

**South Carolina
Native Plant Society
State Board Retreat-Meeting
June 10-11, 2006**

The Board of the South Carolina Native Plant Society met at the Clemson Sandhills REC starting at 10:20 AM on June 10, 2006, adjourning at 4:00 PM, June 10, 2006, and starting at 9:20 AM on June 11, 2006, and adjourned at 3:00 PM

Attending, June 10, 2006: Bill Stringer (Presiding), Mary Morrison, Rick Huffman, Charles Horn, Colette DeGarady, Tommie Moody, John Brubaker, Harry Davis, Wesley Burnett (Recording)

Attending, June 11, 2006: Bill Stringer (Presiding), Rick Huffman, Colette DeGarady, John Brubaker, Harry Davis, Ann Friedel, Wesley Burnett (Recording)

Guests: Ron Chicone,

Standard reports

Officers' reports

Minutes Jan. 2006: Approved.

Minutes, General Membership Meeting: Received without approval. They will be distributed to the Board.

Treasurer's Report: The detailed budget was reviewed followed by a review of the summary of the budget. Morrison raised the question of the Board providing money for a display board for each chapter. Brubaker said a motion authorizing the Board to pay for a display board for each chapter each year had been approved. Treasurer's Report was accepted on a motion by Brubaker, seconded by Morrison.

Chapter reports

Awards and Recognitions: Stringer reviewed the various awards that the state organization and the various chapters have received.

Upstate: Huffman reported that the chapter has 271 members and an active board. The chapter is engaged in a number of projects including participation in the Home and Garden Show; Tyger River Plant Survey; Station Cove trail rehabilitation; Sharpton Prairie restoration; Pickens County Museum garden maintenance; grass seed collection; plant rescue

at the Greenville Landfill and movement of rescued plants to the Reedy River. A number of publications have been completed. Plant sale, now held twice a year, may be expanded to three per year. Outreach to Spartanburg has involved two chapter meetings there. Regular meetings include two large meetings per year. Routine meetings are well attended. Under Marlow's leadership the publicity has been very active. The chapter is going to a true committee structure where the committees work independently of the board.

Midlands: Chicone and Moody reported that the chapter is working toward official status with a board and bylaws. Needs include expanded leadership and organization. Several good field trips were held this spring and a number of plant rescues. There seems to be a small but sound and dedicated core membership. Discussion of ways to "jump start" the chapters followed.

Piedmont: Morrison reported that she has been involved with the Society of American Foresters on exotic plants and warm seasons grasses. A lot of "networking" has been going on. York County Museum has offered to host the next symposium and the North Carolina Native Plant Society has expressed interest in coordinating on the symposium and other activities. Morrison speculated on ways to collaborate. Membership is about 10.

Lowcountry: DeGarady reported that the symposium was draining but the regular programming which skips summer and December has begun planning for the fall. Committees have started spawning new committees.

Symposium wrap-up: DeGarady reported that the symposium was about as good as they had expected it to be. In their planning, the chapter was "super frugal." She did suggest that there may be some need to make sure that chapters are prepared to manage the responsibilities of the symposium. Recommendations: Begin early (at least a year ahead); teacher scholarships didn't work; registration form need to be clarified; on-line registration would help; keep the number of field trips to a manageable level; sales protocol needs early establishment; a protocol for volunteers is needed (who will get free this and that for working as a volunteer); policies on speakers honorarium and/or free admissions needs to be established early; the more speakers, the more trouble in organization; policies for vendors and exhibitors need be established; cell phone numbers should be given to speakers so they can contact committee members in the event of no-show or other difficulties. Considerable discussion of ideas for the symposium followed.

Committee reports

Membership committee:

Website: Davis reported that everything is going fine. He needs more material particularly post event reports.

Newsletter: None. The committee no longer has a chair.

Issues committee report

Issues: Brubaker reviewed his philosophy with the issues committee. He then reviewed the structure of the Conservation Voters of South Carolina (CVSC) and our relationship with that organization. In addition he reviewed the attempts to revitalize the South Carolina Exotic Pest Plant Council (SC EPPC), our involvement with the Beach Vitex Task Force, the SCNPS review of USDA USFS review of management proposals, and the I-73 Stakeholders Working Group. We should be more attentive of the SC Department of Natural Resources Board meetings. Brubaker also reviewed our involvement with the US Army Corps of Engineers Tyger River and several other areas of concern. The organization would benefit if the chapters were more involved in “issues,” particularly in their region.

SC Exotic Pest Plant Council

Update on the re-organization: Most of the southeastern states have very active exotic pest plant council. The exception is South Carolina which is now trying to restructure itself. Meeting, Aug 23, 2006, at the Congaree NP.

Statewide activities

Canby's bay: Brubaker reported that two thirds of the highlands have been burned. Wiregrass plugs are being raised. The bay needs burned but it won't happen this year.

Station Cove trail: Huffman reported that the contractor doing the heavy work is ready to go. June 24 and 26 are scheduled work days for volunteers. Huffman reviewed the financial arrangements. Once built the new trail will be allowed to set and season for six months to a year.

Long Cane restoration: Privet is being removed and river cane and river oats plants are being generated for transplanting.

Business

Harry's Credit Card proposal:

Davis suggests that we go to a credit card payment on line for membership and symposium payment. Through Paypal the cost is about \$3.00 per \$100; however it can't be used for plant sales and so forth. Commercial account would run \$20.00 month.

Davis moved and Brubaker seconded that Davis proceed with getting SCNPS set up to begin using Paypal's website payment standards for on line credit card payments. After discussion the motion was called and passed without opposition.

Membership renewal dating procedure:

The matter was discussed at length. Davis and Morrison (second) made a motion subsequently amended to read that NPS move the date of dues being due to January 1 and those joining or renewing in the last quarter will have their dues take effect on January 1 of the year follow. Those joining in the last quarter will be considered members in good standing from the date of joining through the following calendar year. Motion was tabled on June 10, 2006 and subsequently passed on June 11, 2006.

The procedure and protocol were discussed in some details. It was proposed that the process be as follows:

Renewal notices for those who have not paid their 2006 dues will be sent out for renewals through 2006 through September, 2006. In December, post cards will be sent for the 2007 year. The 90 day limit will be enforced.

Stringer has developed a proposed form for recording memberships and dues, book and other purchase payments applications and at special events.

Davis brought up the problem of the list serve and its coordination with the membership process.

Stringer will develop a set of rules and a flow chart for distribution, experimentation and comment.

Budget formulation 2006-2007

A new directory is needed but this should be put off until 2007-2008

A general budget was approved (on motion by Davis and seconded by Brubaker) as follows:

Newsletter=\$3000

General Expenses=\$3000
Executive Budget=\$300
Projects/Steeds Creek=\$2500 (to be paid out of cash reserves)
Symposium=\$10000 (to be paid for by earnings of the symposium)

Allocation of dues estimated as \$7500
State=\$4500
Chapters=\$3000

Budgeted Income from Dues=\$7500

Income from Symposium=\$10000
Other income sources
Sales=\$300
Donation=\$600
Interest=\$400
Projects/Steeds Creek=\$2500 (from cash reserves)

The proposed budget represents a deficit of \$500

Huffman moved and DeGarady seconded that 50% of profits from each year's symposium be allocated to the host chapter and 50% be put into the statewide cash reserve.

Statewide Newsletter issue:

Stringer reviewed the history of state newsletter. Brubaker said that the major problem is that we make it too complex. A standard template is need. Stringer said he thinks it is too much for one person to take care of.

Stringer passed around a sample that he generated for \$200 for an issue of 8 pages. He then provided various scenarios of printing costs for 500 copies on 80 lb. glossy paper (the least expensive from the printer consulted).

8 pages all b& w=\$290
8 pages all color=\$1165
8 pages 1& 8 in color=\$694
4 pages full color=\$635

The purpose of the newsletter at the state level was discussed. Also Stringer argued that it was not necessary to mail a copy to everyone. Rather, some would prefer PDF copies. Others argued that this would be more trouble than the savings in postage, printing and so forth would justify.

DeGarady moved and Brubaker seconded that one prototype edition of up to an 8 page newsletter, color front and back, be prepared and distributed under the supervision of Dr. Stringer. The motion passed unanimously.

Other:

Organizational issues for discussion

Annual symposium –

A general conversation was held on the utility of the annual symposium. The planning for 2007 is well underway and should be supported as much as possible. In the meantime, we will take up the matter again.

Stringer is charged with the responsibility for finding a state symposium chairman and committee.

Statewide projects – Future

1. Steed Creek initiative: DOT is attempting to reduce the size of the projects.
2. Canby's Preserve:

There is a problem of supervision of the area and maintenance of the fire lines. Working with the hunt club to solve these problems in exchange for some limited hunting rights under supervision of our manager is being considered.

Burnett moved and Davis seconded that Bamberg Hunt Club be given permission to hunt deer on specified sites from non permanent stands to be removed at close of deer season in exchange for the Club maintaining the fire lines to the specifications of the Canby site manager. Further to this motion, the hunt club must provide insurance to indemnify the NPS for hunting on the site. The motion passed without opposition.

There is a further problem with preserving the hard wood area and the application of fire to control of loblolly. Alternatively the loblolly could be harvested and then the area could be managed for species that include native pines. The several options are being considered.

Huffman moved and DeGarady seconded that the loblolly on the Canby site be harvested and then the area be burned with a hot fire under the supervision of the Canby site land management contractor. The motion passed.

3. Kingsburg Carolina Bay - Potential new site in Florence County:

From the proposal submitted by Frank Holleman:

“If the Trust is willing to own the property, the Society could work with the Trust on management, acquisition, and research/education. The Society could still play a key role in preserving and protecting this remarkable site.

On the other hand, the Trust may decide it does not want to own the site. Then, it is important to know whether the Society would be willing to own it. This looks like a great opportunity for the Society to protect an important native plant site, one that two of our leading botanists consider globally significant.”

Motion: Brubaker moved and Huffman seconded that we agree to take on the role of ownership of the property pending details of the land transactions.
The motion passed.

Budgeting and fund-raising

Statewide vs. chapter allocation

Growing a Statewide reserve fund. {This matter was not considered}.

Reimbursement for expenses for travel: The topic was discussed and the Board expressed the mood that reimbursement is fair and reasonable. The issue, however, was not resolved and will be re-visited at a later time.

Growing the organization?

Promoting chapter membership. {This matter was not considered}.

Promoting new chapter formation. {This matter was not considered}.

Tackling Environmental Issues

The agenda called for discussion of: How have we done it? How have our responses been received? Problems and facilitating the process. Providing guidance to the Committee from the Board.

However, the matter of Tackling Environmental Issues was not considered.

Other: {No further matters were considered}

Adjournment: 3:00 PM, June 11, 2006