

December 5, 2022 Charlottesville Area Tree Stewards, Virtual Board Meeting via Zoom 1:00-3:30 pm

Attending: Robin Hanes, Barbara White, JoAnn Dalley, Michelle Cormier, Alison Brill, Penny Kaiserlian, Kathy Nepote, Mary Spear, Tim Maywalt, Barbara Monfort, Libby Gretz, Jean Umiker-Sebeok

Interim Meeting

An email vote was held on Tuesday, December 13, 2022 at the request of President Robin Hanes who wished to add Lara Johnson and Thomas Johnson as associate members of CATS.

***The vote to add Lara Johnson and Thomas Johnson as associate members passed.**

Secretary: Alison Brill

***The motion was made, seconded, and passed to adopt the minutes of the November 2022 board meeting as submitted.**

President's Report: Robin Hanes

Robin discussed the Steve Gaines letter to the City Council requesting funding for the upcoming year. She wrote and distributed to the Board a letter to support his requests. The Board discussed both, and suggested a few changes to Robin's letter. Robin and Barbara W. decided to work together outside of the meeting to adjust Robin's letter given the Board's various suggestions. The Board agreed to the unchanged portions of the letter and to Robin and Barbara working on it further.

Robin thanked Mary for the invitations to the membership meeting/holiday party. She noted that pins and rain gauges have arrived and will be handed out then. The Board discussed the table configurations and centerpieces; Barbara will make sure that needed technology is ready. Those presenting at the meeting/party were encouraged to use photos.

Folks have been successful in getting businesses to donate door prizes. CATS will supply drinks.

Board members discussed the forms for memorial trees that Robin, Tim, Kathy, JoAnn and Barbara W. worked up. The form indicates the questions the Board needs to answer for itself when deciding whether to take on a memorial/celebration tree project. The Board discussed the details of the form; Michelle and Barbara W. will translate the form into a spreadsheet and the completed memorial/celebration trees will be added. Robin will draft a different form for the party requesting the tree planting.

The Board added \$25 to the amount that had been discussed in previous meetings. The added amount is to cover the cost of a plaque. It was agreed that having a hold harmless agreement is important; Robin will talk to her lawyer about drafting one. There are still a few issues that will need to be worked out when the time comes, particularly how to handle when a party wishes to plant the tree on public land. The Board also addressed which party should dig the holes, the time of year for planting various species of trees, who will be taking care of the trees, who should call Miss Utility, etc.

The Piedmont Botanic Garden told CATS that they do not want to have memorial/celebration trees on its property.

It was reiterated that the past president will take the lead on this project and that three current trainees will assume responsibility for the tree's care post-planting, with each trainee committing to one year apiece.

Kathy will talk to Chris and TJ about the various issues surrounding planting memorial trees on public property.

The Board again agreed that the memorial/celebration project will be reactive and not promoted by CATS.

Robin mentioned that she had been working at The Grove recently when a person approached Robin and told her how much she enjoys the trees CATS has planted there. Robin said that this happens frequently. (Note to Michelle that a check should arrive soon because in this particular case, the person mentioned that she'd lost an oak tree, so Robin sold her one from the CATS nursery.)

The discussion of the sequence of volunteer hours that needs to be fulfilled in order for a volunteer to be eligible for a nametag and/or pin continued.

***A motion was made, seconded and passed to approve a document the Board produced at this meeting that sets out the requirements for a trainee/volunteer to be given a hat, pin, or nametag and that this document will become an official policy to be added to the organizational documents and to be relayed to new trainee classes during orientation.**

Past President's Report: Barbara White

Barbara W. was told that CATS may ask for additional funding for spring planting, as well as be reimbursed for an amount already spent. She spoke with Jim Barbour and TJ about planting at some new parks. The Board approved Barbara's request to be given permission to have meetings with Kathy and Allen, Jim and TJ, the relevant park supervisor(s) and herself to talk about feasibility of planting in spring at the parks. Barbara was concerned that she submit a supplemental grant proposal as soon as possible due to the limited pot of money available.

Incoming President's Report: JoAnn Dalley

JoAnn will announce the new officers and handle voting at the December member meeting/holiday party.

She reported on behalf of Anne Benham that the library seems to have been "edged out" by VDoF. Anne has requested to be on the agenda at the January 2023 board meeting to discuss the future of the CATS library.

Treasurer's Report: Michelle Cormier

Michelle sent complete financial reports to the Board prior to the meeting.

Current balances:

\$32,136	money market savings
4,137	checking

Year to date:

\$34,300	income
25,700	expenses

Approximate surplus: \$8,500 (rounded)

Income is more than anticipated, indicating that CATS is growing.

Michelle has not needed to make any transfers from the savings account into checking yet this year.

The fourth quarter of the year was busy, with outflows of \$9,600 (which had been anticipated) and income of \$5,300.

JoAnn commended the education committee since the income from class tuition almost entirely covers their budget.

Michelle asked where nametag costs should go – to administration/nametags and pins.

Mary mentioned that donations coming through Eventbrite should go to the education budget.

It was clarified that the tree sale/nursery is its own category.

An “unknown” expense for \$25 for printing under “administration” is probably attributable to the 10th and Page project for stickers.

Michelle explained how the PayPal button works to offer users the option to add the 91 cents that PayPal charges for its fee if people pay with a credit card.

The Board agreed that if CATS receives a donation through the PayPal button, CATS will pay the fees (which should go under administration). Fees during the 4th quarter were \$15.49.

Carol Hunt is now going to handle writing all of the thank-you notes for donations.

Pins cost \$315 this year.

Michelle set up new income/expense categories for promotional items. There was a question as to whether there is a limit to how much a 501(c)(3) can earn via its merchandise. Michelle will ask the accountant.

Gifts/honoraria should be one category.

Michelle inquired about an expense of \$41.04 – nobody could identify. Michelle will research further.

Michelle will have detailed reports for each committee at the end of the year and reminded attendees that their 2023 budgets are due in January.

Tree Commission Report: Jean Umiker-Sebeok

Jean reported that the Tree Commission is exploring the idea of having a spring conference with UVA professor Tim Beatley on the topic of how to accomplish both increased housing density and increased green space/tree canopy. She feels that affordable housing advocates outnumber advocates for trees and raised the question of whether someone from CATS would want to participate in the possible spring conference.

Jean asked whether CATS posts on its website how many trees it plants each year. This led to a discussion of a number of things CATS could post to amplify its accomplishments; Mary is interested in updating the website.

Communications: Penny Kaiserlian and Mary Spear

CATS received its tee shirt order and offered the new gray long-sleeved T-shirts to the Class of 2022 graduates on 12/15. We sold 30 shirts and have 36 left. They will be offered again at the holiday party along with caps, cards, and rain gauges. There are about 48 hats left.

Piedmont Landscape Association will hold its annual seminar at the Paramount Theater on February 2, 2023 after a two-year hiatus. CATS has been invited to participate again as a vendor and should reserve soon. The rate is \$100 for a 6' table for non-profits. There is a charge for people to attend the seminar, but Penny believes those staffing the tables receive free admission.

Speakers will be:

Colston Burrell: Principal, Native Landscape Design & Restoration

Peggy Cornett: Curator of Plants at Monticello

Thomas Rainer: Principal, Phyto Studio, LLC

Doug Tallamy: Professor, Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology, University of Delaware

Anne and Penny visited the proposed library space in the VDoF Geology Library—still not ready, with no set date. As noted above, Anne is concerned about lack of use of the CATS library. She'll try bringing new books to the December 15 holiday party for people to check out. She has written a separate memo with more details for discussion about the future of the library for a Board meeting.

Projects Committee: Kathy Nepote

The group had a productive day at the Grove.

Projects will ramp up now that class is over.

Tim's pruning program began on December 1.

They did invasives control on December 3 at Northeast Park.

Projects committee is meeting on the 7th; new projects will be decided at that time. Check TIF.

On November 29, Kathy and Allen went to Waynesboro to look at a possible project involving a greenway in Constitution Park where cages around trees need maintenance. She will find out what the costs might be. There is a question of whether we could do a one-off project to help out there; Waynesboro doesn't have its own tree steward chapter. Kathy will get more details.

Habitat for Humanity has requested a meeting on December 7 with CATS and Piedmont Master Gardeners about their joint landscaping project at new Habitat homes.

Education Committee: Tim Maywalt and Mary Spear

The member meeting on January 25 will feature Professor Serita Frey of the University of New Hampshire who will speak on how human activities are impacting terrestrial systems.

The new class is currently completing a course evaluation. Their feedback will be available in January. The education committee has also asked class presenters for feedback. When the committee begins planning next year's class, they will look to this feedback to see if they want to incorporate any of the suggestions

The next tree basics class is tomorrow, Thursday, and Saturday on ID and control of invasives. Tim anticipates approximately 40 people attending the online portion and about 15 for the in-person session.

There was one tree walk this month, which was at Riverview Park. 16 people attended.

Tom Wild's brochure has been printed up (250 copies at \$175) and is available for tabling.

Barbara Monfort will take over in 2023 as education committee chair. Mary's moving to communications. And Tim is stepping down from the board, but will remain active with the class.

Everyone thanked Tim for his service. And his sense of humor.

Emily will conduct her tree ID session in February (on the 7th for the Zoom, 11th for the walk).

Pruning is scheduled in January.

Ongoing and New Business:

Mary explained that the email address for Zoom is going to be transferred to a centralized, more accessible email. Michelle asked that they include her and that they streamline the process so that everyone who needs to can easily access Zoom.

Everyone thanked Robin for her work as President this year.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Brill