

Minutes of 12/4 Prairie Sands Chapter Holiday Party and Annual Meeting

Present: Special guests, Gary Eldred, Gary Adams, Brendan Woodall

Chapter members: David and Shelley Hamel, Ray and Dick Goehring, Cathy and Bill Franks, Karen and Fred Wollenburg, Dale and Beth Johnson, Christine and Tom Schaeffer, Jill and Rob Schuettpelz, Laurel Bennett, Doreen Sonnenberg, Ben Bomkamp, Kerstyn Perrett, John Shillinglaw, Dick Hansen, Charles Church

Ray Goehring called the meeting to order by introducing our special guests and Gary Eldred, one of the original founders of TPE, said a few words about the relationship between the chapters and the central TPE organization. He talked about how the chapters are important in helping the central organization grow and sustain its ability to identify, restore and maintain remnant prairies in perpetuity while still supporting its grassroots philosophy and keeping its paid administration staff to only one 1 full time and 1 part time person. He then introduced his guest Gary Adams who has helped in prairie restoration over the years. Brendan Woodall from U.S. Fish and Wildlife was introduced and would speak later in the meeting.

Because there were several new members present, everyone in the room introduced themselves and spoke of little about their personal interests in prairie.

Ben BomKamp and Kerstyn Perrett of Nature Works LLC, gave a presentation of the online website iNaturalist. They talked about how it can be helpful in organizing plant and wildlife inventories, marking where specific species are located on a property and surrounding properties, and how it can help keep track of invasive species encroachment. Ben offered to help any chapter members who might be interested in setting up a page. His email address is: Ben@natureworkswi.com

Then while Barbara owner of More Healthy Foods and Café served us designer pizzas,

Shelley Hamel gave a presentation on the online site called Fire Effects Information System. It is an online collection of reviews of the scientific literature about fire effects on plants and animals and about fire regimes of plant communities in the United States, Compiled and coordinated by USDA/US Forest Service. She distributed hand out that answered questions about the site and gave reasons for using the site as: "It's a unique resource to help create informed management plans for prescribed burns. Allows you to weigh how different burn plans affect multiple species within your burn unit – including desirable species, invasives, and aggressive wind-blown colonizers like Canada Goldenrod, either within your unit or nearby."

Business Meeting

Treasurer, David Hamel, gave the treasurers report. (See attachment)

He then asked for a motion to authorize payment by the chapter funds for the pizza for the party (\$272). Motion was made and seconded and approved unanimously. Ray and Dick Goehring wrote a personal check to pay for the pizza and will send (through David) a reimbursement form to TPE to be reimbursed from chapter funds.

David then talked about how many of us felt the purchase of a portable microphone from chapter field trips would be a good idea because often it is difficult to hear what the leader is saying. He brought along a model he was considering but was unable to demonstrate because of interference within the building. He asked for a motion which was given by Jill Schuettpelz to approve a budget of \$200 for the purchase of a portable microphone which was made and seconded by Ray Goehring and approved by unanimous vote.

Chapter field trips: Ray Goehring said she would be sending out a sign up email for 2019 Chapter field trips and/or workdays. These often include the greater TPE organization and public but not necessarily. Last year we had member who requested a site visit but weren't prepared for an actual public event, so asked that we limit the field trip to chapter members only.

Ray Goehring mentioned the TPE Annual Conference would be held on March 2 in Menomonee and that the silent auction was our chief fundraiser. Jill S acted as coordinator for last year's chapter silent auction and volunteered to do this again. Ray will send a notice out to the email group about how to donate and contact Jill. Last year there was a box placed at More Healthy Food and Café for people to drop off their donation if they couldn't get to Madison (where Jill lives) Cathy Franks said she drives to Madison often, so she could help deliver the items from the box to Jill. More details will follow in this regard.

Election of officers: David has been chapter treasurer since the chapter began and also has been the board member. He briefly described the job duties of both positions and asked for nominations to take over the positions—most in question was the Board Membership position. David explained that the board meets 8 times a year – 4 by telephone conference and 4 in person. He has found it difficult to make all of the 4 mandatory in person meetings because he is traveling. Since there were no volunteers, Dick Goehring suggested we pay someone to attend the inperson meetings and Charlie Church proposed we pay that person \$100 a meeting for travel expenses and time. There was a motion to do this and it was seconded and approved unanimously. There was still no volunteer to be board member so it was suggested that David write up a job description and Ray Goehring will send a notice to the entire email group asking for a volunteer.

There was a brief discussion about having a chapter chairperson, which didn't go very far. Ray Goehring said she would continue to be Communications Liaison but since she is not in Wisconsin for much of the year, she needed "boots on the ground" from other chapter members to attend chapter field trips, leadership meetings, site evaluations, send membership/fundraising letters etc. Several members said they would do these things on an as needed basis.

Membership: David Hamel presented a list of members and the status of their membership dues and the need to have someone assume the role of membership chair. No one volunteered for that role and

Ray mentioned how neither David or her enjoyed handwriting notes of fundraising letters and the group then talked about possibly sending the fundraising letters to several members to hand write and then mail. No specific names as of yet, but Ray will ask for volunteers via email in the future. As far as membership dues themselves, some indicated that they tried to renew their membership online using TPE's website several times and they kept being put on a never-ending loop. Gary Eldred said he would mention that to the TPE staff.

Prescription Burn Training: Fred Wollenburg said there were about 8 people who attended and although the weather prevented them from actual infield burning, the classroom instruction seemed even more helpful and informative than last years.

Brendan Woodall from Fish and Wildlife then talked a bit about the status of the Karner Blue Butterfly grants. He said if anyone is interested in the grant, it usually entails a site visit and if the site looks appropriate for Karner Blue Butterflies, Fish and Wildlife will usually do a 50/50 cost share and provide a plant list and restoration recommendation. There was still more money available but they are looking for new acres dedicated to the project. Upon questions about FWS help for acres already planted under the program in previous years, he said they will still do site visits as time allows.

The meeting was then adjourned and everyone was invited to choose packets of seed from a table full of seed donated by members for the seed exchange.