

Nebraska Master Naturalist Executive Board meeting 8/9/19

Roll call: Present: Bryce Krohn (phone), Dorie Stone, Tisha Johnson, Chris Robie, Mike Schrad, Karen Klein, Vicki VonLohen, Matt Jones, Ali Mayes, Andrea Faas, Dennis Ferraro,

Absent: Carolyn Smith, Austen Hill, Doug Wells

Conference scheduled for one day, Saturday 11/2/19 - Matt reported that we will be able to use the rental room fee at Camp Brewster as an in-kind donation. Registration will be open next week. Matt is handling this himself and presentations will be given similar to a symposium. Andrea suggested that by September or October be the deadline for potential presenters. Possible topics and speakers: Spring flooding, someone from the Corps, Water Quality, drinking water and/or stream quality for fish and invertebrates, George Cunningham, Department of Water Quality, Tom Hederly, Aquatic Ecologist.

Winter Celebration is scheduled for 2/8/19 located in Forest Room at Fontenelle Forest.

Budget and Financials Dennis reported that the date has arrived and that officially the NET grant is in place and can now be accessed in part. The dollar value has just been approved at \$48,000. Over half of that \$48,000 will go to Matt's salary. \$11,000 for operating expenses, \$7,000 for in kind donations, \$2,150 for equipment and \$6,500 for speaker expenses and travel expenses. Dennis offered to get the Foundation a copy of the NET grant.

The previous grant has been extended from 6/30/19 to 12/31/19, and \$5,000 remains for the remainder of Doug's salary and \$2,000 for equipment. The Master Naturalist Foundation now pays Matt's salary, not the University. The NMN Foundation has agreed to provide a \$35,000 year cash match for the 2 year NET grant. Additionally the Foundation is now set up to receive training registration fees.

Along with NET grant money of \$48,000 and the previous grant's value of \$7,000, the Master Naturalists program also has \$4,300 in the University's revolving account. This money is intended for training participants' food and other operating expenses that are incurred during core trainings.

The Master Naturalist Board and the Master Naturalist Foundation request more control regarding calendars. Specifically, making sure when the money for the bill is due and when paid, from which account. Dennis suggests that this committee be handled by the marketing committee. Motion passes to have the calendar committee join the standing marketing committee, so that funding for production and distribution can be better managed.

River City Chapter Update from Karen: there has been an election of officers meeting, new officers are tasked with organizing and planning for the rest of the year. It was noted that officers should be given a lot of learning opportunities, maybe an orientation. Karen suggested that an officer take up the formal duty to keep the Chapter on track by following the strategic plan timelines and goals more closely. Recent events and participation by the Chapter were Earth Day, Game and Parks Fishing event, and the Schramm Park tour. Additionally, the Chapter promotes Heron Haven and Glacier Creek Preserve programs.

Proposed Salt Creek chapter. Midge Dublinske offered to head the Chapter formation. Andrea reported that she and Ali are currently brainstorming the initial launch of the Lincoln Chapter, searching for potential Master Naturalist leaders for the Chapter's formation.

Matt reported on the progression taking place forming the Greater Nebraska Chapter, he's working on an approach where the goal is to get enough Master Naturalists participating regularly in planned volunteer events, so to naturally create interest for quarterly meetings.

A Chapter's development would benefit from learning how to conduct trainings. There was a discussion about the need to prepare operational guidance for Chapters to conduct their own Trainings. Where will the money come from to conduct the trainings, the grant, the Foundation? Dennis suggested that the trainings take place at Master Naturalists Partners' business, and that their employees take the course along with interested. An example was to go through Jocelyn at Fontenelle Forest who heads the volunteers for her organization. She might be paid to take on the responsibility of creating course training for Fontenelle Forest volunteers that would also serve as Master Naturalist course content, and in exchange Master Naturalists would naturally want to volunteer with Fontenelle. The Partner would have more input on the course content.

If attending a volunteer event, please discuss with the Partner whether a collaboration would work. To make the process easier perhaps there's a summary that Andrea can put together reporting what resources, people, places and money could be utilized for proceeding with this idea.

Matt reported that this last quarter the total number of volunteer hours surpassed any previous quarters by a couple hundred hours of volunteer time. Since 2010, salary savings to conservation organizations has reached a total of 1.8 million dollars. Total number of volunteers trained across the state is 482. This is average to where we regularly are this time of year. The number of active volunteers is 110. Andrea suggested that the two dates for the Winter Celebration and the upcoming Conference be published on postcards and sent to Master Naturalists who are active. The benefit being that those postcards returned would serve to deem inactive Master Naturalists.

Alex Wiles and Bob Wells have a new video promoting the Master Naturalist program.

The job description document for Matt's position has been completed for the Foundation, and the Board wants future planning included in the monthly report. Motion accepted regarding the request that Matt's title be changed to State Director, for the purposes of the Foundation and the NE Master Naturalist program.

Our next board meeting is scheduled for the 'morning' at 9am, November 7th at Pioneers Park Prairie Building. An upcoming meeting with representatives from both the Board and the Foundation will be held 10/24, 10/31 or 11/14. The focus of the meeting will be flushing out the relationship and/or duties of the Foundation versus the MN program, In Mike's words, the relationship is best described as the "Piggy bank helping the worker bees".

Tisha Johnson will be initiating Board member nominations in November, and new officers to be in place by 12/31/19. Foundation has had donations recently and the total is \$16,000. Now working to apply for grants with the Audubon Society of Omaha, the Cooper Foundation and the Abbott Foundation. Time has been allocated to learning how other states' Master Naturalists chapters work out their funding. Significant time was spent perusing a guide that helped match the Foundation with Not for profits whose criteria best meshed with the Master Naturalists mission. Foundation is now Guidestar listed, which is vital to the grant application process. Mike commented that the Foundation's future looks promising. Website getting 500 hits per month.

Dennis reported that he has been asked by a previous coordinator who now works for the Department of Health and Human Services about a potential Master Naturalist partnership/ program for special needs and/or disabled.

Ali reported curriculum will be written a year or so from now for the Junior Naturalist program. Texas has active Junior Naturalists and Ali has plans to seek out the details of how their program functions.

Dennis concluded the meeting entertaining board members with his drinking glass, trapping one of the annoying flies. Then the formal vote to adjourn. ...