



Florida Native Plant Society

Council of Chapters Meeting Minutes 1/26/25 Online

Zoom Meeting taken by

Tiffany Duke – Secretary

Melanie Simon called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM

In attendance (31) – 25 of 32 Chapters

*** indicates proxy or guest**

Broward County - Tiffany Duke – **Secretary**

Citrus – Gail Taylor*

Dade - Riki Bonnema

Eugenia – David Martin

Heartland – Gregory Thomas

Hernando - Janet Grabowski

Hernando - Jason LaRoche*

Ixia – Cate Hurlbut

Lake Beautyberry – Tina Mertz

Longleaf Pine – Kimberley Bremner

Magnolia – Maddie Snuggs

Mangrove – Linda Wilson

Martin County – Dianna Wentink

Nature Coast - Diane Caruso

Palm Beach County – Rebekah Kaufman

Passionflower – Melanie Simon – **Chair**

Pawpaw – Karen Walter

Pawpaw – Amy Legare*

Pawpaw - Barbara Davis*

Pawpaw - Lisa DiNicolo*

Paynes Prairie - Sandi Saurers

Pine Lily – Dana Sussmann

Pinellas – David Perkey

Sarracenia – Lynn Artz

Sea Rocket - Elizabeth Bishop

Serenoa – Trent Berry

Suncoast - Merrilee Wallbrunn

Sweetbay - Jody Wood-Putnam

The Villages – Bob Keyes

Ann Redmond* – **VP for Finance**

Melissa Fernandez-de Cespedes* –

Executive Director

Regular Agenda Items

- **Minutes from 11/24/24 meeting** o Rebekah K. motioned to approve the November 2024 meeting minutes. Karen W. seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Next Meetings will focus on challenges:** Leadership challenges **February 23, 2025 at 6:30 pm.**
Speakers/Programs **March 23, 2025 at 6:30 pm;** Full Council Meeting **April 27, 2025 at 6:30 pm.**

News/Announcements/Reminders

- Welcome Merrilee Wallbrunn – Suncoast Chapter Rep; Linda Wilson – Mangrove Chapter Rep
- Updated Chapter Representative List - attached
- January Chapter Support Documents –
 - Schedule a meeting with Cherice at <https://calendly.com/csmithers-fnps/30min>
 - 2025 volunteer hours and insurance waiver instructions (including where to upload 2025 waivers) on the membership database site
- Chapter Payment Request - <https://forms.gle/Ak6fyHKTtFNR4AtS9>
 - Some Chapter Reps did not get the form or were not able to access it. Melissa will resend
 - Date choices at the beginning were confusing, but have been removed. The form should be completed as soon as possible.
 - Melissa explained that payments are distributed at the end of February or early March and that the form is required to get payment. She emphasized the need for chapters to be up-to-date with their files to ensure legal transfer of funds.
 - Form will be challenging for some Chapter Reps as they do not have access to some of the information requested (such as bank account numbers or whether filings are up to date) or the information asked for is not something Chapter Representatives usually track. Melissa clarified that the form was intended for whoever usually submits the payment requests.
 - Form asks for the number of plant sales, programs, etc. which is reported in the volunteer hours.
 - Form asks for the number of acres of natural land the chapter assists in managing, restoring and/or preserving. While chapters have workdays at conservation properties (plant surveys, invasive removals, rescue planting - all reported under Habitat Restoration) they may only work on a small area. Melissa said this counts.
 - The form will be used for an annual report, in addition to Chapter payments.
 - Trent asked how is the Chapter payment calculated? Melissa said Chapter payments are 26% of membership dues of Chapter per the Bylaws
- **Conference Scholarships**
Melissa invited GA Native Plant Society – any chapter can support a GNPS student member to attend FNPS Annual Conference – just let Melissa know if interested
- **February Support Documents** – Melissa will send email, will include new links
- **National Invasive Species Awareness Week** –
links to different organizations participating across the state
feel free to share any activities with Melissa
- **Council meeting days/times poll**– will remain 4th Sunday 6:30 pm – not enough participation in survey to determine new date/time – tabled for now

Initiatives/Updates

- **Chapter Challenges committees –**

- Leadership challenges **February 23, 2025 at 6:30 pm**
- Speakers/Programs **March 23, 2025 at 6:30 pm**
- Tiffany D. to send meeting invites to all Chapter Reps
- see information on the challenges at
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fZsdEWpLXiiqCWY47AVxWNGKbFmU-tJo/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=104935037195742853903&rtpof=true&sd=true>

- **License Frame Fundraising**

- Project was to fundraise for brochure printing - there is no printing budget for 2025
- Website for pre-sale shut down by State
 - Accounting does not want to deal with sales tax
 - Suggested frames be characterized as donation to avoid sales tax, but pricing would have to be \$25 or \$66 per frame – too high but would avoid sales tax
 - Suggested Chapters “step up” to handle frame sales themselves
- Chapters can pay for printing on their own – Connect with Cherice for printers
- Frame Interest poll: 4 chapters not interested, 18 chapters interested and 9 did not respond – total from interested Chapters was 635 frames - not enough to get quantity discount
- Fundraising project is on hold for now - frames will not be distributed at the conference
- Moving forward:
 - No discounted sales to Chapters - makes accounting too complicated and getting brochures and shipping paid for should be reward enough
 - No sales to individuals - all sales will be through Chapters
 - Will have to come up with a different shipping/distribution strategy

- **Brochure Printing**

- Chapters can pay for printing on their own
 - Past year costs shown on table below, but costs are likely to be higher for smaller print quantities

BROCHURE PRINTING COSTS	2024	2023	2022
Publication	Unit Cost	Unit Cost	Unit Cost
Good Citizen Guide - Gatefold	\$0.43	\$0.41	\$0.37
Good Citizen Guide - Insert	\$0.21	\$0.16	\$0.21
Homeowners Guide - English	\$0.23	\$0.26	\$0.23
Homeowners Guide - Spanish	\$0.23	\$0.26	\$0.23
Native Landscaping Brochure	\$0.70	\$0.67	\$0.73
Membership Brochure - English	\$0.15	\$0.14	\$0.21
Membership Brochure - Spanish	\$0.31	\$0.24	n/a

- Chapters need to respond to poll about brochure requests so needs can be assessed
 - <https://forms.gle/doq2RQTgMThQs2JY7>

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- Once brochure needs are known, Cherice can coordinate with printers
- Melanie S. noted that finding a sponsor is an alternative to cover costs
- Raised question: What has changed with the printing budget?
 - Melissa – inflation, higher costs, but membership dues remain same price (currently \$35), challenging conversation to navigate increasing dues
- Concern expressed about having handouts for outreach events and education programs
- Move to have brochures in digital format on website
 - Fundraising was to also cover graphic design costs to convert some of the large-format brochures to digital formats
- **Conference: Council and Chapters Get-Togethers (poll)**
 - Poll on Conference Attendance - 25 responses
 - 7 not attending
 - 14 attending and will be in Gainesville on Thursday
 - 4 undecided
- **4/3 Thursday 3:30-4:30 FNPS Council & Chapters Gathering**
 - There is a room with a projector and screen but no refreshments and no computer. Chapter Reps can use room if they want to meet, but nothing formal will be organized
- **4/5 Saturday 12:15-1:15 Lunch Council of Chapters mixer**
 - Assume this is just a room where Chapters can sit together to eat lunch.
- **Conference Spouse registration** – Melissa will ask Athena/committee – probably case by case/manual registration
- **Regional Native Landscaping Brochure edits (breakout rooms)**
 - Edits in the document are color coded (yellow to do now, red to do now if info is available, and black to do later).
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GZV6Yyr2o532oIBw40XJWrq6z8NBqrMe/edit>
 - Edits to do now are to correct typos, scientific name updates, and remove plants no longer considered native. Also consider removing/replacing plants that are not available from native nurseries (check FANN listing).
 - Chapters went into breakout rooms by region to discuss. Document (see above link) can be edited per those discussions.
- Melanie will be unavailable from now through April 26. Please direct Council questions to Tiffany and volunteer hours and printing questions to Cherice.

Motion to Adjourn

- Lisa motioned to adjourn. Rebekah seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:06 PM