



Florida Native Plant Society

Council of Chapters Meeting Minutes 07/24/2022

Online Zoom Meeting

taken by Melanie Simon – CoC Chair

Melanie Simon called the meeting to order at 06:34 PM

In attendance (17) – 13 of 33 Chapters

*** indicates proxy or guest**

Citrus – Jeffrey Bippert
Coccoloba – Lucy Breitung
Heartland – Greg Thomas
Ixia – Cate Hurlbut
Ixia – Ginny Stibolt*
Longleaf Pine – Kimee Bremmer
Longleaf Pine – Josh Teyler*
Martin County – Dianna Wentink
Naples – Sara Dust

Passionflower – Melanie Simon - **Chair**
Pawpaw – Susan Anderson
Pine Lily – Tayler Figueroa
Pinellas – David Perkey
Sparkleberry - Carol Sullivan
Suncoast - Tina Patterson
Guest - Gail Taylor*
FNPS Exec. Director – Lynda Davis*

Note that a couple of important action items and requests for participation have been highlighted below.

Regular Agenda Items

- **Minutes from 6/26/22 meeting**
 - Cate H. motioned to approve the May 26, 2022 meeting minutes. David P. seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- **Next Meeting August 28th 6:30pm**

News/Announcements/New Items

- **FNPS Membership Database**
 - Lynda D. reported that changes are being made to the Membership Database to make it easier to use. Target completion is September, and there will be videos to help navigate changes.
- **2023 FNPS Budget**
 - Lynda D. noted that work will be starting on the 2023 budget. Asking for budgetary requests by the end of September. Lynda will be available in mid-September for questions and discussion.
 - Kimberly B. asked about the brochure printing budget. Melanie S. responded that this will be on the agenda for the next Council meeting – we will use this year's spending as a baseline and adjust. Melanie will also check with the Education Committee about any new brochures anticipated to be available for next year.

- **License Plate**

- Lynda D. announced the Board has made the difficult decision to end the license plate voucher project. Sales have been very slow, and the feeling is that to increase sales people would have to be fully on board with the look and language on the plate, which can't immediately be changed.
- *Chapters are asked to remove license plate graphics and links from their websites, social media, etc. and to not display/distribute any materials at their events.*

- **FNPS Conservation Action Alerts**

- Melanie noted that there is not a request link on the FNPS website for Conservation Action Alerts. Someone in each chapter should request these alerts so they can be passed on to chapter members in emails and newsletters. Request link is:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe1j3byAopgneC85DGUNoEJkuh9vBSESLRB6fqNXebEA_eOQQ/viewform?usp=sf_link.

- **Gardens on the Website**

- Melanie thanked chapters who are stepping up to correct/remove/add native plant garden information from the FNPS website. A new form to make adding garden listing easier (and make sure the needed information is provided) is linked on the Council website home page.

- **Membership Brochure Printing**

- Membership brochures have just been shipped to FNPS Administration, who will distribute to chapters based on earlier requests. Unlike the educational brochures, extra membership brochures were ordered and can be requested by emailing info@fnps.org.

- **Volunteer Hours Reporting**

- Melanie noted that the value of a volunteer hour in Florida has increased from \$26.32 to \$27.68.

- **Chapter Bylaws**

- Lucy B. asked about how the new State Bylaw affects Chapter bylaws and noted that Coccoloba has just updated their bylaws and is unclear about getting State approval.
 - Model Chapter bylaws are hard to find. After the meeting Melanie looked for them and found them under the Handbook/Society Governance/FNPS Policies on the FNPS website.
 - Melanie noted the new State bylaws are not yet on the website. Lynda said that the new Board Governance Committee will be updating the Handbook, model chapter bylaws, and other related reference/resources.
 - Both Lucy and Tayler F. (in chat) noted the lack of anything about a quorum in Chapter bylaws.
- Until further notice, revised bylaws should be emailed to executivedirector@fnps.org.

- **Memorandum of Understanding**

- Lucy B. asked whether State review of Coccoloba's Memorandums of Understanding is needed.
- *Lynda will follow up on MOU review requirements.*

- **Plant Common Names on Website**

- Lucy noted there is no way to find the common plant names on the website. It was noted that they are in the Native Plant Database, but the search function by common name does not work and it is believed this is something that is being worked on.
- *Melanie will follow up on the plant database revision timeline.*

2023 Annual Conference

- **2023 Annual Conference Format**

- Ginny S. reported that the Conference Committee has decided on a hybrid format for 2023. Speakers/presentations will be virtual (organized by FNPS as in 2022) for state-wide participation, with several regional in-person gatherings (organized by Chapters with FNPS help) in addition.
- Tentatively thinking the virtual part of the conference on the last weekend in April and the in-person gatherings on weekends in May.

- **In-Person Gatherings**

- In-person gatherings are envisioned as one-day events hosted by Chapters.
- In-person gatherings will be held on different weekends (after or before the virtual conference weekend). Different weekends will allow people to attend more than one in-person gathering.
- People would register (and pay) for the virtual and in-person gatherings separately.
- In-person gatherings should accommodate about 100 participants - will require planning for parking, restrooms, meeting halls, etc. to accommodate this number.
- Gatherings could involve several field trips in the morning, lunch (food truck?), plant sale/vendors/workshops/silent auction or other activities in the afternoon, and a social in the evening. Format and activities are up to the hosting chapter(s) based on available venues and resources.

- **Host Chapter Volunteers Needed**

- Local chapters (single chapters or regional collaborations) are needed to host the in-person gatherings – target is at least two of these in different parts of the State.
- Hosting chapters would garner a lot of publicity within FNPS and in their areas and could use these gathering for fundraising.
- A letter asking for chapters to volunteer to host in person event will be sent out in a week or so.
- *If your Chapter is interested (even if only in finding out more and asking questions) contact Valerie at communications@fnps.org.*

Initiatives/Ongoing Business

- **Council Survey Results**

- Melanie noted that the survey results have been updated (now includes responses from all chapters) and are posted on the website. Additions did not affect overall results. Will be using this as a road map for things the Council should focus on/address.

- **New Member Packages**

- Melanie reported that the New Member Package committee met and assigned pages for review/editing. Plan to regroup in August to assess where we are with drafts. Once drafts are completed all Chapter Reps (and other members) will be invited to review.
- Volunteers are still needed to write/review/edit three pages:
 - Getting Started (planting zones, sun and moisture requirements, spacing, establishing plants, etc.)
 - Plant ID/Plant ID apps
 - Conservation Issues (what are some issues for Florida, how does FNPS address these, what can chapters do?)
- *If you have expertise in any of these area and can do a 1-page write-up contact msimon@fnps.org.*

- **Publicity and Outreach Workshop**

- *Workshop has been scheduled for 2pm to 5pm on Saturday, August 13 on Zoom. Chapters can send multiple people and should invite their communications/social media/outreach persons to save the date.*
- Invitations/links will be sent out next week.
- Workshop will be recorded for those who cannot attend in person.
- Focus will be on social media – working smarter not harder. Will include how to get Facebook fans to join, get involved with the chapter, using Facebook tools and stats. Objective is to give Chapters ideas for easy ways to attract attention to their chapters (and the State), share content, and make a bigger impression on Facebook – to keep things simple and engaging.
- After Ginny’s presentation, attendees will move into breakout rooms for further discussion.
 - The number and topics for breakout rooms is still being determined.
 - Ideas were shared for breakout room topics and resources.
- *Moderators/note takers are needed for each Breakout Room. Email msimon@fnps.org if you can help.*

- **Council Vice Chair and Secretary Vacancies**

- Melanie pointed out that the Council Vice Chair and Secretary positions are still vacant and she is challenged filling all those roles by herself.
- Melanie shared the duties for these positions in the Handbook.
 - Vice Chair backs up the Chair and does Chapter Rep. orientation and training.
 - Most of the Secretary duties are “behind the scenes” computer work. Melanie will train.
- *Please help - volunteer to serve in one of these positions, nominate someone else for Melanie to talk to, or just help run Zoom meetings or do the minutes for one meeting (easy since we are recording).*

Open Floor/Other Items

- **Education Brochures**

- Kimee B. is looking for more Mow Less brochures. No “extra” brochures were printed.
- *Melanie will check on getting a higher-resolution file that can be printed.*

- **Muni Codes**

- Muni codes were discussed at the last meeting and a link was provided in the 6/26 minutes. However, Gail T. pointed out that the Citrus County landscape codes are not in the Muni codes she needed Patricia’s help to find them.
- Suggested that Patricia B. could provide more instruction to help if other chapters are having trouble finding their County information.

Motion to Adjourn

Lucy B. motioned to adjourn. Gail T. seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:52 PM