



**Board Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, November 12, 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm and record of the Friday, November 15 Annual Membership Meeting**

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

**Called to order** at 2:00 pm.

**Present:** Margie Gibson, President; Cathleen Norman, Treasurer; Betty Spence, Secretary; Don Graves, Past President; Dinah Demers, Marty Eberhardt, Elroy Limmer, Stacy Sollisch

**Absent:** David Philips, proxy given to Margie Gibson

**Guests:** Donna Stevens, candidate for President, and Cara Staab, candidate for Vice-President

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the Board meeting of October 8, 2024, were approved.

**Board Reports:**

**Treasurer's Report:** Prior to the meeting, Cathleen circulated a Treasurer's report for the close of October. Among other information, she reported that the Gila Native Plant Society checking account as of 10/31/2024 had a balance of \$1,331.25, and the GNPS money market fund had a balance of \$9,167.46. The Silva Creek Botanical Garden checking account as of 10/31/2024 had a balance of \$37,943.88, and the SCBG money market account had a balance of \$29,547.29. The total asset balance including Edward Jones and other accounts as of 10/31/2024 was \$193,558.01. She noted that the GNPS and SCBG accounts had been listed separately for greater clarity.

In response to a question from Cara Staab, Margie explained that the Silva Creek Botanical Garden was not a separate entity but was a GNPS project managed by the Steering Committee. However, since considerable money was involved in the garden project, it was practical to have separate accounts.

**Committee and other reports:**

**Silva Creek Botanical Garden Steering Committee Report:** Prior to the meeting, Marty circulated the following Steering Committee report:

We have been busy since the last Board meeting with planning. We met with designer Judith Phillips about a plan for the Front Yard Garden. We will have a plan for 2025, with construction occurring no sooner than 2026. Judith wants to communicate with Ashley Pedersen, who is designing the Children's Pollinator Garden, since the two areas are adjacent. Zoom meetings on the pollinator garden are ongoing, and we are moving from conceptual design to the design development phase of the contract, which ends in mid-February. We then plan to apply to the Carroll Petrie Foundation for funding.

We are trying to get bids for the wall, but do not have two firm bids yet. The wall must be up before the mural project begins in May. Rohan is waiting for colder weather to deal with the leaking oil.

We plan to have the Habitat Thicket interpretive signs in before the spring.

We met with Steve Morgan and got plans for the Front Entrance. However, we still do not have prices on everything (board members will be familiar with the challenges of getting bids in Silver City). The new design is a HUGE improvement over the rather vague initial concept....and it will cost at least \$7,000 more. The board will be given the new design and the budget together for a vote, just as soon as we can get them to you.

#### Discussion

Marty added that Ellie Sorensen, a wonderful local artist, was planning a show at the Leyba-Ingalls gallery during the time we would be hosting the state conference. She was creating all kinds of artwork with paints and dyes made from natural plants.

She also said that the members of the Silva Creek Botanical Garden Steering Committee were feeling a little burned-out and could use more help, especially with the non-plant infrastructure. Elroy commented on how hard it was to get bids and ride herd on contractors in this town. Estimates for building the wall were still up in the air. Margie suggested that we should look for a member who was a retired contractor. She added that, although there was a deadline for finishing the five projects paid for by the Trails+ grant, there was no overall deadline for implementing the garden Master Plan. Perhaps it would be wise not to rush into getting a grant for the pollinator garden immediately next spring. Marty noted that the pricing for the infrastructure on the pollinator garden would be very complicated.

#### **Report of the Gila chapter representative to the NPSNM board**

Prior to the meeting Betty circulated the following report:

On October 23, 2024, the board of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico held an additional board meeting to consider a few items that could not be dealt with at the summer board meeting for lack of time. The NPSNM Board authorized the creation of a committee to plan ways to celebrate the organization's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2026. Kathleen Hall, the NPSNM

Documentarian, agreed to chair the committee, which she hopes will involve at least, but not limited to, one member from each chapter.

The NPSNM Board approved an update to its Policies in Effect, Meeting Section, as follows: “A member or group of members not on the NPSNM board may submit a proposal for consideration by the board if it has been approved by at least one chapter. The proposal or request to the board must be accompanied by the minutes of the chapter board meeting(s) demonstrating that a corresponding motion was proposed and approved at the chapter level.”

### **Unfinished and General Business**

#### **Election of the chapter representative to the state board**

Betty explained that she was a candidate for Recording Secretary of the NPSNM board and would not be able to continue as the chapter representative next year. Margie said that Dinah Demers had volunteered to be the Gila Chapter representative. She proposed that the GNPS board elect Dinah as its representative.

**Motion: The Board elected Dinah Demers as the Gila Chapter representative to the NPSNM board effective January 1, 2025.**

#### **Removal of artwork panels**

Marty reminded the Board that we needed to move the metal artwork currently surrounding the water tank in the Silva Creek Botanical Garden and reposition it in a new permanent location along the creek to make room for repairs to the tank and the planned wall around it. The wall needed to be in place by May, because Diana Ingalls had gotten the grant to do the tilework on the wall with YCC help. Unfortunately, the bid she had presented to the board in October turned out to be inaccurate. The lowest bid now received was from Alonso Romo. He would charge \$2,450 to move the artwork from around the tank to the edge of the creek between the tool shed and the auditorium space, and another \$500 to move the wood blocks now occupying that space, the whole plus tax.

Don noted that we would be able to get reimbursed for the expense, since we had a contract with the Town for up to \$15,000 per year for our costs in developing and maintaining the garden, which was on Town property.

**Motion: The Board agrees to hire Alonso Romo to move the artwork panels and the wood blocks for the invoice amount.**

#### **2026 NPSNM State Conference**

Don reported on the deliberations of the conference planning committee. The theme so far decided on involved native plant interactions with pollinators, wildlife and culture. Because the 2026 state conference would fall on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico, we were proposing to bring in a special person as keynote speaker and were thinking of contracting with Doug Tallamy. Because he was very well known as a speaker on creating

habitat in your yard, it would cost \$4,000 to hire him, plus the costs of his room and board and transport, and we would need to nail down the schedule early to secure him.

**Motion: The Board agrees to contract with Doug Tallamy to present the keynote address at the 2026 state conference at a speaker fee of \$4,000 plus room and board and transportation.**

Margie said that the conference planning committee would need to agree to outlays of funds for conference expenses too quickly to get the Board's approval for each amount. She proposed that the Board authorize the conference planning committee to use \$5,000 in up-front conference expenses. Betty explained that most of the conference expenses would eventually be covered by the conference registration fees, which were kept by the host chapter, but there might be some overrun.

**Motion: The Board approves \$5,000 in up-front conference expenses.**

[Update: At its meeting on November 13, 2024, the conference planning committee decided: a) to host the conference on September 11-13 (with early registration available on September 10, 4-6 pm); b) to hold the conference at the Grant County Business and Conference Center; and c) to adopt as the theme "Roots of Resilience: Native Plants in the Next 50 Years."]

### **Tamal Fiesta y Mas**

Margie informed the Board that GNPS would have a booth at the Tamal Fiesta y Mas on Saturday, November 16, 2024, from 10 am to 4 pm. Don said that, as usual, Jim Blurton would set up and take down our canopy and booth for us. We would have an educational activity (making seed "empanadas"). Some members of the education committee would help with that activity, but we also would need people to sit at the table in two-hour shifts selling books and answering questions about our organization. Dinah volunteered to help out in the morning.

### **Volunteer Appreciation Potluck and other GNPS events**

Margie urged Board members to attend GNPS events and programs, so that the members could get to know us. We were the face of the organization.

Don said that we needed volunteers for other tasks besides the garden work. A general discussion ensued on how we could enlist more volunteers. Some ideas involved including a short list of volunteer opportunities in each Bulletin and having sign-up sheets at program meetings and events.

### **Holiday Party, Sunday, December 8**

Stacy reminded us that we need to give the Women's Club a check for \$50 to use the kitchen during the holiday potluck. Cathleen confirmed that the reservation fee had been paid, and she would handle the additional \$50 payment.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

**Friday, November 15, Annual Membership and Program Meeting, 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**

The meeting was held at WNMU, Harlan Hall, in Room 111. It began at 7:00 with elections for a slate of officers and approval of revisions to the Bylaws. Voting was in-person and via the chat feature on Zoom. Only chapter members can vote.

The following officers were elected:

President Donna Stevens (new)

Vice-president Cara Staab (new)

Treasurer Cathleen Norman (returning)

Secretary Betty Spence (returning)

In addition, the revisions to the Bylaws were approved.

Following the elections, the program, "Observations from the Field," was presented.