

Minutes – Carolina Wetlands Association
Board of Directors meeting – November 16, 2015.
Duke Wetland Center, Durham, NC

Board members Present:

Rick Savage, President

Steve Rebach, Vice President

Kristie Gianopulos, Treasurer

John Dorney, Secretary

Kim Matthews

Stratford Kay

Laura England

Chad Guthrie

Also Present:

Kim Hamlin

Ashley Steele

Robert Truesdale

Bill Flournoy

George Matthis

Ginny Baker

Neal Flanagan

James Graham

Amin Davis

The meeting started at 6:48 pm with introductions. The September 24, 2015 minutes were adopted unanimously. Meeting dates for 2016 are as follows: January 25, March 21, May 16, July 18, September 19, and November 21. Time and location to be announced later. We anticipate switching between the Duke Wetland Center in Durham and NC State University in Raleigh to take advantage of Weblink abilities as these locations.

The draft Bylaws were discussed with changes (as listed below) suggested by the Executive Committee:

1. The Executive Committee should be required rather than suggested.

2. At least four (4) Directors are needed to call a Special Meeting.
3. All actions taken without an in-person meeting must be unanimous.
4. There is only one Vice President.
5. Purpose and Mission – add the refined mission statement from our website as follows” The Carolina Wetlands Association promotes the understanding, protection, restoration, and enjoyment of North and South Carolina’s wetlands and associated ecosystems through science-based programs, education, and advocacy.”

With those changes, the Bylaws were adopted unanimously. Chad stated that the 501(c)(3) process could now begin and he will work with Rick and the UNC-CH Law Clinic to begin that process.

The Conflict of Interest statement will need to be read and signed annually by all Board members at the annual meeting in January. It will have to be signed individually. John will email it to all Board members who can sign and then either scan or mail the hard copy back to him for filing. They can be mailed to our post office box at P.O. Box 33592, Raleigh, NC 27636.

The Document Retention Schedule was also approved unanimously. All final documents will need to be placed on the shared drive under “Document Retention” in the shareCarWA/CarWA information folder. Rick will decide on the need for separate subfolders. Kim Matthews will work with Rick to organize this effort.

The Whistleblower Policy was approved unanimously. The Board will need to assign someone to manage this effort who is not a member of the Executive Committee. That position and the individual will be established at the next Board meeting.

With respect to fiscal sponsorship where we would identify an organization to collect funds on our behalf until our 501(c) (3) status is approved, the Board unanimously decided not to pursue that approach due to the amount of paperwork required. The letter from Jase Burner, UNC-CH Community Development Clinic dated October 20, 2015 states “CarWA would need to inform donors that donations are not tax deductible at the moment. If 501(c)(3) status is granted within 27 months, then donations will be retroactively tax deductible.” This language should be provided to all donors in the interim.

Two new Board members were unanimously approved – Curt Richardson at Duke University and Daniel Hitchcock at Clemson University. There are now 13 Board members with a goal for 15 members. The Board will be organized initially in three classes with one, two and three year terms to make certain that the entire Board does not rotate off simultaneously. The rotation schedule will be decided at a later Board meeting or by the June meeting at the latest. It was noted that the Board needs more non-scientists and representatives from SC. Also if a Board member resigns, the new person will serve the remainder of that term.

The Annual Board meeting will be scheduled around National Wetlands month in May – May 16th for 2016.

Committee Reports:

1. Executive – All items were covered earlier with the exception that John Dorney and Steve Rebach will be researching funding opportunities. All people with ideas are urged to send them to John, Steve, or Rick.
2. Program – Amin Davis and Ashley Steele reported on this Committee and provided the draft brochure for review. Comments should be sent to Stratford Kay by December 9. Amin will email it to everyone as well. With respect to “Wetland Treasures”, the Committee recommends that we use the Unique Wetland sites which were identified on public land by Ed Schwartzman and approved by the NC Environmental Management Commission after public hearing. The Committee will search for a similar subset for SC and Laura will lead that effort through the SC Natural Heritage Program. It is anticipated that 3-6 sites will be adopted annually in May of each year in conjunction with National Wetlands Month. Site visits at that time may be part of the designation. ESRI’s “storyboard” may be used to help organize this information. Amin will get the maps and background data for the Unique Wetlands sites put on our website. The Committee will soon meet with Mike Schafale of the NC Natural Heritage Program to get his input on the list. Recommendations will be made to the Board at the January meeting. John Dorney and Karen Hall have met and discussed the possibility of sponsoring workshops and they will relay that discussion to the Board at a later meeting
We will look to collaborate with the NC Museum of Natural Sciences on Science Saturday and Rick will take the lead on this effort. Other events such as Reptile and Amphibian Day, BugFest and working with the wetland display at the Museum will be pursued as well.
3. Science – Ginny Baker announced that she had sent out a Doodle Poll to set the date for the first Committee meeting. CarWA will be listed as the QA/QC contact for Mike Burchell’s EPA grant soon.
4. Regional Coordinators, Stakeholders, Landowners, and Community Involvement – This committee is led by James Graham and Lindsay Smart and is just getting started. The Committee name will be shortened.
5. Finance –The Treasurer reported that CarWA had raised \$1,535 from 19 people, spent \$335.34 mostly on business cards and membership in the NC Center for Non-Profits with a balance of \$1,199.66. The 501(c)(3) application will cost \$850. The website has a working PayPal connection with PayPal charging from 3.2 to 5.9% depending on the size of the donation. In addition, donations can be sent directly to our Post Office Box.
Rick will write a pleading letter for donations to be sent out to all members in December after review by the Board. James Graham noted that he has sold some art work with the proceeds donated to CarWA with an Instagram account of @carolina_hemlock.
6. Advisory Committee – nothing new to report.
7. Development – Kim Matthews reported that this Committee will focus on social media at least initially. Members are urged to send good articles to Rick or Kim for posting on our Facebook site. A Marketing Plan will be presented to the Board at their January meeting. She will mail out draft bios to the Board members for their review soon. Carolina Wetland Association will soon be on Linked In and members are urged to list it in their Linked In bios as well. Photos of Board members were taken for the website. A January campaign “Why

are we concerned about Wetlands” will soon be organized. Amin will check with Correction Enterprises to see if we can use them for our printing needs.

8. Policy Committee – this newly established Committee is led by Steve Rebach with John Dorney and Chad Guthrie as members. The purpose of the Committee will be to reach out to legislators and others to educate them about wetlands whenever possible. John then resigned from the Science Committee so he could spend time on the Policy Committee. Ginny will seek a new co-chair of the Science Committee. Other individuals who may be interested in the Policy Committee include Grady McCallie and Merdith Gibbs both of whom have legal backgrounds.

Other Business

Science Saturday is at the NC Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh on February 2nd which also happens to be International Wetlands Day. Other events for National Wetlands Month in May will be developed as well. Board members are urged to actively participate. Events in SC will also be identified as well as other NC cities. Rick talked about recent meetings he attended. As a result of those meetings, a web development company has agreed to donate 5 hours of time to improve our website. Rick will work with them on that effort. In addition, a separate firm will donate some time to work with us on Social Media issues. Finally, Rick attended a WRRRI training session in Chapel Hill on citizen monitoring which may provide some ideas for CarWA with regard to wetland monitoring as well.

George Matthis discussed the River Guardian Foundation which is also a new 501 (c)(3) organization that was set up a few years ago and got quick approval by the IRS. He stated that having a good Board is critical for the success of a non-profit organization. The specific objectives of the River Guardian Foundation is to conduct advocacy for better protection and public awareness of river-related issues focusing on a collaborative rather than confrontational approach with special emphasis on education. The Foundation has two big projects – “Stow It, Don’t Throw It” and “The River Guardians Program” with a grant from State Farm Insurance, to train teachers at schools in three river basins with an eventual goal of a statewide focus. He would be glad to work with CarWA on related efforts between our organizations. He will have an annual symposium in Greenville, NC on April 16, 2016 at River Park North and will send information on the symposium to Rick.

The service of “Free Conference Call.com” will be used next time to make remote participation more seamless.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 pm.

Minutes prepared by John Dorney, Secretary

Minutes revised on December 5, 2015 pending member review.