



Florida Native Plant Society

Council of Chapters Meeting Minutes 3/23/25

Online Zoom Meeting taken by
Tiffany Duke – Secretary

Rebekah Kaufman called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM

In attendance (23) – 19 of 32 Chapters

*** indicates proxy or guest**

Broward County - Tiffany Duke – **Secretary**

Citrus – Ellen McNally

Dade – Riki Bonnema

Eugenia – David Martin

Hernando - Janet Grabowski

Ixia – Cate Hurlbut

Lake Beautyberry – Tina Mertz

Longleaf Pine – Kimberley Bremner

Magnolia – Annie Schmidt*

Mangrove – Linda Wilson

Martin County – Dianna Wentink

Martin County – Pete Grannis*

Palm Beach County – Rebekah Kaufman

Palm Beach County – Ethan Aparicio

Pawpaw – Karen Walter

Pawpaw – Amy Legare

Pine Lily – Dana Sussmann

Pinellas – David Perkey

Sarracenia – Lynn Artz

Serenoa – Trent Berry

Suncoast - Merrilee Wallbrunn

The Villages – Bob Keyes

Melissa Fernandez-de Cespedes –

Executive Director

Regular Agenda Items

- **Minutes from 2/23/25 meeting** o Karen W. motioned to approve the February 2025 meeting minutes. Cate H. seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- **Next Meetings:** We will resume our standard Council of Chapters meetings **April 27, 2025, at 6:30 pm.**

News/Announcements/Reminders

- **March Support Documents** – You can access them [here](#). The monthly Support Documents can be shared with all Chapter participants.
- **April Support Documents** – Melissa will send an email, which will include new links
- **Amy Legare** stepped in to be co-council for Pawpaw Chapter
- **Rebekah K.** offers to send text message reminders for meetings. Send her a message if you are interested in receiving text message reminders the day of. rkaufman@fnps.org
- **There is a GoFundMe** set up to assist Craig Hegel and partner Jane. If you wish to help, [see here](#).

Initiatives/Updates

- **Within March Support Documents** (link is above) – “About in the GEL” was discussed. This is a group exemption for tax purposes; in summary: FNPS vouches for Chapter nonprofit status. View the March Support Documents for more information.
- **The role of Chapter Representative was discussed.** Rebekah K. confirmed that Chapter Reps. obtain information from the State and share the info with their Chapter. The group agreed it would be helpful for the executive members of each Chapter to receive the info from the State too. If anyone wants to be included on the emails, email Melissa F. (Executive Director) the names and email addresses to be added to the list. executivedirector@fnps.org
- **Annie S. of Magnolia Chapter** shared James Cooper will be their new Chapter Representative. Annie S. will serve as proxy.
- **Rebekah K.** interested in starting a leaderboard for Chapter Volunteer hours – ideally listing the Top 10 Chapters.
- **Program/Speaker Challenges committees** –
 - [see Challenges document here](#)
 - What works:
 - Lynn A. shared Sarracenia is close to FSU and public lands, so they often look at their speaker line up and extend invitations to speak at their Chapter meetings. Often, speakers are suggested by other people. Live speaker preferred over Zoom.
 - Bob shared The Villages has many clubs, with access to attend various lectures within each club. Rebekah suggested collaborating with the Chapters that have extensive guest speaker lists, such as Sarracenia and The Villages. Collaborating and communicating with other FNPS Chapters can be very helpful.
 - Lynn A. shared that FNPS Survey revealed their Chapter had different interests. Pivoted to focus on topics around ecosystems and restoration.
 - What isn't working:
 - Cate H. shared challenges with advertising. Meeting announcements in the newsletter only goes to their subscribed email list; this presents a challenge about sharing speaker presentations with the community (those outside of the Chapter). Rebekah suggested

- Eventbrite. Lynn A. shared they post to Facebook (share post with outside groups), newspaper calendars.
- Bob shared that speaker cancelations or tardiness has been an issue. Having a backup plan in place was a suggestion.
- Regional Speaker list and a 2025 speaker/topic database is requested. Rebekah will check in with Melanie S. about these items.

New Business

Open Floor

- Lynn A. – there was a change in payment system, treasurer needs to request quarterly payment. Several group members request important financial information and updates be communicated directly to each Chapter Treasurer. The group requests that President be included too.
- Kim B. asked if edits can be made to the Chapter Activity waiver – field trip participant’s contact #, more space for text
 - Melissa F. will ask Cherice what can be edited

Action Items

- Rebekah suggested everyone check out Slack. Email Rebekah if you are interested in accessing Slack. rkaufman@fnps.org
- Join other Chapter Representative meetings taking place during the “Seeds for Tomorrow” FNPS Conference. Thursday, April 3, 3:30 pm and Saturday, April 5. President’s lunch Friday, April 4. See [Event Schedule here](#) for more information.

Motion to Adjourn

- Ethan A. motioned to adjourn. Annie S. seconds. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:54 PM