

DRAFT MINUTES

Old Rag Master Naturalists Board Meeting (via Zoom)

September 13, 2021

10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Call to Order – meeting started at 10:04 am

Attendance –

The following Board members were in attendance: Barry Buschow, Jeff Stehm, “Tepp” Tepper, Bill Bynum, Jere Willis, Tom Drier, Deirdre Clark, Bonnie Beers, and Kathleen Aucoin.

The following committee chairs were in attendance: Jeff Stehm, Charlene Uhl, Carolyn Smith, Bonnie Beers, Deirdre Clark, and Mary Fran leMat.

The following members were in attendance: Bill Clark

Verify Quorum - verified

Agenda Approval – approved except will add compensation for church to New Business section

Minutes Approval –**approved** minutes from Board meeting July 5, 2021 pending two changes from Mary Fran leMat

Officers’ Reports

1. President –*Barry Buschow*

- a. There is an ORMN social event scheduled for October 22 from 5:00 – 7:00 at Lenn Park in Culpeper.

2. Vice President –*Jeff Stehm*

- a. No report

3. Secretary – *“Tepp” Tepper*

- a. The VMN annual conference will be October 1-3. It will be an online-only conference.
- b. The VMN Leadership Month is November. The online sessions will be given on November 3, 9, and 18, from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. All sessions are free.

4. Treasurer –*Bill Bynum*

- a. Bill has completed his financial audit and reported that ORMN is financially sound and he did not find any problems. Everything is in good order.
- b. Status of bank accounts: ORMN has a total of \$12,373.46 in its checking and savings accounts (**see attached treasurer’s report**).
- c. Barry has expressed the Board’s appreciation to Dave Cooper for doing such a good job while he served on the Board as ORMN’s Treasurer.

Program Committee Reports

1. Basic Training Committee – *Bonnie Beers*

- a.** The BTC will meet this Friday and co-chairmanship of this committee will be passed to Tom Gill and Cindy Colson at this meeting. The number of field trips for Class 11 and their formats will be discussed. The class reading list will also be reviewed.
- b.** Class 11 will meet in the “Gathering Room” at St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church in Culpeper. WiFi is available, the church is ADA-compliant, and there are several breakout rooms off the main room that Class 11 can use.

2. Member Recruitment and Services Committee - *Mary Fran leMat*

- a.** Carolyn Strand and Cherie Lawson have left this committee but Francis Vaughn and Connie McCabe have joined this committee. Francis will do ORMN clothing orders and distribution, which Cherie handled in the past.
- b.** There are 7 applications for Class 11 at this point. These candidates are being interviewed. In addition, there are 10 people who previously expressed interest in the class and the committee is keeping in touch with them
- c.** The period for accepting applications started on August 1 and will end on November 15. The selection of trainees will begin on November 16 and end on December 1.
- d.** Bruce and Ann Bowman will be in charge of assigning mentors for the Class 11 trainees.
- e.** Jeff Stehm has digital copies of ORMN brochures and the recruitment poster. He will send them out to everyone and ask for help in posting them.

3. Communications Committee – *Jeff Stehm*

- a.** Recruitment information is featured on the home page of the ORMN website.
- b.** Public service announcements about the training class have been sent to the local newspapers.
- c.** A poster about the class has been sent to all county Extension offices in our area.

4. Continuing Education and Logistics Committee – *Charlene Uhl*

- a.** Charlene now has all the electronic equipment, the screen, the tent, a table, and 2 chairs. She also has a lot of publications and handouts.
- b.** We now have all the equipment needed to set up an ORMN display. A display is planned at the Madison Library during the town yard sale. Charlene would like to know about other opportunities where we can set up a display.

5. Projects Committee – *Carolyn Smith*

- a. A new proposal for statewide mapping of invasive plants was received and approved. This project will be led by Rebeca Sanchez-Burr.
- b. A stewardship and education project in Greene County is expected to be proposed soon.
- c. The Socrates Project will be expanded to include poisonous animals, including reptiles, snakes, and insects in Virginia. Alfred Goosens will be heading this effort and members of other VMN chapters will participate. UVA will underwrite the project costs.

Unfinished Business

1. Bill Clark presented his scholarship proposal (**attached**). The scholarship will be awarded to a high school senior based on his/her current intentions to study an environmental field in college. The Board unanimously approved increasing support for the scholarship to \$2000 and that this amount will be added as a line item in the budget. The Board also approved the continuation of the work by Bill's ad hoc committee, which will next focus on the logistics of awarding the scholarship. There was a brief discussion of where Bill's committee would fit into ORMN's existing committee structure but this was tabled pending further work by the committee. Bill is looking for new committee members to work on the logistics.
2. Number of trainees: The Member Recruitment and Services Committee has decided to yield to the BTC in limiting the maximum number of trainees to 15 for Class 11.
3. Should trainees be required to pay a deposit before the class actually starts? The Board decided that this decision will be left to the BTC, which wants to stay with having the trainees pay at the first meeting of the class.
4. The free version of Survey Monkey is very limited. There was a discussion of whether we need to purchase rights to use an enhanced version of Survey Monkey for \$300 a year. This discussion was tabled until we need to do a survey so we'll avoid paying for something we aren't using.
5. Mary Fran provided an update on the status of the Butterfly Committee. The information collected during the July butterfly count was sent to NABA. The Board decided that the NABA butterfly count should be treated as a regular project and not have a committee status.
6. Deirdre presented some information from a session she attended on "Hidden Biases in Volunteer Management" that was hosted by Volunteer Fairfax. She emphasized the fact that specific words used do matter and that casual conversations and person-to-person outreach are much more effective than formal presentations to groups. We need to meet people where they are and let

them know they'd be welcome to join ORMN. We don't want minorities to feel like they are a targeted population. We need to move forward on increasing diversity in our chapter wherever we can. Deidre will keep an eye on activities at the Carver Center.

New Business:

1. Discussion of Charlene Uhl's proposal (**attached**) to create an ad hoc committee to address engaging, recruiting, and involving members with mobility challenges and other physical disabilities. The Board officially established this ad hoc committee.
2. Discussion of proposal by Charlene Uhl and Dave Cooper to offer a CE class to ORMN members on CPR and use of AEDs when we can have face-to-face meetings. The Board decided to table further discussion of this proposal until covid restrictions are lifted.
3. Discussion of how we can help "Zoom-challenged" members and trainees, an issue that was brought up by Charlene Uhl. Bonnie Beers and Charlene Uhl will do a survey of our members to get a handle on how many members this is a problem for.
4. Request for up to \$500 for building 6 bluebird houses – *Barry Buschow and Tom Dreier*
 - a. Six new bluebird boxes that have already been built have been donated to ORMN by the Virginia Bluebird Society.
 - b. The Board agreed to set aside \$300 as a line item in the budget for fixing birdhouses and to handle whatever needs come up. Barry can approve expenses out of this account.
5. The Board voted to increase compensation to St. Stephens Episcopal Church to \$600. The Board will also offer the church an ORMN annual work party to help with maintenance of the church property.

Date of next Member meeting: October 11, 2021, hopefully at the St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Culpeper.

Date of next Board meeting: November 1, 2021, at the St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Culpeper.

Adjournment: 12:08 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy "Tepp" Tepper
ORMN Secretary

TREASURERS REPORT

Submitted by Bill Bynum, Treasurer

OLD RAG MASTER NATURALISTS

September 13, 2021

- Account Balances: Checking \$4,321.42 Savings \$8,052.04
 - No unbudgeted activity
-

A proposal is being presented to the ORMN BOD to approve/support the award of an annual Scholarship to an individual student that must be a resident of the ORMN Service Area, and either a full-time college freshmen or high school senior who has applied to a college to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in Wildlife/Conservation/Environmental Studies, one of the scientific disciplines taught in the ORMN Master Naturalists Training Program, or in related Studies like Geography, Remote Sensing, GIS, Soil Science, and Hydrology. This scholarship would do two things:

1. Show ORMN'S commitment to the future generation of environmental stewards,
2. ORMN Name recognition throughout the region with a younger/different audience

The BOD has two Options:

1. Not approve this proposal
2. Approve the proposal with the following criteria. The BOD may wish to change/add/delete any or all the following criteria.
 - a. amount of the scholarship should be \$1,000.0
 - b. Initial funding for the Scholarship could be provide out of the ORMN Treasury.
 - c. Funding should/could be by contributions to a separate Scholarship Fund (when member dues are payable in December).
 - d. To initially establish the fund other organizations (PATH Foundation) might be approached for funding. If a shortfall in Scholarship Funding occurs, it could either be supplemented from the general fund, or not awarded that year.
 - e. Applications would be accepted from 15 January to 1 April.
 - f. Application forms could be similar to forms used by the Virginia Association, John Marshall and Culpeper SWCDs. (attached)
 - g. Evaluation Criteria could be similar to that used by the Virginia Association, James Marshall and Culpeper SWCDs. (attached)
 - h. Guidance Counselors at each school will be informed of Scholarship availability.
 - i. An Evaluation Board should be established by the BOD to evaluate applications.
 - j. Funds should be provided directly to the recipient and the recipient's School should be notified so it can be announced at the School annual awards ceremony.
 - k. The recipient should be announced and presented to the ORMN membership at the ORMN June Annual Meeting.

PROPOSAL TO ORMN BOARD

How our chapter can engage, recruit and involve people with mobility challenges and other physical disabilities in our mission and activities

Challenge

“The mission of ORMN is to develop a corps of volunteers who understand biodiversity and our regional ecosystem, and who help Virginia conserve and manage its natural resources by educating the public, collecting data for scientific purposes, and providing volunteer service to organizations and entities promoting the conservation of natural resources.” [ORMN Handbook, page 1]

As a part of the Virginia Master Naturalist program, ORMN is bound by the following requirements:

Virginia Master Naturalist programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age color, disability, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer.

The goal of our chapter should be to nurture diversity within our group as well as in the natural communities around us. Currently there are many ORMN activities that may not be available to members who have mobility challenges. This committee would focus on determining the current accessibility of ORMN programs and modifications that could be made to increase accessibility. Based on our work ORMN may consider how to expand access by individuals with other disabilities as a second step to increase inclusion.

Objectives

1. Determine the status of ORMN’s compliance with the above VMN requirements
2. Identify physical accessibility challenges present at meetings, ORMN-approved projects and other ORMN-sponsored activities
3. Report to the Board on ORMN’s overall physical accessibility
4. Propose possible modifications that could increase accessibility to ORMN’s activities

Work plan

- A time-limited committee will be created to undertake an analysis of overall accessibility of ORMN's programs and activities.
- The committee will be chaired by Charlene Uhl, who would also act as staff to the committee. Three ORMN members have agreed to participate to date: Bonnie Beers, Dorothy "Tepp" Tepper, and Jere Willis. All interested ORMN members would be invited to serve on the committee.
- The initial focus would be on individuals with physical mobility challenges, as that is the most prevalent and likely for our chapter population, and may also attract new members who may feel current ORMN activities are inaccessible.

Specific activities to be undertaken by the committee:

- Assess the accessibility of ORMN meetings (general membership, Board and committees, and other meetings) by members and others, including guests and presenters who may have mobility challenges
- Identify and catalog the ORMN-approved projects that are accessible / inaccessible to members with mobility challenges
- Assess whether any modifications could be made to increase accessibility to ORMN activities
- Research any resources, guidance, etc. that VMN may have in this area
- Survey other Master Naturalist chapters in Virginia regarding their accessibility efforts in order to inform our chapter's activities going forward
- Report to the Board on the committee's findings and recommendations

Proposal submitted by Charlene Uhl
August 13, 2021