

Virginia Native Plant Society Board Meeting
June 6, 2020
Via Zoom
Minutes

President, Nancy Vehrs, called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m. with the following participating:

Alex Fisher, Conservation Chair	Johnny Townsend, Dir. At Large Natural Heritage
Peggy Troyer, Fundraising Chair	Ted Munn, Northern Neck Chapter President
Mark Murphy, Web Admin	Laura Beaty, Horticulture Chair
Sally Anderson, Second Vice President	Ashley Molton, Publicity Chair Elect
Betty Truax, Secretary	John Hayden, Botany Chair
Alan Ford, Potowmack President	Kathleen Stasulis, Treasurer
Steve Stasulis, South Hampton Roads President	Lucile Kossodo, John Clayton President
Emily Southgate, Piedmont President	Ellen Holtman, Blue Ridge President
Ruth Douglas, Co-Chair Invasive Species Education	Jan Smith, Upper James River President
Jim Hurley, Co-Chair Invasive Species Education	Kevin Howe, First Vice President
Mary Lee Epps, Jefferson President	

Note: The March 14 board meeting did not have a quorum so no official action took place. Following the meeting, the following actions were taken by an electronic vote (email) in March:

- **Approval of Amended Minutes of December Board Meeting**
- **Approval of Executive Committee action to support State Arboretum Garden Fair at Blandy with \$500 and NatureServe's Biodiversity without Boundaries Conference with \$1000.** [These events were canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic so these funds were not expended.]
- **Approved proposed distribution of funds from 2019 Fundraiser for Plant Virginia–New Native Plant Marketing Campaigns: Ridge & Valley, Southern Piedmont, SW VA.** Pledged \$7000 for SWVA Campaign.
- **Approved the designation of the Quarry Gardens at Schuyler as a VNPS Registry.** At some point, we would have an open house at Quarry Gardens.

Following the May 7 meeting of the Executive Committee, the Board voted electronically by May 12 to fund the following three research grants:

1. ***Recovering native plant diversity in the Piedmont: Gilbert's Corner habitat restoration and native plant demonstration site.*** Submitted by Andrea Weeks, George Mason University. Amount: \$5,508. *This proposal will be the recipient of the inaugural Mary B. Pockman Memorial Research Grant.*
2. ***The Composition, Distribution, and Status of Native Grasslands of the Northern Virginia Piedmont.*** Submitted by J. Berton Harris, The Clifton Institute. Amount: \$6,400.

3. **Propagation methods for the American fringe tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*).** Submitted by Janet Steven and Carter Stanton, Christopher Newport University. Amount \$4,805.

Announcements – Kevin will be providing current grant information, as well as information about the 2021 grants to Mark to be posted our website.

Treasurer's Report – Kathleen filed tax returns. Guidestar has been updated. Due to Covid-19 pandemic, we cancelled our workshop and field trips resulting in loss of \$11,600. Membership numbers are good. Workshop registration fees donated resulted in a gain of \$1,873. Chapters need to submit their tax returns by July 15th. Kathleen is requesting chapters and groups to send in their budget requests for Executive Committee review.

Appointment of Mark Murphy to VNPS Executive Committee. Lucile moved to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation. Ellen seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

VNPS Board Listserv – Mark recommends the board use listserv for e-mail communications. The cost would be \$100 annually for multiple group accounts. Mark explained the features and possible use of is on-line service and explained it would not replace all forms of communication. Alan moved to accept Mark's recommendation. Steve seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Status of the 2020 Annual Mtg., VNPS chapter field trips, and group events

- Annual Meeting: After discussion Peggy moved to substitute a live meeting with a Zoom meeting for the 2020 Annual Mtg and move the Abington plans to the 2021 annual meeting. Steve seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Discussions continued with suggestions of having people register via NEON. Discussed zero cost, but accept donations. Powerpoint presentation instead of video since everyone in the state doesn't have high quality wifi. Friday evening 9/25/2020 from 7-9 p.m.
- Field Trips/Walks/Group Events: Discussion of wearing of masks because of Covid-19 making it difficult to safely host events. Jefferson Chapter is looking into a self-guided tour at Ivy Creek. It was decided that VNPS Board (with the majority voting yes) should make a recommendation to chapters that they move walks and field trips on-line. Nancy Vehrs will work with a small committee to publish a formal suggestion.

Board Vacancies & 2020 Nominating Committee

Current: At-large/Grants (2020) – Kevin filling in, Membership (2021), Publications (2021), Publicity (2022)
Upcoming (exp. 2020): 2nd VP, Secy, Treas, Conservation, Education

Sally Anderson moved that the board appoint Ashley Moulton as Publicity Chair. Steve seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Joey Thompson has agreed to serve as Education Chair and will focus on member education as well as work with Sally Anderson on future workshops (Sally announced she will try to move the program that had been planned for 2020 to 2021).

Kathleen has agreed to continue as Treasurer.

Kevin will continue as Vice President.

Still need: Grants, Membership, and Publications chairs

Proposal by Ashley Moulton to produce a very short video - Ashley proposed a 2-5 minute video with Doug Tallamy with the intent of getting his message out in an abbreviated manner. Discussed what the costs would be, if Tallamy's message could be consolidated in such a small amount of time, and what are the actual points to get across. Ruth suggested deferring the decision and requested Ashley provide a formal proposal to include the topics discussed.

Retirement of Carol Heiser from VDGIF – The agency which will be renamed the Department of Wildlife Resources effective July 1 and will be filling her position. There may be another position added in December.

Zoom Event: “Nature is for Everyone” – Black and Brown Faces in America’s Wild Places” with Dudley Edmundson – Prince William Conservation Alliance - This will be a Zoom event and Nancy announced it would be open to everyone.

Important Highlights of Reports from Chapters, Committee Chairs, and Directors-at-Large

- Ellen is reaching out to people on Instagram on behalf of VNPS
- Sally reported that work on the “Flora 2,” an electronic update to the app, will include 300+ new plants by the end of the year. There will be more name changes. Nancy said Marion Lobstein is developing Webinar classes on how to use the app. Nancy will serve on the committee to determine what’s next for the Flora.
- Emily reported the Piedmont Chapter created a “Habitat Game” and is willing to share their files.
- Ashley mentioned National Pollinator week was coming up and would appreciate any information contributions.

Next BOD meeting: will be decided via Doodle Poll

Adjourn: 12:56 p.m.