

**Kansas Native Plant Society
2015 Winter Board Meeting
Saturday January 24, 2015, 12PM - 3PM
Great Plains Nature Center, Wichita, KS**

Board Members Present: Earl Allen, Iralee Barnard, Shirley Braunlich, Nadine Champlin, Fred Coombs, Nancy Coombs, Krista Dahlinger, Mick Delfelder, Cindy Ford, Craig Freeman, Jane Freeman, Nancy Goulden, Brad Guhr, Mike Haddock, Jeff Hansen, Michael Heffron, Susan Reimer, Cynthia Rhodes, Matthew Richter, Valerie Wright.

Guests Present: Susan Hammer

Welcome & Introductions

At 12:05, Mike welcomed everyone to the Great Plains Nature Center. The group circled the table and performed introductions. There were 20 board members and one guest who stayed for the meeting.

Everybody agreed that they had a chance to review the minutes from the Friday September 19th, 2014 board meeting at Pratt Community College. Craig moved to approve the minutes. Valerie seconded and the motion passed.

Everybody agreed that they had a chance to review the minutes from the Saturday September 20th, 2014 general meeting, and no corrections were offered. Craig moved to approve the minutes. Valerie seconded and the motion passed.

Committee Reports

Budget/Finance Report: Krista reviewed the 2014 budget. KNPS finished 2014 with approximately \$15,000 in available funds, plus an additional \$6,700 in the legacy fund. This is down approximately 20% from the end of year 2013.

Actual income was reported at \$19,300, which was about \$2,500 below what was budgeted. Actual expenses were \$5,400 less than what was budgeted.

A brief discussion was held about the legacy fund and applying a portion of new lifetime memberships to the fund. No action was taken at this time, but it will be addressed at a future meeting. KNPS currently has 29 lifetime members.

Craig moved to accept the budget report. Jeff seconded and the report was accepted unanimously.

Krista next presented a summary report of the 2014 Annual Wildflower Weekend at Pratt. Thanks to the new AWW registration fee, KNPS generated approximately \$475 in net income.

Craig thanked board members Phyllis and Dee Scherich for their hard work to find sponsors to help keep costs down for AWW.

Krista budgeted \$19,600 in income for 2015, which is in line with the actual income for 2014. Krista budgeted \$21,500 in expenses for 2015, which is a net loss of approximately \$2,500.

A discussion was held on methods to reduce the web development budget since that accounts for a significant portion of our budget. It was suggested that Jeff prepare a schedule of when he needs certain content, such as copy for Wildflower of the Year and the Annual Wildflower Weekend. Jeff was also asked to prepare a “best practices” checklist for text and images that he receives to post. The amount budgeted for web maintenance in 2015 was \$6,500.

Other budget considerations were discussed. Earl questioned if we should eliminate scholarships, but Valerie pointed out that scholarship and education are part of our mission. A lively discussion was held on the benefits of KNPS awarding scholarships. No change was made at this time.

Another discussion was held on delivering a completely digital newsletter instead of a print version. It was pointed out that many members enjoy getting a print newsletter, although we could give members an option to receive one or the other. Craig proposed doing a cost-benefit analysis since a digital newsletter would incur a new expense of an email subscription service. The analysis would fall under the auspices of the Membership and Newsletter committees.

Cindy moved to accept the 2015 budget and Susan seconded. The budget was approved with two abstentions.

AWW: Mike reported that much of the preliminary work for hosting the 2015 Annual Wildflower Weekend in Manhattan is done.

The Friday board meeting will be held in the barn at Konza Prairie Biological Station.

The Saturday morning membership meeting and presentations will be in the Big 12 Room at the Kansas State University Union.

All of the outings will be in close proximity to Manhattan with probable locations including Konza and prairies north of town.

Attendees will be encouraged to visit the Flint Hills Discovery Center during the weekend.

KNPS will continue to require a small registration fee for attendees.

Membership Report: Craig reported on some of the membership statistics. He shared a graph of the membership trends which have been steady the past several years, although there was a slight decrease last year.

KNPS averages 10% to 20% turnover wherein a member one year does not renew the next. Craig reported that this may sound high, but it's actually pretty good compared to many organizations.

Craig will continue to look at comparable organizations to determine if there are additional improvements we can make to retain members.

Awards Committee: Fred reported he is stepping up as co-chair of the committee for 2015.

Fred reported the award deadlines: Rachel Snyder Memorial Landscape Award (July 1), Stephen L. Timme Excellence in Botany Award (July 1), Mary A. Bancroft Memorial Scholarship (March 15),

Sheldon H. Cohen Award for Outstanding Service to KNPS (July 1), and Non-profit Funding (July 1).

Fred will oversee the award nominations for 2015.

Valerie is still in charge of the photo contest and we are looking forward to using the digital photograph submission technique for the 2015 AWW.

Events Committee: No report from Shirley.

Newsletter Committee: Nancy G. reported that everyone should have received their newsletter. Nancy mentioned there were a couple of errors. Nancy was successful in getting several new authors and photographers to contribute.

Plant Resources and Stewardship Committee: Brad reported on the Wildflower of the Year. The committee desired to select a plant that supported the Monarch butterfly which has seen a dramatic decrease in numbers over the past decade.

The 2016 plant is Golden Alexander. If anyone has suggestions for future Wildflowers of the Year, they may contact any member of the committee.

Brad also mentioned a proposal from the Kansas Forest Service to reduce Japanese Honeysuckle around the state. He will report on this at a future meeting.

Public Policy Committee: Fred reported that past efforts have focused on roadside vegetation management. The state is mowing at a reduced rate, although they have strayed from the agreed upon policy because "one size doesn't fit all."

The Kansas Department of Transportation recently held a meeting of supervisors and Krista attended on our behalf. Monarch Watch and Audubon of Kansas also attended and spoke on roadside management. Krista reported that KDOT was very receptive to supporting less mowing for wildlife habitat.

In a separate issue, a KNPS member had reported having issues with her township roadside management. A brief conversation was held on erosion control and re-seeding.

Publicity & Outreach Committee: Mike read Chelsea's report.

Kansas Non-game Wildlife Advisory Council was looking for a KNPS member to serve with that group as a liaison. Elizabeth Petrosky was appointed as the KNPS representative and Cynthia Rhodes as our alternate. They will split the duty of attending KNGWAC meetings.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism magazine ([Kansas Wildlife & Parks](#)) will include an article about KNPS in the March or April issue.

Chelsea is working on the 2015 brochure and Mike shared her mockup. Everyone is encouraged to send feedback to Chelsea by the first week of February.

Website Report: Jeff gave a report on the status of the website. 2014 visitations were on par with 2013

numbers.

Old Business

Flint Hills Wildflower Pocket Guide re-printing status: Krista reported on reprinting the Pocket Guide to Kansas Flint Hills Wildflowers and Grasses. The Great Plains Nature Center is printing the Flint Hills guide, plus three others in February. Krista is working closely with GPNC to make sure that KNPS will be able to get copies for distribution.

Hiking liability: Craig reported on a form used by a similar organization. A waiver will inform people what they are getting into, although it probably does not provide much protection from liability. Good liability insurance might be the best protection.

The topic was tabled for additional discussion and Craig and Mick will continue to look into options.

New Business

Committee and committee chair assignments: Mike reported that Valerie and Fred are co-chairing Awards for 2015.

Cindy is considering stepping down from Education at the end of her term. Cindy will review the responsibilities and get back with the board at a future date.

The AWW committee is being updated to the Manhattan board contingent (Mike, Nancy G., Valerie, Joc and Earl), plus Shirley, Craig and Jane.

Future Board Meetings: Nadine suggested that the next board meeting be held at the Klinefelter Barn Conference Center in Hiawatha, and the board reacted enthusiastically.

The board discussed combining the spring and summer board meetings into a single meeting to be held in May or June. May 16th seemed to be a good date for most everyone, although that date is not confirmed.

Douglas Tallamy sponsorship request: Mike reported that nationally known ecologist and native plant enthusiast Douglas Tallamy is speaking in Lawrence (March 21st) on behalf of Monarch Watch. Monarch Watch has asked several organizations to become supporting sponsors for a small donation. Shirley donated \$50, and Fred and Nancy donated \$50 on behalf of KNPS to be a supporting sponsor. In addition, KNPS will post on Facebook and our website to promote the event.

Get Outdoors Kansas listings of KNPS events: Mick reported on the website GetOutdoorsKansas.com: a new venture spearheaded by the Kansas Wildscape Foundation and the Kansas Trails Council. The website lists and promotes healthy, active lifestyles and outdoor activities. Mick will manually post KNPS-sponsored events.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:58.