

Upstate Master Naturalist Association Meeting

May 27, 2021

10:00am, ZOOM Meeting

To minimize Zoom disruptions from alternating screen sharing, the President will present the following officer's reports:

Minutes Asa Hill Secretary: The March 25th minutes had been distributed previously by email on 4/11 (12:28 PM) and they were also posted on Facebook. Any concerns, corrections, or discussion about those minutes, if not approval was requested..

Motion to approve by Dave Redden, second by Alan Elzerman, Approved

Treasurer report from Kathy Harrington:

- Balance as of Monday was \$12,162.61
- Required tax reports and non-profit state filings have been completed for the year and mailed in by Kathy
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Program report from Imtiaz Haque 1st VP and program chair:

After today the next three currently remaining 2021 talks and which have more details that will be out in the newsletter are:

7-22-2021: David Spain - Title: Metamorphosis Ain't Just for Butterflies which will be a Geology talk concerning the Upstate.

9-23-2021: Dan Whitten – Title: The Mighty Oaks of the Upstate

11-18-2021 Pending.....

The two listed are approved for Advanced training hours by the board.

At the Exec Board meeting on Monday, we started planning for possible **in person meetings starting in September**. We will monitor the SC COVID status and the requirements for parks, facilities we may use and state governance, and we are looking for potential safe sites for meetings. The board is also looking at resuming field activities for members.

Imtiaz is reviewing several potential speakers for the annual meeting in November.

Membership report: Dave Redden 2nd VP and Membership chair

Dave reported to the board that the new electronic distribution system (Google Groups) seems to be doing well. If anyone is having trouble getting their UMNA notices, please let him know so this can be reviewed and corrected.

The board has also set up plans for Cloud storage for UMNA. It will have two components. One will be a secure site accessible by members of record to access any old newsletters, announcements, minutes, volunteer opportunities, etc in a single repository. Two will be a secure site for the board officers to allow centralization of UMNA records rather than each officer maintaining their own files and having to hand them over when officers change as in the past. This system will be graduated into place over the next few months by the officers and then vetted by the board.

Committee Reports:

Ray Long submitted his annual volunteer hours report. As expected activities were way down due to COVID restrictions .

After 6 years of service in his position Ray is resigning as Volunteer Coordinator in July due to changes in his available time. So.... We are looking for someone to take that position. He says the volunteer services website is not hard to navigate and it shouldn't take too long to show someone the ropes. Familiarity with MS Excel will facilitate the learning and he will be glad to help the incoming person.

Please think about it. If you have questions contact Ray or me. It is a great opportunity to provide important services to the UMNA and earn volunteer hours at the same time.

Website. The board is trying to decide how to proceed with our UMNA website. Jenna Stephens did a great job setting it up but from the beginning indicated she did not wish to do regular upkeep. Some members and board members have noted that an out-of-date website is often less useful than not having one and that we should either make efforts to maintain an active updated presence or cancel it. We are seeking input from members about the value of it (since we have an active Facebook site and if we have a member accessible cloud storage for documents). One area of potential usefulness might be paying dues! If there is a member with such skills and interest in serving in that capacity, please join in the discussion to help with such a decision.

OLD BUSINESS:

Grants: As announced previously, the 2020 grants were given an extension to year end 2021 due to the COVID limitations in activities and project completion.

I have contacted the grantees for status reports to verify compliance.

Grant Status

<u>Awardee name</u>	<u>Organization represented</u>	<u>Function for the Funds</u>
Manella Calhoun	Critters and More on the go	Travelling educational experience on litter control. <u>Presently on Hold</u>
Tom Kozel (Carole Walters)	Anderson University	Building a wetland viewing platform at RRNP- <u>Money not spent. Begin work Early June</u>
Dodie Clark Anderson County Library	Youth Services	Children's Sensory Garden- <u>Completed pollinator garden</u>
David Hedden/ Carolyn Dawson	Carolina Hemlocks	Treated 30+ Carolina Hemlocks and many more common hemlocks Project Completed - Report Pending

Two of the grants have been completed despite COVID restrictions. Dodie Clark has fully completed all requirement and her report. David Hedden reported completing his project and the report has been mailed in.

The other two have been limited in their progress due to COVID restrictions but are maintaining activities and are expected to be able to complete the requirements.

Detailed individual reports will be provided to members on each one in the future.

NEW BUSINESS:

In response to members suggestions, even before COVID, the exec board has been exploring the offering of advanced training planned by the board using experts in their field of study, in a similar manner to what other SC MNA groups and as some other state MNA groups do. These could supplement our historic offerings to UMNA members. In exploring these considerations several things have come up that other groups have wrestled with in their offerings, and shared their experiences with us.

These include issues of insurance and funding (cost and making money). Those are being explored by the board as part of this issue and further reports will follow, but we are interested in members input.

Other Business?

None

Other announcements by members from the floor:

It was announced by Andy Chesson that James Blake had notified him that Master Naturalist Classes will be resumed under modified conditions to accommodate Covid restrictions.

Dan Whiten announced that the Native Plant Certificate Program in conjunction with the SC Botanical Garden at Clemson will soon be back up and running.

Reminder:

Odd months, 4th Thursday, except November. Start at 10:00 AM

Planned meeting dates:/

7/22/

9/23/

11/18

Imtiaz Haque introduced our speaker: Stephen Schutt Title: Biodiversity in the Home Landscape and the Problems It Faces.

There were 46 attendees on the Zoom presentation.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25AM.

Minutes submitted by Asa Hill