

Meeting Minutes for the Board of the Carolina Wetlands Association meeting

March 30, 2020; 6:30 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting Online via Zoom

Submitted by Kristie Gianopulos

Attending remotely:

Board Members: Kim Matthews, Rick Savage, Heather Clarkson, Chad Guthrie, Tara Alden, George Matthis, Kristie Gianopulos, Christine Cherry, Norton Webster (after voted in), Shaefny Grays (after voted in)

Non-board Members: Virginia Daniel, Linda Wendling, Grayson Hughes

Note from the Secretary: This is the first board meeting after the pandemic outbreak of coronavirus COVID-19 caused mass cancellations of group activities, stay-at-home orders, and a national state of emergency. References to repeated event cancellations are because of this.

6:38 Meeting Called to Order

- Introductions
- Adoption of the Agenda – Heather Clarkson, Chad seconded, all in favor
- Adoption of the Minutes January 2020 – Chad motioned, Kim M. seconded, all in favor

General Announcements - none

Nominations Committee – Rick S. representing Robert Truesdale

- Currently 2 board vacancies (Clint DeWitt and Chad Guthrie) and two nominations for their replacements
- Nominations Committee unanimously recommended: Shaefny Grays (filling in Clint's 3 year term) and Norton Webster (filling in Chad's one year term)
- Vote to accept both of these nominations to the Board of Directors of the Carolina Wetlands Association – Heather Clarkson made motion, Christine Cherry seconded, no further discussion, all in favor
- Nominate Norton Webster to be the new Treasurer – Rick S made motion, Heather Clarkson seconded, Norton accepted the responsibility, all in favor
- Shaefny Grays introduced herself and mentioned her passion for equity. Wants to move past talking about diversity, and more to equity and inclusion.

Committee Reports

- Program Committee - Jessica/Jim/Carrie
 - Kim and Rick met with this committee, Kim gave update – tours of the wetland treasures are postponed. Going to do virtual tours, supporting information and media will be obtained by each person responsible for the tour. The intent is to make a slideshow or video that can be posted to social media and youtube channel. Rick and Carrie will do the announcements via a recorded message which will be posted to Facebook announcing the wetland treasures, press kit released to partners to build up to event and re-release when the new treasures are announced. Every Wed. starting the last Wed in April, will release a virtual tour online and every day for the week do fun facts about that treasure.
 - 5 yr anniversary – hosting a webinar (May 20th is planned date) to talk about the whole 5 yr wetland treasures program.
 - The intent is to still have the tours, just later. Want to include Antioch Bay with the new set of tours; this site never had a tour as of now.

- Science Committee - Ginny/Robert
 - Ramsar Application status
 - George H is working on getting a letter from WRC, want to get more support letters for the application; Curt R. had an encouraging conversation with the USFWS and is positive about our getting the site approved.
 - State of the Wetlands Report
 - Ginny gave update. Working on updating wetland acreage numbers in the State of the Wetlands Report online. The numbers the USFWS published in the 90s are very different from the numbers Ginny calculated from NWI now. Ginny is asking anyone if they have contacts with the USFWS, especially on their methodology for calculating those old acreages, to please contact her.
 - Landowner brochure
 - Verbiage is done, PDF is complete, will be printing 300 copies, hoping to distribute them to some nature centers and potentially down road get grant to make a larger landowners manual for wetland management
 - Two new committee members - one will be working more on some white papers or review the ones completed; continuing more concentration on white papers.
 - Next meeting will be a virtual meeting; info to come.

- Development Committee – Kim Matthews
 - Volunteer Coordinator – Rachel Massa started as coordinator
 - **Remember to log volunteer hours!** Use the link from the carolinawetlands.org website on the volunteer tab; this is really important for cost-share for the grant we have and more grants going forward.
 - Contact Kim M. if can't access the Google form
 - Meet and Greet Events – all cancelled
 - Fundraising Campaigns

- Spring Celebration Event – not going to try to start something new, going to have donate buttons with the virtual tours instead of a spring fundraiser as previously planned
 - Fall – Photo contest and calendars for our fall fundraising campaign
 - Follow on Facebook, lot of new good posts
- Policy Committee – George Matthis
 - Sponsorship document – may need more wording adjustments to it; was sent to board
 - Need more members for this committee, but also need to clarify/remind all of the need for this committee
- Executive Committee – Rick Savage
 - Met last week to talk about financial things that Heather C and Norton W came up with.
 - Committee also discussed using webinars to keep people interested and engaged, especially as the 5 year anniversary comes up in June 2020.
 - Water Resource Research Institute (WRRI) - Cancelled the whole conference, mentioned to Rick they were considering doing some webinars of some presentations; Rick volunteered to get wetland paper/presenters doing wetland oriented webinars. It would be a joint effort of WRRI and us; maybe about 10 papers
 - Association of State Wetland Managers has asked us to do 2 national webinars – how we got started, lessons learned, involve Wisconsin Wetlands Association; another on our community outreach workshops (Swansboro project)
- Finance Committee – Heather, Norton, Chad
 - Balance – funds available \$8,975.31 as of 3/30/20
 - Net income since last board meeting \$2,404.49, but expecting additional \$475 refund from cancelled WRRI registration
 - Heather Clarkson is now chair of the finance committee
 - Met with Norton; realized the organization needs a financial policy. Will be developed; Norton will be working on this. He has experience with this.
 - Will be revisiting budget in light of how things are changing, with events cancelled, etc.
 - Making sure expenses are submitted consistently

7:35 Project Status

- Workshops
 - Town of Swansboro – was supposed to be today, but got cancelled.
 - Rick will reach out with Frank T to see if a meeting can be done remotely
- Stony Run (Dunn, NC)
 - Next Steps: Get a planning grant
 - Env Enhancement Grant application from Dept of Justice
 - Starting a project plan – Rick is working on this now
 - Do have very interested funders, Clean Water Management Trust fund included, but need a project plan for any grant

- Volunteer Wetlands Monitoring
 - Received award from NCSU – for one year of funding (\$20,080 with \$6,000 cost share requirement) – we can start drawing money through invoices. We have a lot of time volunteering to put into this. \$12,500 was for paying a volunteer coordinator, \$2,000 for overhead, and the rest is for other expenses
 - Need to talk to finance committee on how to invoice this
 - Conducted site visits to determine monitoring locations with Mike Burchell
 - Can't get groups together, but can get the materials together, QAPP, statement of work, etc. Could also maybe set up sites ourselves in small groups
- Lindsey Smart – grant proposal – she put Carolina Wetlands Association in her proposal for a small \$10,000 grant (includes \$1,500 for Carolina Wetlands Association). Proposal is to get a 3D model of a watershed, which connects to a computer; manipulate things on the model and model how water will move through and affect communities. Pilot test this with an underserved community to show them how certain things can aggravate their flooding situation or help alleviate it. Ideal if we could include this in the workshops we do down the line.

Other Business

Next board meeting is May 18, 2020, most likely will be online meeting.

Kim M - May is American Wetlands Month. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube site. Please share and like those posts, especially during the month of May. Looking for media contacts to send a press release kit – send this info to Rick S. or Kim M.

Adjourn – Kim M motioned a motion to adjourn, Tara A. seconded the motion, Meeting was adjourned at 7:32pm.