



## **Board Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, October 5, 2021**

The meeting was held via Zoom. Board members participated from their homes.

**Call to order** 4:30 pm

**Present:** Don Graves, President; Wendy Graves, Treasurer; Betty Spence, Secretary; Beth Leuck, Elroy Limmer, Joan Limmer, Emily Pollom; absent: Les Brandt, Keller Suberkropp

**President's Report:** Don reported that the plant sale on September was a resounding success, with over 150 customers and five vendors. The vendors were busy right up until the end and sold out of the plants they had brought. They expressed a desire to participate again next year.

As you know, GNPS was a major sponsor of the Gila River Festival this year. On the final evening of the festival, September 19, Don was honored to represent GNPS by moderating Doug Tallamy's excellent presentation, Nature's Best Hope.

His other remarks concerned old and new business – see those items below.

**Treasurer's Report:** The Gila Native Plant Society account has a current balance of \$15,824.01. The Silva Creek Garden Account has a current balance of \$26,007.82, of which \$1,138.43 is the Healing Garden portion.

Although GNPS did not charge the plant sale vendors commission on their sales, we made \$662 in book sales and received a donation of \$800 from Plants of the Southwest.

### **Old Business:**

**Native Plant/Landscaping Grant RFP and application instructions:** The two documents were approved by the Board via email exchange; see Appendix.

**Strategic Planning:** Don reported that he had discussed with Tom Stewart, the President of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico, the Gila chapter's desire to enter into a strategic planning exercise, and Tom had been favorable. Emily thought that it would make more sense for the state organization to lead that effort. However, Elroy pointed out that the state organization had no salaried staff at this time – just some payments to the people who kept the membership

lists and managed the website. Moreover, the NPSNM board met only twice a year, so that he doubted there would be major effort in the direction of strategic planning on that level.

### **New Business:**

**Natural History of the Gila Symposium:** William Norris, WNMU Biology Professor, who was involved in the effort to organize the next biennial Natural History of the Gila Symposium in February 2022, had submitted a request to GNPS to sponsor the Symposium in the amount of \$2,000. At that level GNPS would also participate in the planning for the Symposium.

**Motion: GNPS will sponsor the 2022 Natural History of the Gila Symposium in the amount of \$2,000.**

**Bayard Public Library Park Project:** Sonya Dixon, Director of the Bayard Public Library, had submitted an application for a GNPS grant as part of an ambitious project to transform an empty lot adjacent to the library into an environmentally conscious space planted with native pollinators and drought-tolerant trees and plants. The total projected cost was \$45,000 to \$50,000, so that the GNPS grant would be just a small portion of the total funds needed. The project met with general support, but it was felt that more details were needed. In particular, GNPS needed to know what specific items its \$500 would be used for. Elroy said that he would like to see a landscaping plan for the lot. An item of \$2,500 in the application was noted for landscaping, so it was likely the plan had not been done yet. Don said that he would be in further contact with Ms. Dixon; the GNPS grant, though small, might encourage others to join in. The project was a way for GNPS to spread its message to people in the mining district.

**Meeting with SWNM ACT:** Southwest New Mexico ACT, the group that is managing the Water Works property on the other side of the bridge from the Silva Creek Botanical Garden, would like to arrange a meeting at the Water Works to discuss collaboration. Don will contact them and set a date for a meeting.

**Beginner's Guide to Landscaping with Native Grasses:** Don recalled that the first Beginner's Guide to Planting Native Perennials of the Gila Region had been a success and required a number of reprintings. The Beginner's Guides were intended to be a series, and he would like for the next in the series to be on grasses. Grasses made great landscaping material and tended to be overlooked.

**Grasses Course:** A course on grasses was contemplated for 2022 that would encompass both cool season grasses in the spring and warm season grasses in the fall. The feedback on past grass classes indicated that they had been too technical for many participants. The grasses course contemplated would cover basic anatomy and field identification and would also emphasize seed collection and landscaping with native grasses. There was some discussion on scheduling; it was suggested that the number of classes should not be excessive.

**Elections to the GNPS Board:** Betty reviewed the provisions of the Bylaws on elections. Officers are elected in even years and Board Members at Large on odd years, including 2021. Elections are to be held at the November meeting, and the Board is supposed to submit a slate of candidates to the members one month prior by mail or email. Since Les, Joan, Emily and Keller

do not wish to serve for the next two years, Don has approached some other GNPS members to see if they are willing to serve. In addition, nominations can be made by the members, provided the person nominated has been consulted and has expressed a willingness to serve. It was suggested that an email should be sent out asking for volunteers.

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.**

**Appendix: Motions adopted by email exchange since the August 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting**

**Motion adopted by the Board by email exchange on Sept. 4, 2021**

**Motion 1: The Board approves expenditures to replace the mower, wheelbarrow, ladder and tools stolen from the storage shed at the Silva Creek Botanical Garden.**

**Motion adopted by the Board by email exchange on Sept. 7-9, 2021**

**Motion 2: The Board approves the printing of 100 more copies of *Beginner's Guide to Planting Native Perennials of the Gila Region*.**

**Motion adopted by the Board by email exchange on Sept. 11, 2021**

**Motion 3: The Board approves the policy adopted by the SCBG Steering Committee regarding herbicide and pesticide use in the Silva Creek Botanical Garden, as follows:**

The Silva Creek Botanical Garden Steering Committee has agreed to the following herbicide and pesticide use policy for future garden operations:

Policy:

Recognizing that even organic nontoxic compounds (e.g. garlic and soap sprays) can endanger native bees and other life, Silva Creek Botanical Garden staff and volunteers will use minimally invasive, nontoxic, observation-based insect and weed control practices at SCBG. Appropriate methods will be determined case by case by the Steering Committee.

Rationale for Policy:

Native plants and insects evolve together in an ecosystem. We can encourage health and minimize insect problems by creating a wide range of plant species and by providing them with appropriate soil and water conditions. In the majority of cases, low-input, low-tech practices that are nontoxic to animals and non-target species are the methods of choice. If public health or the health of native plants in the garden are endangered, stronger interventions may be discussed.

**Motions adopted by the Board by email exchange on Sept. 12-15, 2021**

**Motion 4: The Board adopts the final version of the Requests for Proposals document (relating to grants).**

**Motion 5: The Board adopts the final version of the Grant Application Requirements document (relating to grants).**