

Field Naturalist & Ecological Planning Alumni Association
Board of Directors Meeting
November 17 2020

Present: Sean Beckett, Tate Bushell, Jeffey Hughes, Meredith Naughton, Hannah Phillips, Lauren Sopher. **Absent:** Deane Wang

1. Prospective Students Day 2020

FNEPAA (TB) is presenting on the organization, our role, and about our alumni. Also tuning into the virtual lunch hour

2. FNEP Symposium 2021 - some spring conferences are already going virtual (NENHC). Should we?

No in-person symposium is realistic.

Instead, there is a huge demand for community interaction. We'll focus our efforts on virtual community-building, and hold off on the deeply professional aspect.

Decision to create a monthly(ish) brown-bag Zoom series starting in the new year.

Also decided to create an Instagram account for FNs, use to re-share posts of other alumni.

3. Board composition - reviewing the results of our newsletter outreach.

1. Communications member: General consensus that this is not a major priority right now, because we are able to handle the current level of communications, now that our systems have been honed, and we are all able to contribute effectively.
2. Current student representative: Submit to current cohort a request for a representative. Here's are the details from the bylaws:

"Section 1a. Current Student Appointment (minimum 1): Current students will be nominated to the Board by methods agreed upon by current students. Current students will serve a one-year term. Preference will be given to students with longer tenure in the program. Only one current student may serve on the Board at a time."

Section 10. Current Student Representative: Power and Duties: The Current Student Representative shall be charged with representing current student experiences in the Program. Issues of importance and concern that relate to the Alumni Association shall be determined by the Current Student Representative through active solicitation of input from the current student body on a regular basis, preceding Board meetings. Issues of current student importance or concern shall be conveyed to the Board of Directors two weeks preceding quarterly Board meetings. It is the responsibility of the Current Student Representative to convey the minutes of each board meetings back to current students. The Current Student Representative will also serve as a liaison in matters of collaboration and event coordination. The Current Student Representative may serve as

the Communications Office for the Association, but may not hold other Officer positions.”

3. Fundraising member: Consensus that this is a major need still. Need one person to take leadership on moving our fundraising efforts forward. Need to hire or otherwise recruit someone to accomplish next needed steps: 1) Get us in-sync in terms of what needs to happen, what the goals are (FNEPAA, UVM, other stakeholders, etc.) and 2) Create a fundraising plan.

Big overarching goal: raise funds to endow directorship position. There is interest from all parties in making this happen, and we've laid the groundwork for these conversations to take place, but what is needed is a leader who has fundraising experience to drive the ship and make these conversations take place. Board will scour our alumni list to see if we can find such a person (or group of people) internally.

4. First year cohort support - what support can we offer halfway through their first year?
 1. Project pep-talk. (too soon - projects haven't been administered. February ideally. Ideas: how to communicate with your committee, with your sponsors, with your colleagues; who should be on your committee; planning frameworks; etc.)
 2. Virtual gathering to offer advice; answer questions.
 3. Current student representative
 4. *G/S instruction*
5. Field Notes prep?
 1. What role did we play last year; what role should we play this year?
 2. Arrange meeting with Josh to offer support; ask what help is needed; coordinate our involvement.

Current Students can handle the issue entirely. FNEPAA can give current students some guidance on the tradition of Field Notes and ideas.

Collaboratively, we should create a document to capture the institutional knowledge around this publication, typical roles, Roles/Responsibilities, etc. Make sure to check in with Bryan about this too.

6. Financial status; membership.
7. Fundraising next steps
8. Program Updates:
 1. Staffing changes?
 2. Efforts to diversify the student body?
9. Newsletter:
 1. Call for projects (**JH**)
 2. Prospective Student's day Recording (**Sonia**)
 3. Symposium 2021 updates (**HP**)
 4. Find gaps in project database (**HP**)

5. Announce Brown Bag series (**SB**)
6. New Instagram Account! (**LS**)
7. Membership Appeal (**SB**)
8. Link to recent writing works (EcoBlog? Chris/Maria's new blog?) (**LS**)

Action Steps:

SB - re-circulate unapproved minutes

SB - arrange 1st/3rd Friday noon lunch series

Everyone - Do personal outreach to invite folks to join the lunch naturalist hangout series, once announced.

~~HP - Email Georg to cancel in person event at Eagle Hill~~

LS - Create IG account for FN program

~~HP - recruit a current student board representative (see above minutes for details from our bylaws)~~

HP and TB - Look into alumni list to see who we have as fundraising person internally. See minutes above for initial suggestions. Begin outreach ASAP

SB - make current students aware that they have access to alumni database

SB - announce that we're hoping to fill a current students board member role

SB - organize a "pep-talk" meeting with current students, suggesting some topics that AA can provide input on.

DW/JH - Work over the break to get historic project documents digitized.

~~HP - Organize a GIS session and coordinate with Jeff on when that will happen~~

TB - Connect with Josh Brown about Field Notes expectations, and make sure there is no assumption that FNEPAA will be publishing it. (also check in with Bryan Pfeiffer to gauge his interest in involvement)

TB - Draft *Nuts and Bolt to Field Notes* document

LS - tell Chris/Jason/Maria to get their blog ready for circulation

ALL - Newsletter Content: send to **LS**. **DEADLINES: DEC 14th**

JH/DW - Make Instagram Accounts