

Agenda: CoNPS Board Meeting February 4, 2018

10:00 - 1:00

Jefferson County Extension Office, Conference Room west side of building, 15200 West 6th Ave, Golden, CO
80401

Meeting called to order at 10:04 am

Phone: Preston, Deryn, Bethanne, David Varner (Plateau Chapter) and Amy

Present: Jessica, Denise, Erica, Lauren, Lenore, David, Steve, Jack, Jen, Ann, Denise, Chrissy, Mo,

1. Pass December and October full board minutes (10:00 - 10:10, Denise/Amy)

October minutes comments – None

Motion David Julie; second Lenore; all in favor passed

December minutes comments – None

Motion David Julie; Denise second; all in favor passed

2. Employee Handbook (10:10 - 10:30, Amy)

As part of our efforts to standardize governance, Amy modeled this draft on other organizations – is ready for feedback

Steve question about reimbursements (top of page 3) – workshop coordinator reimbursed for reasonable expenses, as a group we agreed that we would pay for gas and time for travel, but not for mileage (Amy will clarify this point). Linda – she doesn't get reimbursed for CoNPS supplies, she uses the office credit card (**Amy will clarify this in the handbook, it does show up in the budget – important that the finance committee knows this**)

3. Strategic Plan (10:30 - 11:10, Ann)

Please see Strategic Plan document

Linda, Erica, Chrissy and Ann have been working on the Strategic Plan and presented their outline and survey results. They reviewed past plans and plans from other native plant societies, met, then sent out a survey to the board. They received 12 responses – some came in quite late, so they may not be incorporated.

Outcomes from survey

- Most felt mission was still fine, or fine w/ some minor changes. Suggestion to drop “stewardship” from language.
- Most felt that the four major goals were adequate.
- Most felt that the plan should include everything we do, but highlight the new initiatives.
- Most were fine with periodic or annual reviews of performance of the goals.

- The majority of the respondents said that committees should be identified to carry out the goals. Also, most felt that chapter presidents should make sure activities align with the plan.
- Most felt that the board would determine the finalization of the plan.
- Most felt it would be useful to survey the membership to identify areas of expertise.

Current Mission Statement: Colorado Native Plant Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to furthering the knowledge, appreciation and conservation of native plants and habitats of Colorado through education, stewardship and advocacy.

3 major goals pulled from mission: knowledge, appreciation and conservation, as well as an operational goal to ensure sustainability of CoNPS (*please see document*)

Discussion:

Ann: A question that was not addressed in the survey – how long do we want this plan to cover? This is something we want to consider.

Mo: It makes more sense to plan for a shorter time. We need to tie committees to goals to ensure that the plan is executed. Volunteers will do what they are interested in. Perhaps 3 years?

Jack: If you examine native plant societies in general, we don't reach the vast majority of people. The plan doesn't include "advertise". He put some plants in his front yard, and people come over to look at them. Ann: We do have "Expand outreach to the public and private sectors (non-members)" in Goal 2. Lenore: Do we have enough people to do all these things? David J.: Through the outreach we are doing now, we can get people interested in native plants. Jack: Membership dues are 22K out of over 80K in budget – I don't think we're reaching enough people. Plant people are hard to find. He'd like to see a strategic plan for reaching 2000 members. He'd like to know how much it would cost to run an ad during the Super Bowl.

Jessica: What's interesting is what are the next steps, the details of this comprehensive plan. David J: Next steps are identifying the action items. Erica: They discussed whether the plan dictates what tasks the committees do, or do we get feedback from the committees first? Ann: Since this is a volunteer organization, it is key to find the people with the passion and energy to make the goals happen. Erica: Not every goal may happen, but we will reassess. David: the first step may be to increase membership, then we have more people who can support the mission and goals, more leverage. Jack: Can't remember a time when people were as interested in the environment.

Jessica: Do you feel that efforts compete with the Native Plant Master program? Ann: No.

Lenore: Thank you for bringing in Chapter Presidents, appreciates the guidance both from the board and committees. She's been amazed at the level of interest – you have to have something for the pros and for the novices. Erica: Her experience is that the pros are not finding interesting programs. It's been hard to wrap her head around the identity of CoNPS – sees both sides, professional or general? Can we do it all? Mo: For a long time, there were workshops that used a lot of microscopes, but there are also people who just like plants, so we need programs for that. Our mission implies a "stepping stone", and we need to make sure we're meeting objectives all

along the line. Our membership rotates, we lose 150 members and gain 150 members each year. A year ago, we were saying, what's the relationship among board, committees and chapters – this plan shows the need for clarity in our operational plans.

Mo: Assessing our membership's skills is a tremendous idea. If you know expertise and interest, it's easy to find help. On the website, when people sign in, they can sign up for committees. A few years ago, 50 people signed up for Conservation Committee. Mo had a list of 17 people who responded to his email, many had specialized skills. We have 900+ members, a blast emails you will not get responses, but individual emails will get responses. Erica: Finding expertise could be part of improving communication goal – when people sign up or renew membership, they could be asked about expertise, interest. Mo: We used to have a membership committee. Jen: Now this is part of my job. I'm doing social media – we engage too many people, over 1000 people over 3 platforms, to drop this. We get lots of retweets and shares – this generates a lot of interest. Chrissy: This is an opportunity to reach younger people – internships for credit if we have the capacity to support our social media.

Jessica: This is a great document. I like the idea of having the committees look at this to see how they can support. The Operating Committee can see how they support the operational goals.

Mo: Why doesn't the Strategic Plan Committee go through the major goals and see which committees should take on certain goals, and then gauge interest – what kind of tasks in each committee can support major goals? Even if there's no committee there, you may be able to attract people to the committee with specific tasks.

Jessica: I think we need to have a bigger conversation about recruiting members – a media or membership committee? **Please email Jessica if you are interested in this conversation.**
Suggested next steps: email the committee chairs for feedback about tasks that support these skills. The powerpoint is a nice synopsis of what the Strategic Plan Committee has accomplished. We could then finalize plan by May meeting.

Mo: You may have goals and objectives that you may not know where they go, and that may be helpful, too.

4. Mission Grant rubric discussion (11:10 - 10:30, Chrissy Alba)

Please see Mission Grant rubric

Erica, Jack and Chrissy (with help from Jenny) put together documentation about what the mission grant is and how it operates. There was a conversation about making the grant less ad hoc, having one point of contact for proposals. The committee would be responsible for collection and initial review.

Discussion

- Dollar amount not mentioned – dependent on budget each year? Mo has rubric about how this is calculated, but he doesn't like the way it is done now. Erica suggested offering a range of grant amounts. Mo: What we really need to do is make this an endowment fund – then it

doesn't make a difference if it's a good or bad year. You can also go out and raise money for it as an endowment with flexibility. The mission grant can work like the Marr or Steinkamp grants. He'd like to propose at the end of this discussion.

- Timing – Jessica asked if we have to vote as a full board on Mission grants? Erica: If it's an endowment, the same committee could work on all 3 grants. Jessica: does the board want to be involved, or should we delegate to committee? Most agreed to delegate.
- New members – Jack noted that CoNPS membership is a condition of the grant. Chrissy: This is very common among agencies.
- Focus of grant – He'd like to see education. Chrissy: sometimes there's an overlap between education and restoration (Jenny's comment) - *Is the society agreeing as a whole that all requests for funding would go to the Mission grant committee or do the committees still want freedom to use their budget for these items?* Jack: "Stewardship" can be a vague term. Also, you can get into trouble as a 501c3 with taking on advocacy. We can't support any legislation as a 501c3. Mo: We don't do hard advocacy, but we can provide feedback on plans and collaborate with other organizations. Jessica: Perhaps we can just say "advocacy related to the mission". Jack: Another project that built relationships with students and faculty was the creation of an herbarium with grants. **We will add the rubric to May agenda with comments addressed.** Mo: Endowment discussion should go to Finance Committee, then Operations Committee

5. Review Mo's budget (11:30 - 11:50, Mo)

Please see CoNPS 2018 Budget Detail document

Discussion: Mo did not include West Slope Festival in this year's budget. He reached out to John Bregar, and there wasn't interest, but they are interested in a speakers bureau. Any ideas about speakers, please email Jessica and Mo. David Varner agreed that this is a good year to take off, we're working on reviving the Plateau Chapter. Jessica: Fall festival was a great amount of work for little return. Mo: If anyone has a special request for funding, please come to the board or OC. The income is higher because Mo is guessing that we will start selling Jack's book by April/ May, projected to bring in \$12K. Jack: the book is almost on schedule. Jen: one last photo to resolve! We're on final proof. All the reviews are in. **Jack and Mo will discuss endowment to present at May meeting...maybe with the help of a little bourbon.**

6. Updates on Northern Chapter: annual meeting (Ann's role); status of the chapter finding a new president - if have ideas email Ann (11:50 - 12:00. Jessica)

Ann has been working with Jen on finding the location for than annual meeting: Aztlan Community Center – northern community center in Ft. Collins. The two proposed dates 9/14-16 or 9/28-30. Rare plant group is fine with either date. Ann is meeting with someone on Monday

to look at rooms to see if it will accommodate the conference. Ann will also be looking for volunteers at the chapter meeting on Tuesday, then will work on speakers and field trips. **Thank you Ann for stepping up!**

Ann: We haven't met as a chapter yet, but we'd like to identify someone who could stay on as president for a couple of years. Hugh McHigh has some great ideas for the chapter, but is also field trip leader. Any other ideas for leaders, please let Ann know.

7. CoNPS: possible collaborations (12:00 - 12:10, Lenore)

Art is donating time to make lovely bee houses, one for speaker and one for door prize, for four months. **Art**: Don't forsake the non-professionals among us – we value your expertise and time. We want to know more. We put the bumper stickers on and wear the buttons. Thank you – it means a lot!

Cherokee Ranch in Castle is about 3400 acres are very interested in a bioblitz. **David** was approached by Thomas Riggle from Highlands Ranch Water Conservation District and wants to encourage HOA and public areas and homeowners in taking out grass and planting natives. He wants to start doing some classes beginning in March. Marcia Tatroe has stepped forward. This presents a lot of challenges – originally, the HOA required a certain amount of grass in front yard. There are some people already on board. **David** is also involved with the Sierra Club, we could bring forward issues to their lobbyists. Lenore isn't sure how that aligns with our 501c3 status or the Botany Bill.

8. Updates from supervisors (12:10 - 12:30, Denise, David, Mo)

Lauren: Gymnosperms workshop went really well. Renee did a great job. Next, Mo's workshop is one on March 3rd. She's planning another technical workshop for the spring – any suggestions, please let her know. Denise: the Forest Service is currently internally debating the permit for a summer orchid workshop. Lauren: Two workshops scheduled at the High Plains Environmental Center as well. Mo suggested that Lauren reach out to Jan Turner, who has a lot of connections. Bethanne: Beth Hanson might be a good instructor – with South Suburban.

Mo: Thank you Linda for your hard work!

Jen: A lot of my CoNPS time is getting ready for upcoming LWCNP conference. 300 registrations with 60 on the waitlist. All of my time will be reimbursed from the conference. Also working on plant sale - \$5000 in sales already, the biggest yet. Four locations for distribution. The garden tours have 6 gardens lined up in June in Denver, no progress on Boulder County one yet.

Consulting has also generated interest, one project with Denver Housing Authority and another small project with urban drainage – not quite gardening or restoration but in urban areas.

9. Board Feedback for Jack Carter on book excerpt, Uncharitable (12:30-12:50, Jack)

Please see Uncharitable document

We think of ourselves as nonprofit, but we have to work as a capitalist organization. An endowment fund is a capitalist idea. Giving money and time makes people feel good, and Jack has learned to appreciate the importance of giving. For not for profits to make it big, they have to be “uncharitable”. Jack and Martha have followed putting 10% away and giving 10% to causes they care about. He cares about protecting the flora, that’s something that the people he lives with know nothing about it, and it can be hard to get interest across. Think about why we spend so much of our time the way we do – we have fun!

Thank you, Jack, for your helpful perspective.

Thank you, Lenore, for facilitating the phone/ conference call set up!

Meeting adjourned at 12:42 pm.