

January 10, 2022 Virtual Board Meeting via Zoom 1:00-3:00 pm EST

Attending: Barbara White, Robin Hanes, Michelle Cormier, Tim Maywalt, Mary Spear, Penny Kaiserlian, Alison Brill, Libby Gretz, Mark Zollinhofer

Secretary: Alison Brill

Penny moved, Barbara seconded, and the Board approved a correction to the December 2021 Board meeting minutes moving the discussion of dues from under the heading New Business to Communications. Alison will work with the previous Secretary to make this change.

The December 2021 minutes are approved with this change.

Robin welcomed Alison as the new secretary and noted her request to record the meeting. Recording was approved.

President's Report: Robin Hanes

Robin noted the sad loss of Tony Russell, an integral member of the local environmentalist community.

Phyllis asked Robin to talk with the Board about a request from the Piedmont Master Gardeners to have CATS join them at their spring plant sale on May 7, 2022. Consensus among the Board was that May is too late to hold a tree sale because trees need to be planted earlier in the season in order for them to thrive.

Anne Benham has proposed putting on a symposium focusing on the relationship between trees and climate change, similar to the one the Master Gardeners held in 2019. Although the Board thinks this is a good idea, because of the complexities of arranging something on this scale, it was decided after some discussion that such a project is beyond our current capabilities. The pandemic also complicates such efforts these days, and the Board did not take to the idea of hosting an online symposium. Libby and/or Robin will talk with and thank Anne.

Anne's other idea about making our members aware of the USDA Forest Service's "Tree Atlas" was greeted enthusiastically. Finding a speaker to talk to the membership about the project is a good idea for a membership meeting.

Robin and the folks at Emmanuel Church decided where to plant the tree and place the plaque for Maud's tree. Robin purchased a Cryptomeria from Southern States.

Robin and members of the Projects Committee met her neighbor, Peggy Van Yahres, on Franklin St last year to consider a joint planting project with the City Tree Commission. Peggy is on the Commission and became president this January. The City of Charlottesville was studying how to put in a sidewalk on Franklin St, a road with a good bit of traffic, and now, a number of pedestrians. Recently the City has decided not to proceed with the sidewalk.

Robin sent a letter to all relevant City agencies requesting that the City plant on Emmet Street appropriate street trees, using best practices, to go along with UVa's massive new project along Ivy Road and Emmet Street. A member of City Public Works has responded as though planning to plant there.

Past President: Barbara White

Barbara reported that she received a call from Laura Johnson regarding a budget request from (former) Governor Northam which, if approved, will allocate money to DOF to give trees to nonprofit organizations, including CATS, who will in turn distribute them to both public and private landowners. If this request comes through, the trees will be container trees in the 3-5 gallon range.

One concern was that CATS have its tree sale at a different time than when it is charged with giving trees away. Barbara assured Laura that that could be arranged.

Another topic of discussion with Laura was whether CATS would be willing to do a video with DOF on pruning.

The Board agreed to take as many trees as might be offered and to participate in the pruning video should the funding materialize.

Tree Commission Liaison: Mark Zollinhofer

The City of Charlottesville hired a new Director of Parks and Recreation: Dana Kasler. He will oversee the hiring of the new urban forester, which the Tree Commission will be involved in. The new urban forester position should be filled in February or March. The new Parks deputy director is Riaan Anthony.

The budget for the Tree Commission comes out of the Capital Improvement Projects budget. This is not satisfactory since most of the CIP money is currently earmarked for school construction. Mark reported a heightened interest in the benefits of trees and worries about tree canopy loss, so the Tree Commission hopes to have its own line item in the City budget eventually. The Tree Commission is also seeking outside funding.

The City completed a tree canopy study. Mark will forward the study to the Board. The consultant praised the efforts of the City in protecting tree canopy but loss is extensive due to private development.

Because of the turnover at City Council, the Tree Commission-designated list of trees to protect per a city ordinance has not been approved. The trees may be lost because of development moving forward before the protected tree list can be passed by the Council. The Tree Commission is doing what it can to see that this does not happen but concedes that the trees may be lost simply due to timing.

The Education Committee of the Tree Commission has a project called Releaf Cville. In the spring, they will focus on involving high school students. Releaf Cville should intersect with the CATS project at 10th and Page.

The Tree Commission hired a contractor to plant the trees that have been budgeted. They also had money to hire someone to go behind the contractor to make sure that the work gets done correctly in case of warranty dispute.

There is some confusion, but the City budgeted \$100,000 for planting, Mark believes, and also budgeted \$100,000 for the next three or four years to remove diseased Ash trees.

A discussion of who is responsible for the small trees at the Fifth Street Station development led to questions about zoning ordinances that regulate area of tree canopy versus impermeable surface, etc. The zoning ordinances are set to be rewritten in the next year, and the Tree Commission will have input. The City's Planning Commission and Architecture Review Board communicate the zoning requirements to NDS. However, it is unclear how effectively this is carried out. It appears that the process could be much better.

Tim suggested CATS find a way to do follow up work on the trees in tubes.

Education Committee: Tim Maywalt and Mary Spear

Tim tied in the discussion of zoning ordinances and how they are communicated and monitored, especially the CATS and Tree Commission roles in the process, as one of the educational gaps the previous Tree Stewards class identified. There were no objections to the New Class Work Group addressing possibly adding this to the curriculum.

Due to the recent storm that caused extensive tree damage and loss, the Board directed the Education Committee to devise a checklist addressing questions people might have about their damaged and/or lost trees. The list could be posted on the CATS Facebook page.

The new class work group will begin meeting soon. Tim feels that the group has plenty of time to work out what the curriculum will be for the upcoming class.

The Education Committee polled CATS membership about five possible topics for workshops; all five topics were received enthusiastically. The Ed Committee will start working on the new workshops.

Tree Basics classes are arranged, beginning with pruning.

Emily will conduct her winter tree ID class as usual.

March's class covers tree planting.

There are no tree walks scheduled at this time, primarily because of Covid, unless Emily incorporates one into her winter tree ID class. However, that depends on what the Covid situation looks like then.

There are plenty of tree walks prepared for when the Covid situation allows.

Mary sent out a list of monthly membership meeting speakers; she has scheduled speakers through April.

Communications: Penny Kaiserlian

- CoChair Communications

Martha Orton has let us know that she is moving to Northern VA in February. She will no longer be able to co-chair Communications, but she has agreed to continue to run our Facebook page.

- Promotion

We have done a promotion in late December to promote the January and February Tree Basics classes. We currently have 57 people registered for Tim's Pruning Landscape Trees tomorrow and 48 for Emily's Tree ID in Winter at the end of February. About a third of the registrants are from out of the CATS area. Most of the registrants are from our mailings, but we are also getting registrants through the Master Naturalists and the Sierra Club.

- Website

On December 12 we learned that the CATS website had been hacked. We understand from various news articles that GoDaddy, our website hosting service, was hacked in November and that many other WordPress sites were affected. When we learned of the hack of the CATS site, we immediately contacted GoDaddy to have it cleaned up, but a few days later, it was compromised again. The website has now been thoroughly cleaned, and we have purchased additional security. We have also implemented geo-blocking so that our site is not reachable from outside the U.S.; there is a strong possibility this was a foreign hack.

We have taken various security precautions.

- 1) Security. We have purchased an additional security package from GoDaddy for 3 months. This is automatically renewed unless we decide to buy it for a year or more at a slightly lower rate.
- 2) Site management. Chad of WebWeaving has checked all our plugins and followed other advice from GoDaddy
- 3) Passwords. The CATS web administrators/authors who put new information on the website have changed their passwords for extra security. We have removed various web authors or administrators if they are no longer actively posting material to the website.

Treasurer's Report: Michelle Cormier

As of December 31, 2021, all accounts have been reconciled and the credit card is paid off. Current assets are:

Money Market	\$25,133.00
Checking Account	5,556.00 (with two outstanding checks for \$600 and \$638)
Total Assets	\$27,789.00

The Board approved paying the accountant's fee of \$395.

Michelle suggested subscribing to Quickbooks online (rather than buying the software) since it is constantly updated, provides extra security in case of data loss, and will facilitate the transition from one treasurer to another. Quickbooks online for nonprofits costs \$36 per month.

Transition to Quickbooks online was approved. Michelle anticipates doing this around mid-year.

In-kind donations are not susceptible to regular accounting procedures. The better method is to donate money and earmark it for a specific purpose.

CATS' past donation to Ivy Creek of \$50 per month was clarified. There will not be a similar donation this year.

Kendra is working on the cost for pins. Nametags have not been mailed out yet as many of the trainees have not met their 25-hour volunteer requirement.

The line item for pins and nametags is \$290 at the moment, but will be updated at the next meeting after gathering more precise numbers.

The administration budget sits at \$3140. Discussion revealed that CATS has many subscriptions to tech services (e.g., Dropbox, Zoom, SmugMug, Mailchimp) that need to be consolidated under the Admin section of the Budget.

Michelle will update the Admin section, which will come in closer to \$3900, and will send it to Robin to be brought up for Board approval at the February 2022 meeting.

Tim will ask Martha how CATS uses/subscribes to Dropbox.

Penny will re-do the budget for Communications so that all tech subscriptions are under Admin.

The remaining sections of the Budget were tabled until the next meeting.

Projects Committee: Kathy Nepote

Due to a power outage at her home, Kathy was unable to attend or report this month.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Brill