



Florida Native Plant Society
Council of Chapters Meeting 01/21/18 Minutes
Created on 01/26/18 by Nicole Zampieri
Gotomeeting

Julie Becker called the meeting to order at 6:35.

In attendance (16)

Julie Becker – Interim Council Chair (Tarflower)
Kara Driscoll – Council Vice Chair (Naples)
Nicole Zampieri – Council Secretary (Magnolia)
Juliet Rynear (Heartland)
Athena Phillips (Citrus)
Jaya Milam (Big Bend)
Douglas Hunt (Pawpaw)
Dianna Wentink (Cocoplum)
David Martin (Eugenia)
Mikel Renner (Hernando)
Tayler Figueroa (Pine Lily)
Jan Allyn (Pinellas)
Jeannie Brodhead (Sarracenia)
Carold Sullivan (Sparkleberry)
Virginia Overstreet (Suncoast)
Carol Spears (The Villages)

1. Approval of Minutes

Kara made the motion to approve the minutes. Carol seconded. The motion passed.

- Julie: Just a reminder that we have the retreat Archbold in February
- Miki: This is Miki has an agenda been created for that yet?
- Juliet: I am working on the agenda now

2. Chair

a. Meetings: 1.Retreat at Archbold research station, Feb 9 -11,2018, GotoMeetings March and April. Suggest March 11 or 18 and April 8 or 15.

- Julie: Just a reminder we have a retreat at Archbold Feb9-11.
- Miki: Has an agenda been put out?
- Juliet: Not yet, I am working on it.

- Julie: I made some suggestions for dates for our next GoToMeeting. Because we need to find candidates for all three council positions I think we will need two meetings. I have some suggestions for Sundays, March 11 or 18 and April 8 or 15th.
 - Miki: I vote for March 18 and April 15th.
 - Julie: Okay so the two later dates?
 - Kara: Can I suggest that we send out a Doodle Poll?
 - Julie: Yes I think that's a good idea
3. Nominating Committee. I will lead. 2 more members are needed. All representatives should look for good candidates as all positions must be voted on.
- Julie: Next business is a nominating committee. I can lead it because I am no longer eligible to be an officer. I would like two people to join with me and I would like suggestions from the chapters for officers for council of chapters. We have one or two possible candidates but we need as many as we can so we can do the best job we can.
 - Kara: This is Kara – I am willing to continue on as chair or vice chair or whatever capacity you need me too
 - Julie: Yes I have note of that but I need the nominating committee. Carol do you think you can help this time with the nominating committee?
 - Carol: No I can't help this time. I was on it the last time and now I have just taken a new part time job so I am not going to take on anything else right now.
4. Chapters: let's catch up!!
- a. Please, please submit your by-laws if you have not done so. This is a requirement to maintain our organizational status.
- Julie: Chapters need to submit your bylaws, it is very important that you get those submitted, its part of our requirements to maintain our nonprofit status.
- b. Submit your volunteer hours.
- Julie: Many chapters have not submitted volunteer hours
 - Juliet: I just want to point out I've posted a report to the forum with an overview for all the volunteer and education hours submitted for last year, over 47,000 hours. We had 23 chapters reporting and I also put some ideas for the annual retreat agenda, the three workshops we had been discussing in case anyone wants to look at that. That's great, maybe we will have you put that up on the screen in a little bit.
 - Miki: Where is that?
 - Juliet: its on the forum under this meeting
- c. Make sure someone from your chapter attends these meetings.
5. Our BOD is working hard to hire paid staff, change our accounting to Quick books and other organizational improvements. They are also looking a n FNPS wide initiative to obtain a grant: Gulf Research grant.
- Julie: Juliet do you want to talk about the Gulf Research grant?
 - Juliet: We are transitioning to QuickBooks online which is an online accounting system. It should greatly streamline the process, make it easier to make sure that we are making payments on time, and make it easier for more than just the treasurer to access. That will be a big improvement. We are also working on hiring paid staff. The board has approved the hiring of a full time executive director, but after the last meeting we had last Friday, we

are crunching the numbers and looking at what work needs to be done we are gonna be recommending that we hire someone else as well, so two full time positions. This Gulf Research grant has multiple components but the component we will be going for is under Education. We have proposed a number of different ideas at our brainstorming session over the past year. If we could come up with a good project or project that teach people about sustainability, the good neighbor handbook and a lot of the ideas Wendy Poag brought up would be an excellent fit. The minimum amount you apply for is \$75,000. It would definitely cover the hiring of staff, that would help because if we had a paid position to develop these programs and take a lot of the load off the chapters it would be nice if chapters didn't have to do all of the heavy lifting and organizing and so on and so forth. So that's what we are looking at right now.

6. New Business/ discussions

a. CoC Facebook page is being used: 5 minutes-positives and negatives??

- Julie: We always talk about communication. We have somethings going on right now that are helpful. We have noticed the Facebook page is being used quite a bit so I'd like to hear some feedback on that for those of who have used it, and is it helpful things that are good and things that are bad. Anybody use our Facebook page?
- Kara: I use it and I use it to post and/or share... I have mostly been using it to cross post stuff from the forum where no one is responding. Many people use Facebook more often than they use the forum. It is fairly accessible and user friendly. I would assume most people in this meeting do use Facebook. That says do we want to go down the list and get a feel for who is using Facebook.
- Tayler: I use the Facebook and it's good to see what other chapters are doing. Gail Parsons posts a lot about what's going on with her chapters. I am sure other people have some pros and cons too.
- Miki: I obviously get the point of the Facebook and I try to repost to my friend list whenever I can and the feedback on that has been pretty positive.
- Kara: We are trying to get a feel for the council group, have you been using that? Do you like it do you not like it? Is it effective for learning about what other chapters are using?
- Miki: I find it might not be using it that much, there's not a whole lot being put out there. But I am sure it can be effective.
- Julie: Anyone else use the council of chapters Facebook or at least look at it?
- Kara: As I said before I like how quickly we are able to... a lot of people post questions... we do seem to get feedback from each other in this group in an easy to understand way. Anyone who hasn't spoken yet please do.
- Juliet: The only comment I have is that a lot of the ideas for the workshops for the annual retreat have come from things that have been said on that Facebook page. It's a closed private page, so its only for people who were invited aside from a few board members its mostly all council members. It really is a forum for council members to bring up issues. Some of the issues that have come up are pretty serious. There was a chapter with a board member who I think was a convicted criminal. So the question came up is anybody doing any kind of review or background checks before they put them on the board? That kind of information is good not only for the chapters but for the society. There were also questions about insurance, another topic we will cover at the annual retreat, what is insured under our policy and what isn't? this will be covered at the retreat. Can chapters get extra

coverage through our insurance company? All these types of issues are really good to bring up and have been really helpful in creating the agenda for the annual retreat.

- Kara: I agree, I just wanna wrap this up. It seems a lot of people are using the Facebook page. I encourage everyone here to use the Facebook group to ask questions or share what's going on in your chapter. It's just another avenue of communication. The forum is available for us to use so you know just keep on posting. The thread about workshops is still active on the Facebook page so if you have any workshop ideas please let us know.

b. Communications improvements? Can we improve Go to Meeting attendance?

- Julie: How do we continue to improve and maintain communication?
- Carol: I have a suggestion to use a different format other than the GoToMeeting. I've been using Zoom for another not for profit organization for about four years for our monthly board meetings. Even our four day annual board meetings. I teach for that organization a 15 hour course all through Zoom to students all over the country. The audio and the video is so much better, with very few feedback issues. I highly recommend, Maybe Juliet I am not sure who would be in charge. it is easy to use, you would need to have a pro account in order to have meetings longer than 45 minutes. But you only need one of those, like FNPS could have one of the pro accounts. Everyone else just uses free accounts. Has an easy log in. I just find it so much easier than the GoToMeeting. You can have a number of people on screen at the same time and it just seems a lot more visitor friendly.
- Kara: That sounds like an excellent idea, I'm willing to test drive with you later tonight or on e-mail or on Facebook if you want, I have been trying to think of ways to have better software to have these meetings. I know feedback can be pretty awful on this. Among other things, perhaps having future webinars and future training sessions. I will contact you
- Carol to talk about it more
- Carol: You can also do break out rooms so people can do smaller projects and then go back to the main chat

c. Chapter Presidents/Reps info is easily available on the forum. To update send info to: info@fnps.org

- Julie: I have received some questions from time to time about not having emails and phone numbers and stuff. So, this is a reminder that all of you should have forum log ins and FNPS website log ins and passwords. From the FNPS website you have all of the chapter reps and presidents emails and phone numbers It is very easy to do, to update if you have a new chapter rep or president you simply email info@fnps.org. and they will update it. We do have that capability, it is there for you, you just have to reach out and get it.

d. Grants: How do state FNPS Grants work? Does your chapter give grants? How? (Gail Parsons)

- Kara: She was looking up to start a grant program for her chapter for a college student. I believe USF. Just to encourage them to come to Pascoe county and do a Semester long study on a native plant of some kind. I think she wanted feedback on was from other chapters, which chapters have a grant program that they give to students, what are their criteria and what makes the program successful and/or what has failed. So if anyone wants to continue this conversation we recommend reaching out to Gail Parsons to discuss this.

e. Workshops are being planned for February. One of which will involve computer use. Please bring your laptop/tablet. **We will do on hands work** on getting to the forum,

finding chapter info, entering volunteer hours, populating the speaker list, -- and(suggestions). This requires your chapter to bring this information with you to the Archbold retreat. We want to make sure all of us can use these tools to share and communicate.

- Julie: So for our retreat we are planning on a series of workshops, as well as our standard board meetings and our council of chapters meeting. Anne Cox is planning a membership workshop, and we also have space for one or two other workshops. Kara and I have been talking and computer issues always come up so one of our workshops will be computer softwares. **I am asking anyone who has one to bring a laptop or tablet.** We will teach you how to access the forum, website, and Facebook. We will review how to access the contact information for chapter reps and presidents, we will enter volunteer hours. **I am asking chapters to bring available speaker information so that we can populate our speaker's bureau.** So please bring your laptops. We want to make sure everyone knows how to use these tools. So if you have other suggestions, and Juliet if you want or Kara if you want to talk about some of the other things that maybe we might work on I would be happy to entertain it
- Kara: with regards to the software workshop, as of now we will be going over google docs, spreadsheets and forms, so that everyone knows how to create and edit docs. for those of us who aren't familiar with Facebook groups and the forum we will go over those things. If there are any other software tools that anyone is confused about let us know, I will make a forum/Facebook thread for that so that we know what we should address at the workshop. On that note we want everyone to know, Nicole and I created a new tab, folder in the council of chapters called "collaborative ideas". We have shared it on the Facebook page and on the forum. Everyone can go on there and ideas and upload stuff to share. So if you want to test drive this now before the meeting, feel free to upload those. We have a place to share presentations, and we have a general idea board. Try to mess around with it on your own. You cannot delete or mess anything up here. All the other sections are sealed off.
- Juliet: At the last meeting the council we talked about not making these totally editable. Editable means that things can be deleted. For board stuff we usually set the edit settings to comment only. someone could come in and add to it, you can set it to edit or comment. just something to keep in mind. When there's a lot of people editing a document, I like to change the settings to "can comment" so nothing gets accidentally erased.
- Kara: It's up to you guys whether we want comment only or have editing capabilities. We wanted to test drive with this before we start opening other things up
- Julie: I think it's a good idea and we just all have to get used to using it. We will practice getting in and out and posting at the workshop and hopefully we can share and communicate better
- Tayler: Do we have a link to the council of chapters office? I only have the link for the collaborative ideas folder.
- Juliet: Yeah, we sent the link for the council folder which is view only after the last meeting. We will have to send it out again for new people.
- Julie: Also Juliet, Kara and I talked yesterday about sending out a list of links like this for the various different things that we have to Facebook etc. And handing it out at the meeting. But we would like to post it on the forum somewhere or somewhere that you need to log in too.
- Juliet: Right so the forum is public. I'd have to talk to Shirley about that. I know she had added the link to the volunteer hour reporting form password protected on the website.

- Julie: If you don't download that email message then you go back to look for it and you can't find it. It needs a spot that's password protected with all of those links on it
- Kara: I was going to suggest that if we create this list of all of our links to our Facebook and forum etc., can we ensure that this is not just posted on those is also posted on the council website?
- Juliet: Well the council website is not password protected. The FNPS website has a log in. You would have to log in here on the FNPS website is what I am saying.
- Julie: The council website is public, so you don't want that stuff there

f. What do chapters need? Problems? Solutions? Future Working sessions?

- Kara: If anyone has any issues that they need to bring forward let us know, I'll write it down for our next meeting or we can talk about it now. You can also post it on the Facebook page or the forum, both during our COC meeting and elsewhere. So that we can work together to further our own chapters and the society as whole.
- Nicole: I just want to make sure I ask this before we end the meeting. Is there anybody who is on the phone who is not online?
- Diana: Diana Wentick from the Cocoplum chapter
- Jaya: I am on the phone. From Big Bend. I hope you can change GTM it does not ever work for me
- Julie: Thanks for those comments
- Kara: Last thing I'd like to put the seed out there for two items. First thing is that Julie and I have discussed the possibility of workshops, we have workshops coming up in the February retreat and the upcoming conference in May. There have been several issues put forward both on the council Facebook page and on the forum, there have been demands for other workshops that we will not be able to address in person. I am proposing trying to put together webinars for these trainings for the different chapters. I am still trying to feel this out, if there is any interest in assisting me with this process I encourage you all to e-mail me or let me know via Facebook.
- Julie: It's a good idea and some of the stuff could be kept as something that could be open, lots of possibilities for this webinars for new treasurers and how to fill out those state tax forms and when they are do, how to get a license for plant sales, some of it could go in the wiki but some of it would be good as a webinar. So we are definitely open for suggestions. People could join them actively or or review them after.
- Kara: Yes Nicole suggested we have some sort of workshop repository or index such as on YouTube or maybe on the forum where we could save old workshops/training sessions.
- Carol, on Zoom can you record the sessions?
- Carol: You do have the option and you can save it to your computer or save it to the cloud as an mp4.
- Kara: I am very interesting in working with you on moving towards Zoom sounds like an excellent option to learn from each other so thank you. My last thing is – speaking on education – Juliet can you give us an update on the education committee?
- Juliet: Yes since we lost the education chair nothing has really happened. We need an education chair. Anne Cox just let us know she is stepping down in May from membership

committee. We have two board positions opening in May, VP of finance and one director at large. So its getting tough.

- Kara: That means if anyone is interested in fulfilling these duties please let us know. I personally am interested in the education committee which would go right along with this webinar stuff. So if anyone present is interested in helping with this – so please if you are interested in this stuff or if you have a background in education I welcome your comments in this
- Julie: and please go to your chapters, there may be someone in your chapter who would really shine at any of these positions that are going to be open. Especially education. The council of chapters welcomes all the members of the various chapters in helping to get our job done and the mission of the FNPS, which includes fulfilling all of these positions. Don't feel it's all on you or your president. There may be someone in your chapter interested in getting involved.
- Juliet: Tayler says she would like to assist more in any way she can. Yay Tayler!
- Julie: Tayler are you interested in being a candidate for the secretary?
- Tayler: Yes I have been thinking about it and talking with Kara about it more
- Julie: Well thank you for thinking about it. We don't need a decision now we are still looking but we now know you are interested. It's not the biggest job in the world just requires attention to timing. It's two years and then its somebody else's turn. We thank all of you for thinking about it and sharing with your chapters. Nobody else has anything to say I think we should close the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25