Welcome & Introductions
Attendees: Earl Allen, Rondi Anderson, Iralee Barnard, Shirley Braunlich, Nadine Champlin, Krista Dahlinger, Mick Delfelder, Craig Freeman, Jane Freeman, Mike Haddock, Jeff Hansen, Lorna Harder, Mike Kaye, Brian Martin, Andrew Mitchell, Mark Neubrand, Chad Phillips, Joan Pritchard, Cynthia Rhodes, Matthew Richter, Dee Scherich, Phyllis Scherich, Paul Showalter
Guests: Jay Anderson, Bob Champlin, Scott Marsh, Mark Mayfield, Melissa Mitchell, Bonnie Neubrand, Peggy Robinson

KNPS President Phyllis Scherich started the meeting at 1:16 p.m. Mike H. welcomed everyone on behalf of the K-State libraries. The board members introduced themselves.

Mick and Jeff gave the board an update on former board members Fred and Nancy Coombs who have retired to Urbana, IL.

There were no corrections to the fall board meeting minutes or the fall membership meeting minutes. Craig moved to accept. Brian seconded. Passed unanimously.

Budget/Financial Report
Krista reported on the final 2017 budget. We finished the year with $30,798 in available cash and approximately $19,500 in the investment funds. We had $19,457 in income in 2017 and $14,377 in expenses, for a net income of approximately $5,000 for 2017.

Mick asked about the total assets number on the report which seemed amiss. Krista and Earl confirmed it was in error and Krista said that she would submit a corrected version. Earl moved to accept the report pending the future amendment. Mike H. seconded. The motion passed.

Krista submitted a corrected Budget clarifying the total KNPS year-end assets as $30,798 in available cash plus $19,458 in investment accounts, making the KNPS year end funds total $50,256.

Earl reported that he will transition into treasurer duties starting in May to allow Krista more time to work on the upcoming Wichita-area Annual Wildflower Weekend and other projects.

Krista reviewed the proposed 2018 budget with an estimated $16,000 in expenses and nearly $23,000 in income. Craig moved to accept the budget. Earl seconded. Unanimously approved.

Craig and Krista updated on the Mary Bancroft Scholarship Fund. It contains a year-end balance of $5,600.

Recommendation on Sheldon & Virginia Cohen memorial
Craig explained that the awards committee had discussed several different options for memorializing former board member Sheldon Cohen and his wife who was also active in the
organization. After discussing the options, the board agreed on renaming the service award from the **Sheldon H. Cohen Award for Outstanding Service to KNPS** to the **Sheldon and Virginia Cohen Memorial Award for Service**. Craig made a motion to rename the award. Iralee seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

**June Kliesen memorial**
Phyllis brought the board up to speed on a possible memorial for June Kliesen, a former board member and neighbor of Dee and Phyllis, who passed away on Oct. 12, 2017. Phyllis had been contacted by June’s son, Brian, who offered a financial gift to the organization on the condition that it be used for financial grants to schools to build and maintain native gardens.

Phyllis had reached out to board member Brad Guhr at the Dyck Arboretum because they offer similar grants and perhaps they could administer this program on our behalf. Brad and Lorna will first talk to Brian to confirm what he would like to accomplish with the gift and determine if his objectives could be met by working directly with the Dyck Arboretum’s Earth Partnership for Schools program. If that approach is acceptable to Brian, Mike K. would be enlisted to help draft a Memorandum of Understanding that expresses the expectation of each of the parties (Kliesen family, Dyck Arboretum, and KNPS) and establish what each would contribute to the effort. The MOU would be presented to the board a future meeting for approval.

**Membership Report**
Craig reported we are slightly ahead of where we expect to be this time last year. About 200 members have not renewed since the end of 2017 and he’s hopeful some of them will renew. Phyllis accepted the report as read.

**AWW and Board Meetings**
Phyllis has some good tentative plans in place for the Spring/Summer board meeting to be held in Wilson, KS on May 18. She recommended that everyone get their hotel reservations.

Krista and Joan updated the board on the plans for the 2018 Annual Wildflower Weekend which will take place Sept. 7-9 in Wichita. The theme will be “Native Plants in Urban Settings.”

Friday’s board meeting will be held at the Great Plains Nature Center, followed by outings at a nearby park. Saturday’s membership meeting will be in the Hughes Metropolitan Complex near the GPNC. Because we are expecting upward of 150 registrants, the committee is recommending that we rent several tour busses to shuttle people between the sites. On Sunday, we expect to visit native prairies on the west side of town.

There was some discussion about inviting charter members to Wichita for the AWW and recognizing them for their early contributions.

We also discussed including information about the anniversary in various statewide publications such as the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism magazine and *Country Living*.

On a side note, Iralee is looking for a writer to pick up her native plant column in the KDWPT magazine.
Website & Events
Krista asked that anyone who notices errors or content that needs updated on the website to please send that information, along with the URL, to her and Matthew. They will relay the request to Jay.

Awards
Mike H. informed the board that the Mary Bancroft scholarship deadline is March 15. All other awards have a July 1 deadline. Phyllis encouraged everyone to submit nominations.

Public Policy
Mike K. let us know that there is a Kansas Noxious Weed Manual available. The Kansas Department of Agriculture would like to print a new edition with support from KNPS.

Scott Marsh, Kansas Department of Agriculture state weed specialist, told us that several other organizations have expressed support for this type of manual. Work is just beginning and the format and publication date is TBD. He also mentioned that a new edition of *Weeds of the Great Plains* (a collaborative effort between the University of Nebraska and the Nebraska Department of Agriculture) is in the works and the publishers are seeking new photographs.

Scott will have a report in the January newsletter about Monarch Conservation workgroups and the Department of Agriculture.

Report on Diversity, Inclusion & Non-Discrimination Policy
Shirley and Mike K. distributed a copy of the Statement of Diversity, Inclusion, and Non-Discrimination Policy that they had sent to the board via email earlier in the week. After giving the board a chance to re-read the policy, Mike K. moved to adopt the statement as provided and Craig seconded the motion.

During the discussion, Shirley read from her email about why this policy statement means so much to her. If approved, the statement would be added to the KNPS website and printed in a future newsletter.

Craig stated that he supports this policy, but has a few minor grammatical suggestions. Krista and several others spoke in favor if it as well, although some members expressed concern that by not explicitly stating that we “welcome everyone,” we are leaving it open to interpretation that we could be excluding some.

Phyllis asked for a hand vote on the condition that the statement is approved pending Craig’s edits. In a show of hands, the motion to accept the statement passed with 18 voting in favor and four against.

Phyllis asked that the revised version be emailed to the board for review before it is posted to the website or printed in the newsletter.

Education Committee
Lorna is working with the AWW committee to integrate educational opportunities into the 2018 Wichita AWW.
**Newsletter**
Cynthia let us know that the winter issue should be in everyone’s hands by the end of January. The next issue (April) will have articles due around March 15. It will be in mailboxes after the middle of April.

**Plant Resources & Stewardship**
The 2018 Wildflower of the Year is Penstemon cobaea.

Phyllis had asked this committee to offer Wildflower of the Year candidates for the next three years to be voted upon at a future board meeting.

**Request for J. Drew Lanham presentation**
Shirley explained how the Lawrence Public Library is hosting J. Drew Lanham, author of *The Home Place: Memoirs of a Colored Man's Love Affair with Nature*. His book is (to quote Shirley) “a book of prose that flows like poetry. This memoir of lyrical nature revelry, heartwarming & witty family stories, thoughtful social justice advocacy rooted in a strong land ethic and a plethora of optimism offers powerful connections to charm & enlighten!” Shirley requested an honorarium from KNPS to help offset the cost of bringing this speaker to northeast Kansas. If approved, KNPS would be listed in the promotional material.

Earl suggested that the board meeting adjourn for 15 seconds so the Awards Committee can have a short meeting to discuss the request. A quorum of the committee (Mike H., Mike K., Craig and Mick) was present and recommended that we approve a $100 honorarium. Craig made the motion to the board, Jeff seconded, and the motion approved unanimously.

**Other Business**
Krista let us know that former board member Jim Mason has retired from his position at the Great Plains Nature Center and he has donated his native-plant-related collection of books as a fundraiser for KNPS. The collection consists of two boxes of books. Krista will compile a list of books and share with the board. It’s likely that the books will end up in the silent auction at one or more AWWs.

Phyllis adjourned the meeting at 3:30 pm.