Board Meeting Minutes, Wednesday, March 18, 2026, 2:00-3:30 pm

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

Called to order at 2:00 pm.

Present: Donna Stevens, President; Cara Staab, Vice-President; Betty Spence, Secretary; Margie Gibson, Past President; Marty Eberhardt, Elroy Limmer, Carol Martin, Ceci McNicoll, Sheila Williams

Absent: Naava Koenigsberg, Treasurer; David Phillips, proxy given to Margie Gibson

Additions to Agenda: Gila Symposium Support, Programs, Picnic

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the Board meeting of February 18, 2026, were approved.

Unfinished and General Business

Give Grandly update: Donna reported that our organization's task was to help groups locate their assigned place on the day of the live event. She would see that information about Give Grandly was included in the next GNPS *Bulletin*. Jim Blurton had agreed to help with the set-up. Help would be needed to attend our table. Marty and Sheila volunteered.

Plant Sale update: Ceci reported that they had reserved the parking lot across from Gough Park for Saturday, August 8, 2026; Naava had helped her get the permit. She had sent out a letter, a copy of which she circulated, to all the vendors she was aware of.

Margie suggested we should make up a Save the Date card for the plant sale, to be given out at tabling events. After some discussion, it was decided we could have a bookmark mentioning not only the plant sale but also Family Day at the Garden and the state conference. She volunteered to do the artwork.

Support for the Gila Symposium: Donna reported that she had received a communication from the organizers of the Natural History of the Gila Symposium. The next Symposium would be held on February 25-27, 2027. The sponsorship levels they laid out were $100, $250, $500 and $1,000. For those unfamiliar with the Gila Symposium, it was organized on a biennial basis by the University, and involved a series of academic but interesting talks about all aspects of local natural history. We had sponsored it in the past and had been able to have a table in the lobby

with our informational material and to sell books. It was unclear if it was necessary to donate $500 in order to have a table this year. After some discussion, the sense was that GNPS would like to donate at least $100 and perhaps $250. The decision was tabled until the next meeting.

Board and Committee Reports

Silva Creek Botanical Garden Steering Committee Report: Marty reported that the new Volunteer Coordinator had started a few weeks ago and had done some work on posters, a garden calendar and Facebook posts. She was concentrating at present on recruiting for watering.

The Garden Committee was planning a Family Day on July 11 and three docent training events on July 18 and 25 and August 1. She would provide a write-up for the GNPS *Bulletin* on the new Volunteer Coordinator, the Family Day and the docent training events.

Marty said that in light of the crisis in Silver City's finances and the cut to the Town's payments to the garden, she had talked to Nick Prince, the Town Councilor for the district in which the garden was located. He had responded by saying that GNPS might consider taking part in one of the Gila Community Foundation's workshops on Compliance or Board Governance. Since we were a chapter of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico, compliance was not our responsibility. No one was interested in attending the all-day workshop on Board Governance.

Marty also reported that an ATV had been seen riding around the garden and had done a little damage. Juno Ogle of the Silver City Daily Press had photos of the damage for us. Elroy suggested that we should report the incident to the police. A discussion ensued of how to prevent ATVs from entering the garden, such as a post at the entrance or a security camera. Margie pointed out that we did have a solar-powered security camera, but it needed someone to maintain it.

Conference update: Cara reported that the conference planning committee for the NPSNM conference our chapter was hosting in September had made good progress. Some preliminary information on the conference would appear in the April 1st NPSNM newsletter, and the full schedule and registration information would appear in the July 1st NPSNM newsletter. The venues had been set: the Murray Ballroom for early registration and a Meet and Greet, the Waterworks for the Friday evening reception, and the Convention Center for presentations, the banquet and silent auction. Caterers, presenters, field trips and workshops had been lined up, with just a few to be confirmed.

A call would soon go out for student posters. We would be lining up the sub-team needs for volunteers. We needed help from the board soliciting silent auction items, including experiences, and monetary contributions from businesses. Sponsoring businesses would have their logos displayed.

Programs: Cara reminded the board members that Ivy Stephens-Etheridge, a Youth Intern, was scheduled to give the presentation at the GNPS program on Friday. She would be hosting Ivy and her mother at Little Toad Creek for dinner beforehand and invited any board member who wished to join them. Donna said she would come.

New Business

Conservation Committee authority: Donna reported that our Conservation Committee consisted of Dave Becker and Phil Hastings. They were also our representatives to the state Conservation Committee. They had asked for clarification on how the board would like to handle approval of letters and representation at meetings in the name of the Gila Plant Society.

With regard to representation at meetings, Margie recalled that there was already a policy on representation of GNPS that stated: "… only the President or the President's designee is authorized to represent or speak on behalf of the Society." If Dave Becker, for instance, would like to speak for GNPS at a meeting, he should contact the President and get her approval of the venue and his position.

With regard to approval of letters, Margie explained that the system used by the state Conservation Committee was to circulate a proposed letter by email to the state board members for approval. When time was too short for that procedure, the proposed letter was sent just to the executive committee for approval. It was agreed that GNPS should emulate the state system.

Field Trip update: Donna reported that Steve Mudge would like to lead a field trip to the Chiricahuas sometime in April – the exact date still to be determined - and John Titus had agreed to co-lead. Elroy noted that we had often field trips to farther locations in the past.

Annual Picnic: Donna said that, since the idea of a GNPS membership picnic had met with general approval in a round-robin of emails, we now had a confirmed date of May 10th at the Gomez Pavilion. After some discussion, it was decided that we would start at noon, since it was a Sunday, and make it a potluck without trying to organize hot dogs or pizza. The Bird Alliance did not wish to be involved this year. Elroy would provide the large coolers of water and iced tea, hopefully with some help.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Spence, Secretary
Gila Native Plant Society