the main point is that we want to present an award from the COC for a palmetto award, and it will be one different from the green and silver.
- Donna - do we have more discussion?
- Donna - all in favor?  
-all in favor-
- Donna - any opposed? any abstained?

**Al Squires made the motion to propose to the board that the council of chapters have a bronze palmetto award that would be awarded by the three officers of the council and Ina Crawford seconded. The motion carried.**

- Ginny - I would like to say that in 2014 we got started, but we did the brochures, its not that we should try to do that again, what we are looking for is something concrete. its not like we haven't done anything.
- Donna - I never meant that -
- Ginny - yes but the brochure is a concrete example of an accomplishment
- Miki - the three things that you mentioned, almost each one of them should be a separate meeting. As you just said brochure, but one of the primary purposes of our meetings is to share what we are doing, and one of the things I've discovered is we just don't get the chance to talk to each other, once in a blue moon we have gone around. we reformed, but we never stormed, that's why we are not normed. we need to do some of that.
- Donna - how would you like that done? what did you like in the past and how would you like to see it go forward?
- Ginny - two years ago i did an all day workshop at the Lyonia center and part of that was the brainstorming at lunch time where it was not a presentation where it was people talking about three different things- the newsletter, something else... what was different was that it was not involved with the board at all. it was just a separate outreach workshop and 3 members from each chapter were invited.
- Donna - was that Lyonia?
- Ginny - yes it was at Lyonia. A lot of people came and really liked it because it was just for the chapters, not the whole state. I think that we could do that again - I could do that again in 2019. Someone else could do it in a different region.
- Donna - that could be a regional thing - like what we never worked on from the old initiatives
- Ginny - yes but it doesn't have to be a a state thing. just one topic for an all day thing.... but that did work well.
- Wendy Poag - I think its a common thing that I'm hearing at our chapter, if we keep drawing it down to he chapter, at our meetings I hear, well what is the state doing for us? I don't use that website... I tell them how the state is recording volunteer hours. but I take those. No one else does. so the individual members I think in our chapters are not engaged - I don't think the membership are not understanding their role, what part do they play in this? they don't even feel a part of the state chapter, just a small section of them do, but the general 70 or 80 members do not, and I don't know how to take that energy when we talk about preserving what's left. we need every body active. how do we do that?
- Juliet - one of the ideas we were thinking about when writing up the chapter representative thing. we need more people at the chapter level to serve on the state committees. The thought was, you don't have to be heavy lifting and being a chapter rep is a huge commitment. For example on the conservation committee there are a lot of people that just hang out to know what's going on. and then they have that information and can take it back to their chapters. That's' what we would really like to encourage is more involvement on state committees.
- Wendy - and they want to do something that really matters but we want to give them that simple tool

- Greg - Wendy was saying exactly what I was thinking - what resources are available to help the smaller struggling chapters? We struggle to get field trip leaders, speakers. I'm the first chapter rep we have.
- Juliet- there is a speakers list on the forum, but we need input. We need to update that spread sheet so that its available to everyone.
- Al - one of the things our chapter does is we rely on the extension agent. They usually give us a choice of topics. Your local water management district is a good source. As far as field trip leaders, decide where you want to go and then contact the state forest and contact them and ask if they could supply us with a leader.
- Donna - I think the point is these are the discussions that you are bringing up that we want to share. I have successes that I can't bring up today but that I can share on how to do these things
- Neta - I would like to go back to Wendy's issue and that is that our members I think come for the meetings and they have a good time and then they leave. I don't think you are gonna get them at the state level. we can't even get them at the local level. and that's what we need to do is get them together, I like the ideas is get the chapters together to brainstorm and come up with ideas and how to engage them. each chapter is different and at what level and what projects you are gonna have and you know we were just talking about this in our chapter - how do we get more people? we have talked about how do we get our members involved? One is we have to personally ask them. The other thing is you have to ask them specifically, can you work on this?
- Juliet - you just said it though - how do we do a better job at engaging people
- Unknown - It depends largely on chapter leadership. How many chapters have a chapter rep? We haven't done that very well because we have been having program meetings. There was a time depending on who our chapter rep was, they knew they needed to have chapter rep say something but they kept it brief, you know 1 minute or so which totally defeats the purpose.
- Miki - This is something detailed - in my mind that would be, the topic for our meeting. So we would spend a half hour or whatever on how to engage our membership. Sharing successes and failures. Each of these tools that are available. There are so many things that we could throw out a sentence and concern and that will be the conversation, and we have this. Certainly to begin the camaraderie and connectedness between us. We are new still and we really haven't done that.
- Gail P. - I like that idea, however it may be to be more concrete - there is a lot of people in this room, I would love to see our council meetings be brute and facilitated so we can talk about what we need to be doing instead of being talked too, sharing information amongst ourselves in maybe three groups. I think that would be more beneficial.
- Julie Becker - It's been a while... but we have a couple of meetings were i did break people up and put them in groups. This is my new suggestion here, when we have these face to face meetings, then we need to make sure that that's what we are doing is talking to each other. Some of this nitty-gritty stuff needs to be completely taken care of maybe on the gotomeeting or online, and whatever and then we do break up into groups. we can maybe use the regions we used for the brochures, maybe we break up regionally one time, into 2 or 3 discussions at the time, but we do need to limit and have goals and stuff and discussion to come up with something.
- Donna - form what i am hearing, what if we did break up in those tables by regions, discussing issues like engaging members, and then we had one person get up and give the take ways

- Julie - It doesn't matter if they have different or the same topics it would be as the needs come
- Athena - as far as the meeting together getting more face to face I think our area has had a pretty good job doing that already, Pinellas did a multi chapter in December, we did like a trip chapter plant walk and picnic. The year before that our chapter held the website class. if that's something that's not really being done, does that mean the council of chapters should try to organize a kind of schedule on how the individual local chapters should get together or should we continue to do it informally and just do it?
- Donna - I'm not sure how many people would actually be able to commit. I think it is something we should offer but maybe if what was regional they may more likely commit. if it is regional they would more likely commit. you can invite other people like your treasure and president we are going to cover these topics.
- Athena - is that something someone has to organize it or can we just do it informally?  
-a lot of discussion inaudible-
- Jan - so this group is really too big to discuss or to have a workshop type thing for a specific topic, but I agree the regional meetings we have are the ideal times to have those break out sessions. so maybe if the entire group could determine what are the 3 topics our chapters need help with, I think its less important to divide up geographically than it is by topic. you could pick which ever one of those three was greater need for your chapter, whatever is your interest. I think we have done it in the past. i think that works pretty well. we just need to decide what those things are within the chapters.
- Donna - and then one person from each topic can report back at the end on what was discussed.
- Jan - I don't even think we need the report and it can be shared on the forum. I think the outcome is the brainstorming itself. Because not all solutions are gonna work for all chapters.
- Donna - I could just see that one person can't go to all 3 and might want the information.
- Jan - There's nothing that says more than one person from each chapter can't come - they can split up and visit the different topics.
- Susan - you reached back to 2014 for this.. you said the landscape brochure was one of the initiatives and that we have achieved that. so it took 3 years to achieve? so how many other initiatives were there?
- Julie - one was about advocating for land use planning
- Miki - The state once had a process that no longer exists
- Julie - that one was explored and when it came to helping people on a local level it was just too complicated there are so many different rules per county
- Miki - and that's what Gene and Sue are doing in their advocacy workshops, so its come around where it can't be a big thing like the landscape brochure. but it had focus that we need to this.
- Julie - Gene and Sue doing that workshop is the result of that. and the other one was field trips.
- Al - field trips - that fell apart because everything we came up with by our planning people... -inaudible-
- Susan - can we put field trips back as an initiative?
- Donna - Well we can do whatever we want.
- Al - We were trying to come up with ways for chapters to improve their field trips and Scott had some way to get younger people involved. But when we came back with that these

people told us “that won’t work because we can’t make any money off of that”. these people were just concerned with the money.

- Ginny - going back to what Wendy was talking about, I think maybe as a council we could come up with a presentation/Powerpoint for chapter reps to present to their chapters about what the state is doing so that maybe our local members, so that maybe our local members could be more interested. I am the only person from Ixia who is at the conference.
- Al - the program that was put out on land management - very nice it was like a 10 minute program and now like half of the members know what land management is and what we are doing.
- Wendy - I agree with what Ginny said - each chapter if they feel like they are a bigger piece – what’s the states initiatives? They feel like are a part of this bigger thing. It’s kind of like this nebulous thing - the state and all these committees.
- Gail Taylor - the program that Ginny did that was so fantastic we had a breakout session and you could go to whichever one you wanted and there was a whiteboard and you could throw out whatever you wanted. we all got back together and then one person got back together and presented what we discussed. it was three different topics. it was wonderful to share that kind of information.
  
- Donna - we have a short amount of time so I just wanted to recap. I obviously hear engaging members to the state. That’s one. I know there are others put out there. Can we come up with maybe at our next go to meeting and come up with several topics - I think we can come up with 3. Break out, have people discuss it, if we have time after we can give presentations at the end of the discussion and also post to the forum
  
- Susan - I have a question, you said that we were all supposed to report on native plant communities in our regions - a couple of meetings ago we wanted to update the native plant gardens. how is that going? how is that initiative?
- Donna - Oh that was something about updating the native plant garden section on the website.
- Susan - how is that going?
- Donna - It’s not.  
-inaudible-
- Gail T - We produced- Athena was instrumental in making a survey that we sent out to our chapter members. We asked them to fill out, do you want a longer meeting or short meeting? field trips? it was very complete, we then handed it in. it should be available to any chapter to use it, and then you know what your chapters are interested in. how far do they want to go? will they travel 3 hours? do they want the field trip to be an hour long? do they want to go to nurseries? it was an engagement tool.
- Carol - What kind of a response did you get?
- Gail T - Everybody at the meeting handed it back. and then I emailed it out to our members.
  
- Carol - [to Donna] could we have some time to come up with topics? and maybe email you?
- Donna - yes that is perfect, each of you please think about it and please email me [donna.bollenbach@gmail.com]. At our next council meeting we can decide what three goals to focus on, and we can work on them at our next in person meeting. Then maybe some initiatives will come out of that and we can start making some goals.



- Kim - One of things that has been experienced in the society - is that everyone here is a member of the society, and a leader in a society, it is not the state. a long time ago we had a lot of problems with the "state" vs. the chapter. But we are all members of the society, and all the chapter reps are a leader in the society. Sometimes how you frame things- we are all a part of that. What is the society is doing for us? It sort of goes back to what Kennedy said - don't ask what your country is doing for you ask for what you can do for your country. Each one of us has a role, even if we just call someone to lead a field trip.
- Donna - so lets try to use the word society - not state.
- Ina - A couple of years ago we did a presentation engaging children. One of the things we did at Falling Waters SP was having kids make seed balls. So i brought a box of what's left. Here it is.

A motion was made to adjourn and was seconded. All were in favor and it carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30.



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## **Appendage I.**

### **Suggestions from Council of Chapters workshop**

Purpose seems wordy and not to the point. Response is that this was written during a strategic planning session - verbatim from official FNPS documents.

Question: will the new (to be appointed) vice chair serve a full two year term or just complete the one year left on Donna's term?

Vice chair is a one year term since we are in the middle of the term

#### Discussion on volunteer hour commitment number for the chapter representative

Make the hours a per month not per week number.

Where are the hours coming from? General confusion over what chapter reps are spending their time doing. This is explained on the powerpoint.

Ginny's suggestion - Depending on the amount of activity you would be expected to volunteer about 8-16 hours per month

Unknown suggestion - Maybe it is better to list no hours at all, with a detailed list of what is expected a

**Donna - go to the website, reread the duties/responsibilities and give feedback at the next gotomeeting.**

Ginny - reword to include that the council is a volunteer society - not a professional society somewhere before the mention of how many hours are to be expected.

Forum - need training!!! The general feeling is that the forum is still cumbersome and not user friendly.

Question: Where do chapter rep reports go? under council>meetings>find the meeting with date and post a reply

Athena - There is a link at the top of the forum on "how to use the forum". This should be included on powerpoint slide and on the council website's how to page.

Speaker list? is it updated? maintained? Answer seemed ambiguous. In the COC meeting that followed Juliet Rynear briefly mentioned the speaker list exists but has not been updated recently - need input from chapters to keep it updated.

#### Powerpoint edits

-The slide with council SOP has fallen letter "s"

-Support docs - do not need to have chapter log in to access.

-Typo on slide about Policy documents - "What's is it?" mistake made on following few slides.

-It was hard to follow the powerpoint to understand where to access things. Need more clarity on if we are talking about things at the footer of the fnps page, the forum, or council website. Could include this in a simple manner along on the left side bar on the slides.