



## **Board Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, May 9, 2023, 2:00 pm**

The meeting was held at the home of Margie Gibson, President

**Call to order** 2:00 pm

**Present:** Margie Gibson, President; Mary Barrett, Vice-President; Dave Becker, Treasurer; Betty Spence, Secretary; Don Graves, Past President; Beth Leuck, Elroy Limmer; absent: Rick Lass

**Minutes:** Minutes of the Board meeting on March 14, 2023, were approved as corrected.

### **Board Reports:**

**Treasurer's Report:** Dave reported that the Gila Native Plant Society operating account as of 4/30/2023 had a balance of \$5,037.98. The Silva Creek Botanical Garden account as of 4/30/2023 had a balance of \$8,790.99, including the Medicinal Garden. (Amounts in these checking accounts were lower than those reported in earlier months because funds not immediately needed had been moved to interest-bearing accounts.) Total asset balance including Edward Jones and other accounts as of 4/30/2023 was 88,361.84. The Chapter ended April with about \$4,750 more in assets than at the beginning of the month. This was due largely to receiving the quarterly reimbursement from the Town (\$3,744.58) and a good month for the Edward Jones mutual fund. Of the \$420.86 in the PayPal account, \$300 had been transferred to the GNPS account at First Federal Credit Union. A temporary transfer glitch has been fixed.

### **Unfinished Business**

**Give Grandly:** Dave reported that GNPS had so far brought in \$2,842 in donations, of which \$850 had been earmarked by donors for the Silva Creek Botanical Garden. Six non-members donated over \$40 and were therefore enrolled as new members. A number of people indicated that they were interested in receiving our emails, and Rick will enter them in the MailChimp audience as "interested."

**Old Financial Institution:** Dave reported that, after a certain amount of aggravation, the accounts at 1<sup>st</sup> New Mexico Bank had been permanently closed and the monies transferred to other accounts.

**Silco Theater Presentation:** The Silver City Museum had invited GNPS to be one of three organizations taking part in one of its Community Conversation programs at the Silco Theater on April 15<sup>th</sup>, along with the Grant County Archaeological Society and the Copper Cowbells. Don and Wendy gave a PowerPoint presentation on the origins and activities of GNPS and fielded a few questions. The audience was not large, but the exposure was worthwhile. Don reported that one of the questions posed from the audience was whether the three organizations “talked to one another.” Don was able to respond that he and Wendy had attended a meeting of the Grant County Cooperative Extension Service, which brought us in contact with people engaged in farming and ranching. Greater interaction with Extension Service events might be useful for GNPS to spread the message about the value of native plants.

### **New Business**

**Annual Picnic:** Margie asked if more help was needed to organize the annual joint picnic with Southwestern Audubon at the Gomez Pavilion on May 13<sup>th</sup>. Don reported that Andrew had checked out the area and found that there was not enough flowering to make it worthwhile to organize a ramble prior to the picnic. Elroy said that he would contact Rachelle Bergman of SWNMA to make sure the hot dogs they were providing arrived on time to be grilled before mealtime.

**SCBG Plans, Expenditures and Contracts:** Dave said that he needed to have budgets or estimates before the last minute on contracts for work in the Silva Creek Botanical Garden so that he could make sure the funds were available. It would be a pretty simple procedure just to include the Treasurer in the loop on contract discussions.

It was confirmed that, since Wendy Grave’s withdrawal from the Board, Elroy was now the Board liaison on the SCBG Steering Committee.

Margie noted that the garden had a budget that was approved through June. That budget included a new weed-wacker. Incidentally, there was a new volunteer to do mowing.

Dave reported that Stream Dynamics had submitted an estimate of \$923.84 for a back-hoe operator for four hours and six hours of SD supervision for placement of boulders on State Street. Margie noted that the Town of Silver City had done its part of the work on State Street that morning.

Dave clarified that nonprofits did have to pay gross receipts tax (GRT) on services and materials, but not on equipment. He would circulate the government brochure explaining what nonprofits did and did not pay GRT on. Since GNPS did buy equipment from Ace from time to time, it would be useful to give Ace a list of names authorized to use the credit card for purchases exempt from tax.

Since Alex Brown, the Town Manager, Dave had heard, was planning to retire next year, he would work with him to revise our contractual relation with the Town with regard to the garden. Margie said that, with the Master Plan in place, it would not be difficult to spend enough to meet the limits the Town was willing to reimburse.

**Motion: The Board approved payment of the estimated \$923.84 with the unanimous vote of those present.**

**Formation of Finance Committee:** Dave had proposed that a finance committee should be formed to consider environmentally sustainable investment options. The item was deferred in the absence of Rick, who was particularly concerned with the issue.

**Book Storage and Materials:** Don reviewed where the supplies of printed materials were held and asked for volunteers to take charge of the some of the materials that he and Wendy had stored in their house, since their duties as Co-Presidents of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico might take them away at times when the materials were needed. The bulk of the copies of Jack Carter's *Trees and Shrubs of New Mexico* were stored at By-Pass Storage; Les Brandt and Mary Ann Kressig had about 10 boxes, and Rick had others and would also store the Beginner's Guides. Betty agreed to take charge of a miscellany of publications and materials to be used whenever we had a booth. She said she currently had two boxes of historical materials from the early days of GNPS, and Margie expressed interest in obtaining those.

**Education Committee/Events Staffing:** Don reported that Steve Blake had the supplies for children's activities at events. He would be handling the GNPS booth at the Kids' Fishing Derby at Lake Roberts on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. He could probably use some help at the booth.

Dave asked what were the events at which we might have booths and could sell books. Various Board members mentioned Earth Day, the Hummingbird Festival, the Native Plant Sale and the Gila River Festival, which would not be held this year but would be held in 2024. Also in 2024, we might have a booth at the Natural History of the Gila Symposium and the Gila Centennial. Dave suggested that we set up another box of selected publications for sale at such events. With regard to the Gila Centennial, GNPS would probably lead field trips, but we should also figure out an event at which we could give out promotional material.

### **Other Business**

**Replacement Board Member:** Since Wendy Graves has withdrawn from the Board, there was potentially a place for the appointment of a replacement. Don said that he could recommend Karen Valentine, a retired educator, as a potential Board member. Margie suggested that, instead of appointing a replacement for less than one year, it would be better to wait until November, when all Board members-at-large would be elected.

**Contribution in Honor of Phoebe Lawrence:** Dave mentioned that Carolyn Johnson had made a contribution of \$50 in memory of Phoebe Lawrence.

**The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.**

### **Appendix I: President's April Report**

Since it was agreed that there would be no Board meeting in April, Margie submitted the following President's Report via email on April 10, 2023.

#### **Meeting with Alex Brown**

Marty Eberhardt, Elroy, and I met with Alex Brown on March 24th. Alex started the meeting by telling us he had just signed a purchase order for \$15,000 for work on the Virginia Street curb and State Street drainage. Getting electricity to the garden would cost \$30,000, and he suggested solar panels and batteries as an alternative.

Marty presented the SCBG Master Plan and explained how it came about. Alex said the town could provide a bike rack. Elroy asked the city to rough out the Zuni bowl and channel with a motor-grader and place the bollards on State Street. He also reported on the recent elm removal, which Alex supports.

We explained that Ashley had details required for her graduate work, which we wouldn't necessarily be following, such as pavement. Alex said that at the Rock House (Waterworks), they will use square plastic pavers that link together and are filled with crusher fines. It's cheaper than pavement and easier to work with. Here's an example:

<https://www.truegridpaver.com/products/truegrid-pro-plus/>

Marty explained the upcoming phases of the Master Plan. The bird habitat thicket is currently underway. Phase two, revising the butterfly garden, will coincide with next year's tenth anniversary of the plane crash. The front gate with a kiosk would be part of this phase. Phase three would be the front yard garden and expansion of the pollinator garden beyond butterflies. She asked if grants might be available that the town qualifies for, and Alex said he would have their Community Development Director talk to her.

Elroy mentioned Dave's liability concerns, and if Dave prepares a draft, Alex will give it to their lawyers.

#### **Earth Day**

Don will be in charge of the Earth Day booth.

#### **Fab Five**

Last year, we came up with the idea of offering a group of larval host plants that would provide habitat for people's yards (and look good together). In March of last year, we talked about growing them with Steve Plath, who runs the nursery for the Gila Watershed Partnership. You might recall that he had some of the best-looking plants at our plant sale. As Don mentioned in

an email, it's time to move forward, so let's discuss that at the next board meeting.

## **Appendix II: Motions adopted by email exchange since March 14, 2023**

### **Motion adopted by exchange of emails on April 2-4, 2023**

**The Board unanimously approved the grant application from John Gorey to research a potentially new endemic thistle species in the high Mogollon Mountains and awards him a grant of \$500.**

#### **Explanation:**

In 2022 John received a grant from the Native Plant Society of New Mexico to research locations of the rare Graham's Thistle (*Cirsium grahamii*). In the course of that search he discovered an unusual thistle, and he has received tentative confirmation from plant experts that it may be a new species endemic to the high Mogollon Mountains of the Gila. He received a \$1,500 grant from NPSNM to search for more specimens, and he requested \$500.00 from GNPS in order to do a more complete search for both *Cirsium grahamii* and the potentially new thistle. This additional money will allow the project to have roughly five extra days in the field and the ability to pay for an additional field tech for searching the Mogollon Mountains. John will make a presentation to GNPS on his findings at a date to be determined in 2024.

### **Motion adopted by exchange of emails on April 10-17, 2023**

**The Board approved the transfer of the remaining balances at 1st New Mexico Bank in the GNPS operating account and the Silva Creek Botanical Garden account (except for the amounts needed to cover outstanding checks) to the respective money market accounts at Edward Jones. The motion was passed with one no vote and one abstention.**

**Explanation:** The GNPS and SCBG money market accounts at Edward Jones are currently earning 4.5% interest. By transferring the funds to those accounts, GNPS can be earning interest on the roughly \$27,500 currently remaining in the two 1st NM Bank accounts. Funds can easily be transferred as needed from these liquid money market accounts to the respective checking accounts at First Federal Credit Union.

The no vote and abstention stemmed from a concern to place our funds in accounts that favor socially and environmentally responsible investments. However, the remaining Board members felt that the matter, while important, required considerable research and would in any case affect the longer-term investment funds. Meanwhile, it was fiscally responsible to earn interest on the funds that should remain readily available.

**Motion adopted by exchange of emails on April 26-27, 2023**

**The Board unanimously voted to authorize the Treasurer to close the accounts at 1<sup>st</sup> New Mexico Bank.**

**Motion adopted by exchange of emails on May 4, 2023**

**The Board approved the expenditure of up to \$3,600 to implement the north end plan for water management and the habitat thicket for the Silva Creek Botanical Garden with eight yeas and one member unavailable.**

Explanation: By motion adopted by email exchange on October 18-20, 2022, the GNPS Board accepted the north end plan for water management and the development of a habitat thicket for the Silva Creek Botanical Garden. Stream Dynamics has now submitted a draft North End Implementation Contract for the water management aspect with a cost estimate. It was clarified that the Town of Silver City will reimburse the cost.

**Other Decisions**

**The Board agreed to the recycling of an old MacBook loaned in the past to the Southwest New Mexico Audubon Society.**

Explanation:

Approximately 12 years ago GNPS loaned an older MacBook to SWNMA for presentations. It no longer works well and cannot be upgraded, and Rachelle Bergmann of SWNMA offered to take it to electronic recycling on her next visit to Tucson.

**Wendy Graves resigned from the GNPS Board effective May 6, 2023.**

Explanation: Wendy explained that, having been elected Co-President of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico, she would like to concentrate on the changes that she and her Co-President can make in the NPSNM to strengthen the organization as a whole and hopefully make it more stable. Her resignation was accepted.