

## **Agenda for the Board of Directors of the Carolina Wetlands Association**

**September 16, 2019**

**Location: RTI, 3040 E Cornwallis Rd, Durham, NC 27709**

### Board Member Attendees

In Person: Chad Guthrie, Rick Savage, Kim Matthews, Kristie Gianopulos, George Matthis

On Phone: Dan Hitchcock, Tara Allden, Curt Richardson

### Non-Board Member Attendees

In Person: Robert Truesdale, Linda Wendling

On Phone: Ginny Baker, Norton Webster, Alexis Bond (for George Howard)

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### **6:30 Meeting Called to Order**

#### Introductions

Adoption of the Agenda – Landowner brochure should be under Science Committee notes, Policy Committee needed to be added, South Carolina event needed to be added. Rick made motion to accept agenda with these changes, Chad seconded, all in favor.

#### Adoption of the Minutes

May meeting – Matthew Harold as phone attendee added, Chad motioned to approve with this addition, Kim seconded, all in favor with George M abstaining because not present.

July meeting – No changes, Kim made motion to accept, George M. seconded, all in favor,

### **6:40 Nominations Committee – Robert**

Vacancy on board, state employees now eligible, Amin Davis identified as recommendation. He is preparing a statement of qualifications. If Amin accepts the nomination, the board will vote on it next meeting.

### **6:45 Committee Reports**

- Program Committee - Jessica/Jim
  - Need to work on next year's Wetland Treasures
  - Met on August 28<sup>th</sup>, reviewed Strategic Plan items assigned to them.
  - October Bass Lake event
  - Next meeting October 21<sup>st</sup>; looking for new members to help
- Science Committee - Ginny/Robert
  - See Committee Report – white papers in progress (Carbon sequestration, wetlands and water quality, wetlands and flooding, wetlands and climate change)
  - Landowner brochure – Ginny will be sending the current draft to Norton. Getting feedback from non-scientists too.

- Letter to support expansion of Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge – We have been asked to write a letter in support of a minor boundary change (land swap gaining undeveloped and restorable land and getting rid of developed land). Dan Hitchcock strongly is in support of this land swap acquisition. Chad is wondering why they are giving up and in their target/priority area. Dan will look into it, but it was mentioned that there was a water treatment plant on the land they wanted to give up. Dan and Tara will follow up with the whole board via email. Chad is okay with signing support letter if it furthers our goals regarding wetlands. Comments due to USFWS by Sept. 23. Rick asked if the board had any problems with supporting the land change in principal and no one objected.
- George’s report on RAMSAR via email because he could not attend: “Congressman David Rouzer called me Friday and asked if I would attend a 6:30 fundraiser for him tonight at North Hills. I plan to go – but you are not forsaken, as I plan to make the pitch for him to help on RAMSAR. He is as good or better bet to help than any other Republican. He can work with G.K. Butterfield effectively as well. I am glad people are prepared to approach Butterfield and David Price, but we need Republicans more than ever with this Administration. I have known David for 25 years and better than any other member.  
Curt and I have been in regular touch and he has finished up his RAMSAR section. We need RAMSAR committee to have a call to discuss next steps which will including how to finalize, and who to approach politically.”  
“Alexis will take notes on who should join the RAMSAR call, and organize the call for us in coming days.”
- Development Committee – Kim
  - Only Rick and Kim attended the phone meeting scheduled for last week.
  - This committee has Strategic Plan assignments that need to be addressed.
  - Facebook likes – 782, followers 819, newsletters (July, Aug, Sept) 35% open rate, 6% clicks, which is about typical
  - Volunteer hrs logged on Track it Forward for July/August – 215 hrs from Rick alone, 182 other hours
  - Track it Forward should be used for anything related to Carolina Wetlands – meetings, research, writing, events, etc.
- Executive Committee - Rick
  - See summary of activities
  - SC Events
    - Wetlands Matter event in SC - Bill Mitch has agreed to come. There will be 2 sessions, one at Coastal Carolina University (a private invite only session) and a public-invited session the next day
    - SC Coastal Master Naturalist Group asked Rick to come and present – about 80 people attended
  - EPA Wetland Program Development Grant – awarded in August 2019

- Grant is headed up by Mike Burchell of NC State University; aim is to pilot a volunteer monitoring idea/program/method for wetland treasure(s) in NC; has to be all NC sites because the grant is under NC State and EPA awarded it for work in NC
- NC Coastal Conference in Wilmington – they approved 2 attendees – abstract and workshop idea has been submitted, Kim M and Rick S going.
- EEG Grant – We submitted a letter of interest for this grant opportunity and attended several meetings about it. Full proposal due on Sept 24<sup>th</sup>. We would propose to ask for about \$25,000 to post signage at our wetland treasures, including info on the ecosystem services provided, sometimes extra materials (factsheets, poster, etc.) depending on the site and owner. This would be a 3 year timeline. Dan H mentioned that Hobcaw Barony has some factsheets already, Congaree probably has the same, but a sign would be really nice.
  - A major point is that this is a reimbursement grant – we spend the money and ask for reimbursement, which can come as quickly as 4-6 weeks. No matching funds or services required.
  - Chad G is very concerned about committing us to spending more money than we actually have. He feels like we cannot fulfill this grant obligation if we were to be selected for funding. Curt R and George M agreed that we need to make sure we can do what we say we will.
  - Amin strongly recommended that we don't pursue it if it doesn't allow in-kind services.
  - Curt R made a motion to apply for the EEG grant, but for a smaller amount of \$10,000 for 5 sites with extra educational materials. Kim M seconded the motion, with Dan H., Rick S., Kim M., Kristie G. in favor, and George M. and Chad G. NOT in favor.
- Bookkeeper – approved – they are putting our records into Quickbooks currently in a way that we can scale up quickly. This costs about \$385 to do, then there would be a quarterly fee for them to maintain. This firm was referred by Sound Rivers and John Dorney; they have several nonprofit clients and experience handling grants and donations.
- Insurance – Currently getting quotes for board insurance and general liability from a nonprofit that works to get quotes from variety of underwriters that issue insurance to nonprofits. Chad is communicating with them with information and answering questions. He expects the quote for all to be around \$1400-\$1600 annually.
- Meet and Greet invites – Kim M. working with Heather Clarkson getting guidelines set up to help anyone who wants to set up a meet and greet at a location to drum up more interest. Trying to do one in Raleigh, Durham, somewhere between. Trying to get more people exposed to Carolina Wetlands and interested. George Matthis advised checking into breweries – some will give a cut of the money taken in.
- Wetland Summit – This is a meeting being convened at the end of September 2019 by Mike Burchell of NC State University of people involved in wetlands across North Carolina. Carolina Wetlands is involved in planning the meeting and will be telling people about the association at the meeting. The purpose is to understand research

needs and what volunteer monitoring can do, to give ideas for the citizen science pilot grant from the EPA. Rick asked if there were any concerns with Carolina Wetlands carrying this forward and Robert Truesdale expressed some concern about keeping up with technology and sustainability of the effort/data collection in that regard.

- Financial Report - Chad
  - Balances – not a lot of activity. Current balance is at \$5105.66 after expenses. Expenses were for printing thank you cards, domain name renewal, and affiliate renewal (NC Wildlife Federation). Total donations since last board meeting in July 2019 were \$382.66.
  - Jack Spruill just donated \$500 through his investor’s foundation – letter received notifying us (donation not received yet)
- Policy Committee – George M.
  - Nothing new to report
  - This committee now tasked with coming up with some language to make it explicit what a sponsor is or isn’t getting (and we don’t endorse the companies) (see below about sponsor proposal)

#### 7:00 Fundraising Strategy

- Targeted \$500 ask of companies – George/Norton
  - Status – Given by George Howard via email before meeting
  - Giving \$500: Axiom Environmental, Wildlands, Ecosystem Planning and Restoration

Awaiting answer from Corporate: Stantec (George feels positive about this)

No answer: Kimley Horn [although it was noted that Kimley Horn would be more likely to do an event sponsorship than donation – they have a foundation grant with money they give away based on volunteer time of their employees]

Appeals sent today: Withers & Ravenel, Michael Baker International, Mr. Wes Newell (former of Backwater Environmental)

Norton: Water and Land Solutions

- Sponsor Proposal
  - ≥\$500
  - Posted on website for 1 year as a sponsor, now soliciting until end of 2020
  - “Corporate Sponsor” or “General Sponsor” (as opposed to an Event Sponsor)
    - Policy committee will come up with language around this for a formal type agreement.
- Goal for this is \$5,000 raised
- Annual Campaign - Kim
  - Announcing on Giving Tuesday

- Planning to have drawings this year for donated items – rather than us fronting the money for giveaway item(s)
- Anyone donating on X date gets entered into a drawing
- Need help finding donations, gift cards or items by end of October; Kim M wants at least 3 things (eg. cooler, backpack)
- Board involvement – Rick
  - Direct ask of at least 5 donations >\$100
  - Goal is \$3500 from annual campaign, \$5000 from sponsors
  - Ultimate goal is to get us up to \$10,000
- Other revenue streams – asking for ideas from board members and committees

**7:20 Strategy Plan – Rick and Kim – THIS SECTION WAS TABLED FOR NEXT BOARD MEETING (Kim made motion, Rick seconded, all in favor)**

- Review Committee Assignments
- Call to Action from Board Members
  - Program Committee – no issues by need person resources
  - Science Committee – no issues since mostly things they were already doing
  - Development Committee – need to recruit members

**7:30 Workshop: Wetlands for Decision Makers – Rick**

- Implementation Group has met 2 times, getting information, tools, case studies. Workshop will be right around the next board meeting.

**8:18pm Adjourn – Kim M. made a motion to adjourn, Dan H. seconded, all in favor.**

**Next Board meeting will be November 18, 2019.**