

**Virginia Native Plant Society
Potowmack Chapter Board Meeting
10 March 2016**

The meeting was held at Green Spring Gardens Park. It was called to order at 7:35 P.M. by Alan Ford, president. Attendees were Laura Beaty, Margaret Chatham, Roberta Day, Sue Dingwell, Scott Knudsen, Donna Murphy, Marty Nielsen, Karoline Oldham, Pat Salamone, and Bob Yacovissi.

MINUTES

The minutes from the 21 January 2016 board meeting were approved.

MEMBERSHIP

Bob reported that we have 433 memberships as of the end of February. He distributed a snapshot of chapter membership demographics at that time. He found that 60% of our members have been members for more than five years; 30% have been members for 15 years or more. We have 13 members who joined in 1982, the year the chapter was founded. He suggested that we look at what else we can do for our “core” members, who renew every year, even if they don’t attend meetings. Geographically, most of our members are clustered around the Beltway. Our membership numbers are steady but not growing. Bob will look at this next. He also noted that the process of notifying people of expiring memberships is now automated.

Regarding the member survey discussed at the previous meeting, Michael sent the updated draft to Karoline for electronic distribution. The board briefly discussed different ways this could be done and decided that Karoline would develop the survey using Google Forms and send a draft to the other board members for review. The survey will be distributed via email.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Scott distributed copies of the budget vs actual expenses as of the end of February.

PROGRAMS

Donna reviewed the plans for upcoming programs. She is concerned about overspending the \$3500 programs budget this year, since we are now paying for room rental at Green Spring as well as speaker honoraria. The cost for the room is about \$2400 per year; that leaves \$1100 for honoraria, but we have already committed to or paid out honoraria totaling \$1350 by May, so we may have to cut back on honoraria for summer walks. She is still seeking ideas for field trips in May and beyond. Suggestions included several walk-and-work events. It was noted that if a planned invasives “pull” is in Fairfax County, it must be at a site where the county already has an invasives management area (IMA) established. In addition, if the site is in a riparian buffer, an EPA permit is required, which takes about two months.

She is considering Colston Burrell as a possible speaker for the chapter annual meeting. The board discussed whether to move the chapter annual meeting back to October and decided to do so, with the actual date to be based on Colston Burrell’s schedule.

Spring events include the Green Spring open house on 9 April and the Green Spring plant sale on 14 May. At the 9 April open house, Laura will lead a program for Girl Scouts to earn a native-plant-related merit badge.

FLOOD DAMAGE TO THE GREEN SPRING GARDENS NATIVE PLANT GARDEN

Brenda Skarphol had notified Alan about serious damage to the garden caused by recent flooding. There is also damage caused by the bridge replacement that still needs to be repaired. The board discussed how we might be able to help by providing labor, plant material, and/or money. Alan will contact Mary Olien, the park manager, to discuss how we can best help.

HONOR FOR CRIS FLEMING

Our chapter's botany chair, Cris Fleming, was recently honored with the Paul Bartsch Award for Distinguished Contributions to Natural History, given by the Audubon Naturalist Society. This is a very prestigious award; it has not been given since 2002, and previous winners include Rachel Carson, Roger Tory Peterson, and Stan Shetler. Bob attended the award ceremony, at which Melanie Choukas-Bradley gave the introduction.

PLANT RESCUE

A plant rescue will be conducted on 18-20 March at a Burke Junction site where townhouses are to be built. The Grass Bunch did a survey of this site last year. The best plants at this site are meadow plants. This is a directed rescue; the rescued plants are to be relocated to a nearby stormwater retention site.

MISCELLANEOUS

Propagation beds open early April. One copy of the Flora has been taken to the Fairfax County public library system's Virginia Room. We still have about three copies of the Flora to give away.

ADJOURNMENT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

The board meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:55 P.M. The next meeting is scheduled for 5 May at 7:30 P.M. [Later rescheduled to 26 May.]

Respectfully submitted, Patricia P. Salamone, Secretary