



**Florida Native Plant Society**  
Council of Chapters Meeting 02/10/18 Minutes  
Created on 03/06/18 by Nicole Zampieri  
2018 Annual Retreat at Archbold Biological Station

Julie Becker called the meeting to order at 3:25.

**In attendance (27)**

Nicole Zampieri – Council Secretary (Magnolia)	Pat Burgos (Lake Beautyberry)
Kara Driscoll – Council Vice Chair (Naples)	Susan Knapp (Passionflower)
Julie Becker – Interim Council Chair (Tarflower)	Jon Pospisil (Passionflower)
Athena Philips (Citrus)	Sonya Guidry (Pawpaw)
Ryan Scofield (Coccoloba)	Karen Walter (Pawpaw)
Dianna Wentink (Cocoplum)	Sandi Saurers (Paynes Prairie)
Peter Grannis (Cocoplum)	Tayler Figueroa (Pine Lily)
Martha Steuart (Conradina)	Jan Allyn (Pinellas)
Kim Zarillo (Conradina)	Jeannie Brodhead (Sarracenia)
David Martin (Eugenia)	David Roddenberry (Sarracenia)
Mikel Renner (Hernando)	Judith Zinn (Sea Oats)
Linda Schneider (Ixia)	Virginia Overstreet (Suncoast)
Wendy Poag (Lake Beautyberry)	Ina Crawford (Sweetbay)
	Maran Hilgendorf (Sabal Minor Editor)
	Cammie Donaldson (FNPS Admin)

1. Welcome

- Julie: This will be a basic council of chapters meeting, nothing too official. Thank you everyone for coming.

2. Approve previous minutes

- Julie: We do need to approve the previous minutes. Do I hear a motion to approve the minutes of the last GoToMeeting?
- Sandi: I move we approve the minutes of the last GoToMeeting.
- Kara: Seconded
- The motion passed.

3. Nominating Committee/ nominees

- Julie: We do need new officers before the conference so that we can install them at the conference. We have previously done online voting before the conference, which does seem comfortable for everybody. We do need some nominees. I am the only member currently of the nominating

committee. It would be nice to have a partner. We have one good nominee. Kara is willing to be our nominee for Chair or Vice Chair. We need a secretary and we need an opposite chair or vice chair. It would be nice if there were more people who were interested in fulfilling these rolls. If someone is interested, please see me after the meeting! Otherwise I will be calling you and I don't mean that as a threat, but to individually talk to you about whether you would fit or would to fulfill one of those roles and take an active role in making the council of chapters a more interactive and helpful unit of the Florida Native Plant Society. We have done some online stuff and worked on different things, lots of different things we could do to help us talk to each other and share our projects, maybe having things like using the good neighbor handbook as a format to reach out to less than suburban urban people, I thought that was a wonderful way to approach the native plant message to all types of members of populations of Florida, whether agricultural or rural or cows or have a lot of acres aside from having your yards or urban parks or whatever. Please seriously consider doing that because I think we are about to become a very active group.

#### 4. Chair reports - Other committees.

- Kara: Brief chair report from the committees at the state level. I don't think a lot of us at the council have really heard about what the committees are doing at the state level. And by the way, committees are open to chapter reps, presidents and members participating in these meetings. So, if you are interested in any of the ones that I mention please reach out to committee chairs about participating. The first major course of action, the communications chair Shirley Denton needs help with website stuff. If anyone is interested in helping her with what she needs done please reach out to her.
- Maran (Sabal Minor editor): She had mentioned that she was looking to have someone help the chapters with their websites
- Jan Allyn: I will help with that
- Kara: The conservation committee has a latest update with the Warea project. They met last October 14th to formulate a strategy to acquire and preserve the property, that support large populations of the federally endangered Warea amplexifolia and another Warea species.
- Julie: The property is in central FL on the edge of Orange and Lake Co. (or Marion Co.?)
- Kara: The project is to start purchasing and acquiring land for that area, they put in the memorandum of understanding between FNPS and the public land conservancy trying to start mapping locations of sand skinks, an endangered species. The sandhill rescue, which volunteers from over 10 sites volunteered for, was from a very good looking sandhill site with some awesome elements and rare plants, they dug up over 4800 plants which they are currently hardening off with Green Isle Gardens in central Florida and then soon they will be replanted to restore areas nearby.
- Julie: Some have been planted at Lake Louise and some in Oakland.
- Carol: Some at Lake Apopka Northshore
- Kara: They are doing seed collection and they are preparing to list a few species of Asclepias including Asclepias feayi and Asclepias incarnata. If you want to participate in the conservation committee feel free to contact Juliet Rynear.
- Kara: Membership committee is trying to extend what we did in the workshop earlier, where we are trying to figure out how to build a sense of community and build up membership. she is continuing to work on membership, she is looking to step down so the membership committee is looking for a new chair.
- Kara: Policy had the Florida Forever legislator field trip challenge last year and they are going to try to do it again. Beyond working on Florida Forever program and trying to get that refunded again because we want to have the guaranteed \$100 million put aside to purchase conservation lands. They are also working on other legislative actions. One thing is they are coordinating with a representative of the FL nursery growers and landscape association to secure funding through the budget process

that would support and help reconstitute the palm team where they are studying rare palms. Bunch of researches are starting to retire and there is nobody coming up to replace them. Kind of speaks to the problem of wheres the next generation coming in. They are trying to find funding to hire new researchers to keep on with that. The committee is continuing to track the review process for the proposed limited access highway potentially going through Split Oak Forest, there are indications that the continuing opposition to the route has resulted in an alternative route almost completely excludes Split Oak. Also planning a petition to add boston fern and heavenly bamboo to the noxious weed list.

- Kara: the VP of admin posted his job description for the executive director that we are going to be hiring. Looks awesome.
- Kara: Land management partners: Wendy do you have anything to add land management stuff been done?
- Wendy: I don't know what Ray has on his agenda. I know this year many have been vacant. We are not at 100% coverage like we used to be I think it was 88% last year. If you have the ability to do a land management review or you have done one and can take someone under your wing to share the process this is part of handing the torch over. Just because you have done it for 12 years and are feeling done you need to share some of that.
- Julie: a lot of people in the chapters that's what they do – find out who they are If you don't know them and get them to train new people. It has been a long time since we have had 100% coverage and we want to get back to that.
- Anne: It's on the website – go down to the bottom of the webpage and click on Land Management Partners. One page is information the other is a list. It brings up a map. All the remaining reviews are still on there with little flags. It doesn't have the reviewers on there but if you click on your interest it goes straight to Ray and you can sign up. It is on the bottom of the webpage under committees.
- Julie: If you are interested and haven't done one before you can go as an observer
- Kara: Also, Ray, Land Management Committee Chair is interested in stepping down, he says he is not as active as he should be. His contact information should be on the website if you or anyone you know is interested.
- Sandi: Was there a landscape committee report?
- Nicole: They suggested we remove the fee for entering the contest
- Wendy: I think they were looking to lump together the two categories, industrial and commercial categories and eliminating fees for application because potentially that fee just to apply is discouraging.
- Athena: Yeah I was gonna post about that on Facebook I wanted to apply and voted against it because of the fee. So, seems valid.

#### 5. Go to Meeting dates March 12 or 19/April 16 or 23???

- Kara: So next on the agenda is the upcoming meeting dates of March 12 or 19 and April 16 or 23. Anyone have any thoughts on that? Any dates that aren't gonna work well?
- Tayler: Can we skip the April meeting? That's around earth day so there is gonna be a lot of events and things going on.
- Julie: We need to have one because we need to nominate people and schedule a vote before the conference. So, if we can get it done in March we won't need it in April. If we can get the online vote we can eliminate the April meeting.
- Nicole: we will set one up tentatively for April
- Kara: We can send out a Doodle Poll to get some feedback on the dates.
- Julie: We will choose the best date in general for those meetings.

6. Evaluate today's Workshops, respond to other surveys sent. What do Chapters need?? Kara has sent out/will send out google forms to fill out, please let us know your needs, otherwise we cannot help.
- Kara: Next item on the agenda. I apologize today has been very flexible and we have had to adapt. Next is to remind you guys, your homework for the day is to fill out the Google Form we send out via e-mail. Juliet has sent it out to you. I've also included questions about your chapters, are you having any problems or if you want something to be addressed at the next meeting or if you have any pressing issues we need to address together let us know so that we can take concrete steps to start working together to carry out the FNPS minutes.
  - Susan: Where are we supposed to fill out your chapter report? I saw Julie asked for us to post a chapter rep.
  - Julie: On the forum, when we post the meeting announcement, on the forum, under council of chapters, and then it says meetings, and then you post your chapter report there. You reply to the thread.
  - Kara: You can respond to the thread, or attach a document, whatever is convenient to you.
  - Virginia: So, there is no official report?
  - Nicole: No, it is just a summary of what's going on in your chapter
  - Kara: with regards to the Forum, when I am posting a report on the forum I am trying to share the link on the Facebook so that it gets out. So, if we are about to have a council meeting, in order to minimize 50 different discussions between all the different chapters try to share across the different platforms. I am trying to build communication between the council
    - -Future workshops and Webinar suggestions?
  - Kara: on the form Juliet sent out there is an option to request future workshops. And let me know if anyone wants to help me out!
  - Athena: We were talking earlier about youth engagement and the YouTube channel, but I certainly can't put together a video, so maybe a webinar on how to create a video.
  - Kara: Additionally, if you didn't bring something to fill out that form come talk to me and I will write that down for you.

## 7. New Business

### a. Hands-on follow up: Facebook, GoToMeeting

- Kara: Following up on using Facebook from our earlier workshop. We are trying to get more people to use the Facebook page. It is great for quick communication. If you are not a part of the Facebook group please let Tayler know. I also know that some people just don't like Facebook and don't want to use Facebook period. If you are not or cannot or do not want to use Facebook please let me know because I want to know what's the best way to communicate with you
- Tayler: I mentioned earlier, I got form the society contacts who are the directors at large etc., secretary, council... things like that, I have some gaps of people who I don't have on the Facebook, so sometime today I will be trying to find you and ask you if you have a different preferred method or if you want help creating a Facebook, so I will try and find you.
- Kara: With Facebook, it is just another channel of communication, a way to grease the wheels to talk about stuff that shouldn't be in the council meeting agenda. It's a lot easier when we can talk about minor issues
- Nicole: Sometimes to people will request to have a topic discussed in the council meetings, that I don't think should be on the agenda. These are like really small things, sometimes people just want feedback on an idea... these little things are great to discuss on the Facebook page instead of wasting time in our council meeting hosting a discussion that only benefits one person. It is better for smaller topics.

- Kara: Alternatively too, use the Google Docs! Share documents and get feedback directly that way. Just another tool.
- Wendy: For example, I posted on the forum about Grants and got no response. So we cross posted this idea on the Facebook, and said somebody please answer Wendy. We discussed how chapters are handling grants, for schools or students etc., we got a good response but it still is not resolved. Do we have a template? Shouldn't there be consensus about this?
- Julie: I agree with you but we don't have a thing. We need people to work on that.
- Wendy: so what's the best way? Is it a Google Doc?
- Kara: Yes. We have a section on grants.
- Nicole: I posted what magnolia chapter does for our grants. There is a folder in the google Drive called grants. That is a good place to discuss grants.
- Julie: Athena brought us her chapter's "new member packets" that include a couple of small grants from citrus chapter. It's got the forms and instructions and guidelines and everything.
- Wendy: Can we copy that?
- Kara: Athena, if you could actually upload those grants to the google drive that would be super helpful.
- Julie: So let's add that to the homework. Then maybe next GoToMeeting we can discuss this is what we are gonna adopt.
- Maran: I have managed several grant programs and I wanted to say I don't think there should be consensus on the grants because all the school districts may be different. Some school districts may be all for it and supportive, but you may just be setting yourself up for defeat. I had used an online survey tool that I used within the website and I just did an online form because not everyone can fill out a PDF. But everyone can fill out an online form. You can use Google Forms.
- Wendy: If we had a template, quick and easy would be great. And then each chapter could edit for specific needs.
- Athena: I can put comments on why we did certain things. Right now our big grant is \$300, but we don't want anything larger that the board can't handle. Right now we want smaller projects to start out with. I can make a comment explaining why
- Julie: Sure and the money part is certainly changeable
- Wendy: As FNPS, each chapter is representative of the state, the quality, you want to put forth a good image and you want it to be professional. that's why I think we should have a standard
- Nicole: Magnolia chapter copied the society level grants, and just changed it to be on a smaller level but we copied the formatting and the text directly.
- Kim: Do you give to institutions or individuals?
- Nicole: We have one grant that we are starting this year that we want to give to individuals or institutions.
- Kim: If you give to an individual and its more than \$600 you have to give them a 1099 tax form
- Nicole: We have a grant committee that handles it
- Athena: On what Nicole said about little items that don't necessarily need to be on the agenda... our chapter is doing a demo garden and we wanted to find out if anyone has a written agreement for their demo garden we would love to hear how you did that. We have a long-established garden at a preserve but they had a changeover in staff and they actually asked us to come and remove it.
- Sonya: Pawpaw chapter maintains a native garden in exchange for meeting room fee replacement. Once a month we go to the park and we weed for two or three hours and we replace plants.
- Athena: Do you have a written agreement?
- Sonya: We have an agreement surely but it's verbal. Kevin our former president moved away but he made the arrangement originally. And we report the number of hours that we work there.

- Athena: I know a lot of chapters have business members. If anyone has tips on developing business memberships we would appreciate it
- Cammie: I have a tip for you- what I have observed is the chapters that have plant sales with native nurseries that require the nurseries be business members have business members. If you don't require them to be members, you are missing an opportunity to force them into that relationship.
- Jan: We put business cards from our sponsors and we also put their chapter websites on our website and a slideshow of their business cards at our meetings.
- Patricia: Are business members nurseries? Or is it a variety?
- Jan: we have a variety, we have a landscape company, a guy that installs ponds, a real estate company, a local B&B, an architect who designed a nature center. We have 9 members.
- Patricia: Okay great I just wanted ideas
- Jan: Invite everyone in your membership to become business members. You may have members who are small business owners and you don't even know that
- Kara: Is anyone confused on how to use GoToMeeting? We have been experiencing a lot of feedback lately. The only thing that I can suggest is that if you've got a set of earbuds, they usually have a built-in microphone. When your phone is on speaker, it is broadcasting the sound the microphone is picking it up and then it creates a feedback loop. No one should be using a phone on speaker.
- Nicole: The earbuds that come with your smartphone come with a microphone
- Athena: One thing I noticed in the last meeting was that neither of the emails had the audio pin to get sound. Was that a mistake?
- Miki: Every one of these meetings it is constantly stated to mute yourself – why are people not getting it? Why are people not doing it? It seems to me there is something else going on.
- Jan: Even if you are speaking you've got the feedback loop going, if you've got the speaker on and you are speaking, your voice is coming back through the speaker and getting picked up by the microphone. That's why you need to use the headphones. That way your speaker cannot hear your speaker or your phone.
- Cammie: I have been doing this for years and I have to say the best way to do it is using headphones and calling in on your phone.
- Jan: Use earbuds! You can do it on the computer but just use earbuds!
- Tayler: I am wondering if there might be something else going on – every time Kara I heard feedback. Every time Julie spoke I heard feedback.
- Kara: One thing that was brought up in the meeting was possible switching over to using Zoom instead of GoToMeeting. It is super easy to use and download. But what I think is more important especially to all of us here, is that I think most of us would like to be face to face. On Zoom you can use video and you can have like very many videos at one time. It did have better audio quality but it was kind of negligible. Juliet did say it was cheaper overall for us but it's like comparing apples to apples.
- Julie: You can video chat on GoToMeeting but I'm not sure if on Sunday night people are gonna want to be showing themselves on video. It might be better in terms of comradery it might be better to see each other.
- Athena: We have done a meeting with video before.
- Miki: I just want to get clarifications I use headphones but I use the mic on the computer. Is that picking up feedback?
- Kara: It is hard to tell. It could be
- Nicole: Are you sure that your headphones don't have a microphone?

b. Governance follow up: credit card swipe, vetting members

- Kara: The last thing we wanted to talk about was vetting board members. Gail Tayler shared with us that her local Audubon chapter had someone on their board who was convicted of child pornography or something like that. He ended up having to be extradited from the state. So we wanted to cover how to prevent this from happening with any of our FNPS chapters. I know that Naples chapter, prior to me and my current president, had over \$20,000 was stolen out of our bank account. And we are still indicting him on that. It begs the questions, how to vet members for nonprofits? I have posted a couple of links under chapter management and admin in the google drive called nonprofit governance and resources. There are a couple of things on there about vetting members but nothing too detailed. Some things suggest adding a job description, doing job interviews. will the candidate have the ability to exert undue influence other board members? Does the candidate serve on another nonprofit or organization with a mission similar to yours?
- Julie: They're vetting for is he gonna do a good job in the job that you are recruiting for? One thing is that many counties have lists of sexual predators. So if you are really worried, you need to find out if your county has one but you should look up your new incoming board members. I don't know how you vet for other criminal activities.
- Athena: This wouldn't apply to someone who has never been convicted – but I was wondering if this was something to do at the society level, because businesses can buy a certain amount of background checks for a lump sum. Every time we have an election then we could put forward the names of our nominees.
- Kara: Do you think we should try to approach the board with developing a protocol about vetting board members? Do you think we should bring this up in the upcoming board members?
- Wendy: I know as a mentor at my school we have to do background checks and fingerprints. If that's our goal, we may have to go that step further as well to protect younger people.
- Julie: There's laws for people who are interacting with children at any frequency. My husband works for the diocese in Orlando and anyone who is teaching children, if you have children bible study or something you cannot teach unless you've been fingerprinted
- Jon: I think Athena's idea of getting some kind of corporate discount at the society level for background checks is something worth pursuing.
- Kara: I think that sounds like a good idea especially for positions like treasurer. I know that we currently have something in place like two people need to sign the check and a third person has access to the bank account
- Tayler: Maybe at the very least having someone fill out like a job application type of thing and having professional references just like you would
- Julie: A lot of job applications even ask have you ever been convicted?
- Nicole: But are we allowed to ask that?
- Cammie: Yes you are allowed to ask
- Nicole: But are they allowed to lie to us?
- Cammie: No they are not. But nothing we can do about that.
- Kim: When you file your FDACS application you have to say that these board members have not been convicted of a crime and you certify that when you file your application. And you are supposed to have board members sign a conflict of interest. You should have board; the conflict of interest includes a statement on not ever being convicted. It is one thing to do a background checks. a lot of times those white-collar crimes don't even show up.
- Kara: Anything else before we adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 4:19