

**Virginia Native Plant Society Board Meeting
June 13, 2022**

In attendance:

Nancy Vehrs (President and Prince William)
Kevin Howe (1st VP)
Sally Anderson (2nd VP)
Kathleen Stasulis (Treasurer)
Mark Murphy, Website Admin
Barbara Ryan, Conservation Chair
Johnny Townsend, DAL Natural Heritage
John Hayden, Botany Chair
Laura Beaty, Horticulture Chair
Jim Hurley, Co-chair Invasive Species Education
Melody Mobly, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Pat Quinn, South Hampton Roads
Emily Southgate, Piedmont
Matt Brooks, Pocahontas
Brenda Graff, New River
Jan Smith, Upper James River
Alan Ford, Potowmack
Mary Lee Epps, Jefferson
Pat Quinn, South Hampton Roads
Lucille Kosodo, John Clayton
Nancy Garvey, Northern Neck
Jennifer McClelland, Blue Ridge
Virginia Witmer, Publications Chair
Ted Munns, Finance Committee
Dan Morgen, Finance Committee
Nancy Sorrells, Newsletter Editor
Anna Maria Johnson, Plant VA Natives Campaign for Ridge & Valley

Call to order by Nancy at 7:00 pm.

She welcomed new board members Melody, Nancy and Jennifer. Board members then introduced themselves.

Nancy Sorrells made a request for newsletter articles.

Kathleen Stasulis moved and Lucille seconded accepting the **minutes of the March meeting; passed unanimously.**

Lucille moved and Barbara seconded appointing Melody Mobly as DEI Chair; passed unanimously.

Nancy welcomed Anna Maria as the Ridge & Valley representative for Plant Virginia Natives, and mentioned that she might be interested in starting the Shenandoah Chapter again.

Treasurer's Report circulated ahead of the meeting. Figures show our budget on target. Membership is up. Donations have come from several sources. Final fundraising amount given to Virginia Natural Heritage is \$64, 561.73.

At the next meeting we will discuss the budget. Board members were asked to send budget requests to Kathleen to be included.

Investment Policy:

A draft of the policy was sent to the board in May. Ted described the basics of the plan including 1) keeping the checking account for day to day expenses, 2) using laddered CDs in smaller amounts and of shorter duration, and 3) using an index fund for investments. The committee suggests using a statewide bank for some of these so officers around the state might be able to make transactions. Investment choices like refusing investments in fossil fuels was discussed briefly. Dan shared his screen to review the document.

Kevin moved to approve the investment policy and Emily seconded.

Alan asked about the treasurer being in charge of the investment policy. Nancy said that she expected to appoint a standing committee to implement the policy and tend the accounts.

Kevin added the standing committee for finance to the motion. He mentioned that this is what was envisioned for VNPS.

Kathleen felt strongly that she should not make investment decisions. She would be on the committee. Ted thought the president should also be on the committee. This brought up a discussion of the committee size, and five people seemed to be the consensus, with the president an option, but not required.

Barbara thought that the committee should be in the document and before voting we should spell out the information on the committee. Alan agreed.

Kevin felt we should go ahead with adopting the policy and removed the section of the motion on the committee appointment. The new motions: Adopt the policy and go back to the Ad Hoc committee for the permanent committee setup. Emily seconded. Vote: Barbara and Alan voted nay, the remainder of the board voted in favor, motion passed.

Nancy asked that details be provided for the next Executive Committee meeting in August.

2022 Annual Meeting:

This year is our 40th anniversary. Sally and Nancy are checking on a date of September 17 at Natural Bridge. We hope to have an outdoor event, with a tent for the meeting, followed by lunch and field trips. Northern Neck plant sale is this date, not the 10th as reported earlier, so we will check on availability on September 10.

Jan noted that some park trails are mostly invasive plants, but there are other trails close by.

Alan asked how many people we needed to make a go of it, and we don't know yet, but we are suggesting using 100 people as a guide.

Research Grants:

Kevin shared the screen to show information on grant process and highest scorers. The two grants are: **1** "An Assessment of Native Grasslands of the East-Central Piedmont of Virginia" submitted by Devin Floyd, Center for Urban Habitats & Mary Jane Epps, Mary Baldwin University for \$14,750 and **2** "Native Lianas of Virginia's Appalachian/Blue Ridge Forests: Environment and Ecology" submitted by Lynn Resler, Virginia Tech, \$5,305. These total \$20,055. Alan made a motion to award these grants, Emily seconded; passed unanimously.

Position on Conservation:

Barbara shared the statement onscreen and explained that while the original was somewhat lengthy, the 2015 revision did not spell out the goals. This document simplifies and consolidates without leaving out key ideas. Sally moved and Alan seconded that we accept this revision and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Invasive species legislation:

Nancy reviewed the legislation that went down along party lines in the last General Assembly session. Delegate Bullova expressed a desire to try again. Several board members spoke in favor of meeting with him to see what he has in mind. Barbara mentioned the local success of creating a civil penalty for escaped bamboo in Fairfax County. Jim was reluctant because of the large investment of time last year, but is also interested in what the delegate has to say. He would like to see the development of a longer-term strategy and mentioned Blue Ridge PRISM consulting with Piedmont Environmental Council on this subject. Cooperation of Senator Ruff was mentioned and Nancy will try to get a meeting with Bullova for those interested in attending.

Board Nominations:

We have names from Facebook postings, but if anyone has names they should let Sally know. It was noted that we can always use extra social media help as well. We will need to elect Barbara and Melody in September, as both are currently appointees.

May 25 Zoom presentation:

It was noted that this program "Beyond Colonial Notions: New Plant Kinships" with Nikki Bass and Justin Robinson was recorded, but at the request of the presenters is not shared with the general public.

Highlights:

- Ted shared that Marie Minor, a former VNPS president (1997-2000?) died recently. There is no obituary and not much information. Nancy Garvey has done a short article with a picture and she will send that to VNPS.
- Johnny noted two purchases at The Cedars Natural Area Preserve, preserving important plant and animal diversity as well as karst landscape. He mentioned that his report contains several interesting plant finds including Ozark Milkvetch that Joey Thompson helped to find. Nancy mentioned a field trip she and others took at Difficult Creek and also at the Cedars this spring. Johnny said that the rare *Packera millefolia* that we saw may turn out to be a new species.
- The **Plant Nova Natives Guide** is being revised and Alan asked to come to the next Executive Committee meeting to discuss VNPS involvement with the guide.
- Matt said the Pocahontas Chapter will staff a booth at the **State Fair** in the last week of October and early September. He would like to keep the booth open for the entire fair and asked for volunteers to make this happen. There are thousands of attendees. Virginia noted that the Plant Virginia Natives group will also have a booth there.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 pm.

Sally Anderson, acting secretary