

Virginia Native Plant Society
Annual Business Meeting
Saturday, September 18, 2021
Zoom Meeting

Call to Order & Introductions

-President Nancy Vehrs called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She introduced Mark Murphy who provides VNPS IT/Web support. (166 members in attendance with 71 additional members submitting proxy votes).

Minutes of the September 2020 Annual Business Meeting

-Mark displayed last year's minutes on screen for membership. After allowing time for the minutes to be read by members, Lucile moved to accept the minutes and Ruth seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Adoption of the Annual Budget

Treasurer Kathleen Stasulis explained how she arrived at the budget this year, given the changes made due to Covid. The budget was presented as previously approved by the board of directors. No vote was required by the general membership. Mark posted it online.

Election of Officers and Board of Directors (terms to end 2024)

- President, Nancy Vehrs
- Botany, John Hayden
- Fundraising, Peggy Troyer
- Horticulture, Laura Beaty
- Membership, Kathleen O'Shea
- Director-At-Large – Web Administration, Mark Murphy
- Director-At-Large – Erika Gonzalez-Akre

-Mark moved to nominate Virginia Witmer as Publications Chair for a three year term. Kathleen O'Shea seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

-Still looking to fill the position of Grants Chair.

-Nancy announced VNPS is looking for recommendations for a Diversity Chair (will serve on the BOD and Exec Committee).

President's Report (Nancy Vehrs)

Highlights of Past Year

September 18, 2021

- Raised more than \$30,000 for the Flora of Virginia Project which is preparing to transition to a new phase.
- Highlighted American Wisteria, *W. frutescens* as the 2021 Wildflower of the Year.
- Chris Ludwig held an educational presentation on the Conservation of Virginia's Native Plants via zoom. It was well attended and VNPS is considering doing more since it has statewide appeal.
- Our workshop (held on Zoom) focused on Climate Change. The meeting was broken into two days with two speakers each evening. Joey Thompson, Education Chair is considering a geology theme for next year.
- Recipients of 2021 Research Grants:
 - An Assessment of Native Grasslands of the Central Virginia Piedmont, Center for Urban Habitats, Charlottesville, submitted by Devin Floyd, Director. Grant Amount: \$14,750.
 - Wing-Mediated Pollination in Azaleas (*Rhododendron* spp.) and Lilies (*Lilium* spp.), Mary Baldwin University, Staunton, submitted by Dr. Mary Jane Epps. Grant Amount: \$6,958.

- VNPS worked with other organizations to get a resolution passed to study options of phasing out the sale and use of invasive plants (and promoting native plants instead) through the Virginia General Assembly. VNPS is grateful to Delegate David Bulova and Senator Dave Marsden getting the resolution introduced and passed.
- Due to Covid we did not have any statewide field trips in the past year. Hope to be able to resume them soon.
- Our online presence has grown significantly thanks to Mark Murphy, Ashley Mouton, and the many moderators of our facebook group. We appreciate all their hard work. We need support from the chapters to provide information on their events and would welcome writers to provide blog articles.
- Mark Murphy provided IT support to the production of 7 educational modules that explain how to use the Flora (and the app). The modules can be found on our website under the Resources heading along with other interesting presentations.
- Last year our chapters had to be creative on how to communicate with their memberships and communities. Zoom meetings, flagged walks, mystery wildflower of the week as well as socially distanced plant sales and walks were some of the ways they accomplished their goals.
- Nancy Sorrells continues to be the editor of *Sempervirens* with a goal of 4 issues annually consisting of 12 pages.
- Since our last annual meeting, Matt Brooks was elected the new Pocahontas Chapter president.

Special Recognition

-Two special employees of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation are retiring by the end of the year: Gary Fleming, Ecologist with the Division of Natural Heritage, and Tom Smith, Deputy Director for Operations. VNPS plans to thank both for their contributions.

2021 Annual Fundraiser

-VNPS will be raising money for the Natural Heritage Preservation Fund to include having an auction. We are looking for members to help coordinate this fundraiser.

Next Year's Meeting

-Not sure if we'll be live or virtual next year.

Items for the Good of the Order

-Emily Southgate thanked Marion Lobstein, Mark Murphy and Sally Anderson for their part in creating the new flora modules.

Recognition of Board members in attendance.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Betty Truax
Secretary, VNPS