



**Board Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, August 8, 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; Cathleen Norman, Treasurer; Don Graves, Past President; Marty Eberhardt; Elroy Limmer; Beth Leuck and Betty Spence represented by proxies given to Margie Gibson; absent: Rick Lass

**Minutes:** Minutes of the Board meeting of July 11, 2023, were approved as corrected.

**Board Reports:**

**President's Report:** Prior to the meeting, Margie circulated the following report in writing:

**Shed Access:** The Garden Management Team plans to invest in a realtor-type key lock box. The key under the rock has gone missing several times, and having a box where we can periodically change the combination is advantageous. Please email me regarding who needs key access.

**New Garden Webpages:** I worked with Wendy and Marty on the design – Wendy did ALL the technical aspects, which was a lot of work.

**SCBG Open House:** All the preparation and publicity paid off. Marty reported that 70 people attended, and attendees seemed both interested and engaged. The garden looked good, which was a challenge in this weather. Many people expressed their appreciation of the garden. Half a dozen people told me that removing the existing amphitheater benches was a waste of money.

**Special notes:** Nancy Gordon talked to Jackie and me about the Life in the Creek project and thought if we tried moving rocks, the next big flood would take them away. I also spoke to Bridgette Johns, and they will involve us in the plan for the creek trail on our side, which includes invasive species removal. They have funding and might also be able to help fund some of our other projects. Another thanks to Wendy for making sure we invited them.

**Archives:** I've gone through several boxes, three-ring binders, two accordion files, and a grocery bag and reduced all the materials to one 18-inch long file box (after consultation with past

presidents where needed). The collection included past policies, which we will review at some future date and, if still relevant, post on our website.

My total hours from 1 July to 5 August: 56

**Treasurer's Report:** As Acting Treasurer, Dave Becker circulated a report in writing effective July 31, 2023. He reported that the Gila Native Plant Society checking account as of 7/31/2023 had a balance of \$ 2,692.21. The Silva Creek Botanical Garden checking account as of 7/31/2023 had a balance of \$ 5,088.40, including the Medicinal Garden. The GNPS money market account had a balance of \$ 15,528.34, and the SCBG money market account had a balance of \$20,683.55. The total asset balance including Edward Jones and other accounts as of 7/31/2023 was \$93,781.22.

**Book Sales Report:** Prior to the meeting, Rick Lass circulated the following report in writing: Just a brief report: We purchased a case of *Common Southwestern Native Plants: An Identification Guide* from the Colorado Native Plant Society. Also, I am looking into a possible new publisher for the *Conspicuous Butterflies of the Gila National Forest, New Mexico and Surrounding Areas* pocket guide.

**Publicity Report:** Prior to the meeting, Betty circulated the following report in writing for the period July 12 -Aug. 8:

GNPS has put out a lot of publicity since July 11. For the second landscaping field trip on July 23<sup>rd</sup> we just sent a MailChimp to paid-up members, since participation was limited; RSVPs were monitored. For our booth at the Hummingbird Festival on July 29-30<sup>th</sup> we sent a MailChimp to call for volunteers, with a good response, and put a post on our Facebook page.

For the Open House at the Garden to roll out the Master Plan on August 5th, we sent an article and photos to *Desert Exposure*, which sadly did not use them – perhaps we can rework it for fundraising purposes. We did successfully send press releases to Silver City Daily Press and the Grant County Beat, and notices have appeared on four online calendars; we also sent a MailChimp to members and put a post on our Facebook page.

We've given the full treatment to the native plant sale scheduled for August 12<sup>th</sup>: MailChimp, press releases, calendar notices, Facebook post, a request for PSAs to SkyWest Media for Silver City Radio (KRWG will do PSAs as a result of the calendar notice), an interview by Don on GMCR/KURU on Raul Turrieta's show "Local Flavor" on Aug. 4<sup>th</sup>, and posters placed in town and surrounding areas by volunteers.

We also arranged for plant sale ads, as follows:

*Desert Exposure* – 1/6th page (3.25" X 4.7") - \$174.40 plus \$14.28 GRT for a total of \$188.68.

Invoiced and paid. To appear in the August issue.

*Silver City Daily Press* – ¼ pg. \$120.60 + tax – to appear Friday, August 4

*Deming Headlight* – ¼ pg. \$60.30 + tax – to appear Friday, August 4

*Mimbres Messenger* – ¼ page \$20 – to appear in the August issue

The Coop's *Garbanzo Gazette* – half-page, free, to appear in the August issue (Don's doing)

The next project will be to work on press releases for the fundraising effort for Phase One of the Garden Master Plan.

#### Discussion

Betty was commended for all her publicity efforts for the SCBG Open House and Plant Sale.

#### **Committee and other reports as submitted:**

**Silva Creek Botanical Garden Steering Committee Report for July 2023:** Prior to the meeting, Marty Eberhardt circulated the following report in writing:

July was a busy month. We had to finalize estimates and fundraising goals for the July board meeting. Members also planted the thicket, worked on organizing the August 5 open house, including publicity materials, and worked on the SCBG pages for the website. Our four members put in 75 hours.

#### **Ongoing Business:**

**Treasurer Authorization:** Margie procured the remaining signatures on the document authorizing our new Treasurer, Cathleen Norman, to access GNPS accounts.

**SCBG Open House and Fundraising/Website:** Marty said that everyone involved agreed that the Open House in the garden went well, especially considering how hot it was. She urged Board members to look at the garden webpages on the website if they hadn't already done so. Wendy had done a great job, and Margie and Marty had put in some hours, too. Elroy's photos were used.

With regard to raising money for Phase I of the Master Plan, Marty pointed out that the SCBG Steering Committee had been set up as a policy-making body, not a fundraising committee. It was agreed that fundraising would be the Board's job, not the responsibility of the Steering Committee. Margie suggested that GNPS might set aside \$5,000 as matching fund money. Cathleen noted that on many boards the board members were asked to donate a certain amount, ~~but the idea did not find favor; GNPS Board members would no doubt contribute what they felt they could.~~ Don said that he and Wendy had always thought we should do more fundraising for the garden and rely less on Betsy Kaido, who had already donated so generously.

Elroy asked whether we were going to seek grants for the project. Marty said that Alex Brown, the Town Manager, had staff who wrote grants, and they might be able to help GNPS identify suitable grants to apply for. After all, the garden was on Town property. Denise Friedrich had offered to help write grants. Margie suggested that Marty could contact Alex Brown by email.

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**Butterfly Garden:** Margie drew attention to the funding request that had been circulated for the Children’s Butterfly Garden renovation project, part of Phase I of the Master Plan. The total budget was \$2,660. The work would be done by the Aldo Leopold Charter School YCC Garden Crew as well as by GNPS and Heart-of-the Gila volunteers and was scheduled to start in September.

**Motion: The Board unanimously approved the funding request for the Children’s Butterfly Garden renovation project in the amount of \$2,660.**

**At-Large Board Members:** Margie said elections for At-Large Board Members were coming up in November. She had asked all the current At-Large Board Members if they intended to run for office. Marty, Beth and Elroy were willing to continue. Rick Lass had said that he would not run again for the Board but would continue to handle book sales. According to the bylaws, the Board should have from 7 to 11 members. It appeared that, together with the three officers and the Past President, we would have the minimum number, but it was agreed that it would be better to have more people on the Board. Don suggested asking Karen Valentine, a retired schoolteacher who was on the GNPS Education Committee. Another possible was David Philips, a retired college professor who had already indicated a willingness to help. Elroy suggested Amy McLane; she and her husband Kevin were regular volunteers on garden work days, and she seemed really enthusiastic. It was agreed that these people would be approached to see if they were willing to join the Board.

**Plant Sale:** Don said that all the plans were made and plenty of volunteers were lined up to help. Jackie and Jim Blurton would as usual set up and take down. GNPS would be handling the sale of plants from Whiskey Creek Zócalo. GNPS had three canopies this year, one for sale of the plants from the Zócalo, one for GNPS book sales and membership and one with refreshments (ice water and iced tea) and chairs for the relief for any vendors or customers who needed it. The weather report was not bad.

Asked about the conflict of parking for the Farmers’ Market, he said that the main issue was that some of the vendors had big rigs to maneuver in, and we couldn’t have random cars parked there at the start. However, he had been in contact with the manager of the Farmers’ Market about the problem. When picking up the permit from the Town, he would ask for some orange cones. And in any case he would get there by 7:30 am, which should be long before the Farmers’ Market opened.

Marty noted that a fundraising presence was needed that day, in fact, at any event GNPS was involved in.

Cathleen asked if photos would be taken. Don said that Val Weston had agreed to take photos.

**Holiday Gathering:** Margie explained that The Commons could no longer accommodate our annual Holiday Gathering because the greatly increased need for food meant that supplies were now stored in the main room. The Holiday Gathering was a potluck lunch and about 35

people were expected. In response to questions, Elroy explained that it was usually held in mid-December, on a Sunday in order to avoid a conflict with the Christmas Bird Count. The cost was normally low and not a budget problem. Margie asked for suggestions of possible venues. Two ideas that seemed promising were the old Elks Club, now the home of High Desert Pies, and the Silver City Women's Club, which Cathleen would follow up on. Another idea was the Church of Harmony, which Marty would follow up on.

### **New Business:**

**Fab 5 Committee:** Margie explained that the Fab 5 was an idea developed by the Garden Management Team. It involved choosing a group of five good host plants that would look well together and promoting them as a package. She proposed forming a committee that would select the plants, contract growers to produce them, and promote their distribution, perhaps through an event at which they would be sold at a discount. Don mentioned Gabe Feldman and the Gila Watershed Partnership nursery in Safford as possible growers. A likely time frame was monsoon season next year. Don and Margie volunteered to be on the committee and recruit other members.

**Pride Festival:** Board members felt that, while they were sympathetic to the aims of the Pride Festival, it did not correspond closely to the GNPS mission and we did not have volunteers to take on another event. The next community event in which we should participate was the Mimbres Harvest Festival on October 7<sup>th</sup>, which would attract a more targeted audience for native plants.

**GRIP Phase 2 River Stewardship Project:** Elroy reported on his and Naava's meeting with Allyson Siwik, Mike Fugali, and Joseph Owens concerning the phase of the River Stewardship Project aimed at removing non-native trees and slash piles along Silva Creek, including the section alongside the Silva Creek Botanical Garden. They have funding, and the work is scheduled between October 1 and February 27. Elroy said that they had encouraged GRIP to do all the nonnative removal they wanted, and there was talk about planting a sycamore halfway up the bank.

The discussion turned to questions about the Waterworks trail plans and the possibility that they might help fund the trail on our side of the creek and perhaps other parts of the Master Plan. Since Don and Wendy had had the most contact with Bridgette Johns, Don agreed to do a follow-up talk with her if Marty would send him an email with the points we wanted covered.

### **Other Business**

**Agave Planting with BCI:** Don reported that GNPS would be planting 300 more agaves in conjunction with Bat Conservation International at the end of August. He had lined up six landowners who could accommodate 50 agave plants each. In part they would use some of the agaves saved from the mine property. Reporter Juno Ogle of the Silver City Daily Press had done a nice article on our agave planting for bat conservation. Cathleen asked whether we had further publicized these efforts. Don replied that articles had been put into the GNPS Bulletin and the NPSNM newsletter.

**The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.**

**Appendix: Actions taken by email exchange since July 11, 2023**

**Motion adopted by exchange of email on July 17, 2023: The Board approved the President's nominations of Cathleen Norman as Treasurer and Marty Eberhardt as Board Member at Large.**

Explanation: Because of the resignations of Dave Becker as Treasurer and Wendy Graves as Board Member at Large, the Board required a new Treasurer and Board Member at Large. The President reported that Cathleen Norman had agreed to serve as the new Treasurer. She therefore nominated Cathleen as Treasurer. She also nominated Marty Eberhardt as Board Member at Large. The Bylaws call for the Board to approve these nominations by the President and for the Board to be between 7 and 11 members. These nominations bring the Board to nine members.

**Other Actions**

**By exchange of email on July 13-14, 2023, the Board approved the purchase of of two boxes (16 to a box) of *Common Southwestern Native Plants* at a cost of approximately \$200 per box.**

**Mary Barrett resigned as Board Member at Large by email of July 24, 2023.**