



Board Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, October 10, 2023, 2:00 pm

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

Call to order 2:05 pm

Present: Margie Gibson, President; Cathleen Norman, Treasurer; Betty Spence, Secretary; Marty Eberhardt; Elroy Limmer; Beth Leuck; Don Graves represented by a proxy given to Margie Gibson; absent: Rick Lass

Board Reports:

President's Report: Margie announced that she had spoken to Dinah Demers, who had agreed to run for a position of Board Member at Large in the elections this November.

Treasurer's Report: Prior to the meeting, Cathleen circulated treasurer's reports for August and September 2023. Among other information, she reported that the Gila Native Plant Society checking account as of 9/30/2023 had a balance of \$ 1,759.84. The Silva Creek Botanical Garden checking account as of 9/30/2023 had a balance of \$ 8,898.3, including the Medicinal Garden. The GNPS money market account had a balance of \$ 15,729.61, and the SCBG money market account had a balance of \$ 20,951.77. The total asset balance including Edward Jones and other accounts as of 9/30/2023 was \$ 96,864.45.

Committee and other reports as submitted:

Silva Creek Botanical Garden Steering Committee Report for September 2023:

Prior to the meeting, Marty circulated the following report in writing:

In September, work continued in the Habitat Thicket and Butterfly Garden. Flagstones were ordered for the butterfly garden.

Naava and I worked with Bridgette Johns and others from the Waterworks Hub to lay out the path from the opposite bank to the Garden. This is part of the Silva Creek Nature Trail grant that the Waterworks Hub received through New Mexico Outdoor Recreation. YCC crews worked on the trail on our side of Silva Creek on September 22 and September 29.

I met with Bridgette on September 26 to discuss closer collaboration between our two projects. This was a very helpful meeting. Bridgette and Lee Gruber will put the word out with the town and with funders they know that we are a worthy project and that we both extend each other's reach. Bridgette also told me that she thought we had a shot at a New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Trails Plus grant, if it's not too late in the rolling cycle.

This began a 7-day-a-week effort that still continues as of this writing on October 9. This is a complicated grant involving 50 questions, most of them essay questions and with matching requirements in kind or cash requiring a great deal of calculation. Perhaps the biggest issue has been that we have had to round up the pieces needed for this grant, such as an operating budget, a signed letter from the town, a signed letter from the presidents of NPSNM, and a federal SAM number from NPSNM. Any grant writing in the future will be much easier, especially as we now have language that we can reuse. As of this writing, we have not yet submitted the grant, as we are still waiting for two letters of support and the SAM identification number, which Wendy is working on from afar.

Steering Committee Hours in September: 79.

Report of the Gila Chapter Representative to the NPSNM Board

Prior to the meeting, Betty circulated the following report in writing:

On September 21, 2023, the day before the annual Native Plant Society of New Mexico Conference, the NPSNM Board held its half-year board meeting at the Alpine Public Library in Alpine, Texas.

Tom Stewart, the Treasurer, gave an overview of the finances as of Sept. 16, 2023, and reported that NPSNM was on track to meet its 2023 operating budget goals. The investment accounts had rebounded from the drop of earlier years. That meant that the interest income from the Carter Fund investment account could be applied to the account to be used to authorize grants. That account was still low, but letters soliciting contributions to the Carter Fund were usually sent out in November or December each year. The membership report circulated by Lindsey Kirchhevel showed a record number of 868 paid memberships.

Don and Wendy Graves, the Co-Presidents, reported on their visits to the various chapters. They had shared activities so far with all the chapters but Albuquerque, for which a visit was planned. Each chapter reported on some of the highlights of their activities.

Rachel Jankowitz resigned this summer as Conservation Chair, since she is moving to California, and Barbara Fix was authorized by the Board to look for a present to express appreciation for all her services. Sylvan Kaufman (Santa Fe Chapter), the new Conservation Chair, took over on July 27th. She reported that her first priority was reconstituting the Conservation Committee, made up of conservation representatives from the chapters (Phil Hastings for the Gila Chapter).

In a Zoom meeting the Conservation Committee had agreed on a mission statement and guidelines.

A discussion ensued about the freedom of individual chapters to send letters to government agencies on conservation matters. It was agreed that chapters were free to do so on matters that pertained to their areas, although the Conservation Chair would appreciate being alerted. However, if there was doubt about the controversial nature of some issue, or if the issue affected the entire state, the chapter conservation representative should bring the matter before the whole NPSNM Conservation Committee (conservation@npsnm.org) to ensure consistency.

There is a project underway to digitize and index the NPSNM newsletter archive. There was a discussion, unresolved, on how to fund Sunflower Scholarships for conferences. It was decided that, beginning in 2024, the deadline for grant applications would be November 30th, rather than December 31st. Mary Adams, President of the Taos Chapter, announced that Taos would be hosting the next annual conference on July 26-28, 2024, at the Sagebrush Inn.

The next meeting of the NPSNM Board will be on January 13, 2024, at the Sevilleta Wildlife Refuge Headquarters, when grant applications will be considered.

Ongoing Business:

Fund-raising appeal to members: Margie reported that \$2,190.00 had been raised so far by the fund-raising appeal to members to fund Phase I of the SCBG Master Plan.

Grant: As Marty had indicated in the SCBG Steering Committee Report above, intense work had been going on to put together an application for a New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Trails Plus grant. She, Margie and Denise Smith had been spending hours on it, trying to round up the multiple pieces required. The application process was complicated by the fact that GNPS is a chapter of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico, so that the various ID numbers needed had to be obtained from the state organization. In fact, there were some corrections needed on the state level; Wendy was working on it. Luckily, the grant application could be submitted while the ID issues were being worked out. Another problem was that we might have too small an operating budget for the Outdoor Recreation grants.

Marty reported that we already have five letters of support for our grant and two more would be coming. Betty suggested that Tom Stewart, as the current Treasurer and past President of NPSNM could help with the technicalities.

(The day after the Board meeting it was discovered that we could not submit the grant until we got a federal ID number; however Wendy did the work needed to get one and the grant was submitted October 13.)

New Business:

Natural History of the Gila Symposium: Margie reported that Professor Bill Norris, one of the organizers of next year's Natural History of the Gila Symposium, had asked for \$300 to defray the costs of a social event during the symposium. GNPS had traditionally supported the biennial event.

Motion: The Board approved a grant of \$300 to defray the costs of a social event during the Natural History of the Gila Symposium in 2024.

Carter Fund Donation: Margie said that GNPS customarily made an annual contribution to the Jack and Martha Carter Conservation Fund, out of which NPSNM made grants to worthy projects. The Board should decide how much, if any, we wanted to donate.

In considering how much to donate, Board members looked at the estimated operating budget that Margie had put together for the year from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, based on revenues and expenditures over the previous 12-month period. (The operating budget was approved by the Board via email on Oct. 1-2, 2023 – see Annex.) It was agreed that we should not exhaust too much of the \$3,700 budgeted in the first half-year.

Motion: The Board approved a contribution of \$1,000 to the Jack and Martha Carter Conservation Fund for 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Appendix: Actions taken by email exchange since the Board meeting on September 12, 2023

Motion adopted by exchange of email on October 1-2, 2023: The Board approved the attached operating budget prepared by the President for the period July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, with seven yeas and one nay.

Explanation: The incentive for the preparation of the operating budget was that it was urgently needed to accompany the application for a New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Trails Plus grant. After some discussion about the amounts, it was clarified that the figures had been taken from the Treasurer's Reports in the previous 12 months. In addition to being a requirement for the grant application, it was welcomed as a useful planning tool for expenditures in the coming year. The budget was not set in stone, but could be amended if the financial picture changed substantially.