



## HIGHLANDS BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

Annual Membership Meeting

June 20, 2020

In attendance via Zoom: Marianne Jenkins, Jim Milby, Amy Patterson, Monte Gaillard, Liz Sargent, Julia Grumbles, Sarah Morgan Wingfield, Vernon Skiles, Alex Smith, David Martin, Cookie Patterson, Karen Patterson, Jennie Stowers, Doris Grove, Jim Costa, Lisa Armstrong, Ruthie Oliver, Steve Ferrell, Bill Reeves, John Mitchener, Linda Barlow, Charlotte Muir, Paige Engelbrektsson, Winter Gary, Frances Oakley, Martha Stibbs, Cathy Jones, Melanie Mauldin, Bill Clarkson, Lucy Trawick, Helen Regnery, Carol Stewart, Bryding Adams

Quorum present.

Meeting called to order at 2:06 p.m. by President Julia Grumbles.

### **President's Report, Julia Grumbles**

A motion was made to approve previous meeting's minutes. Motion carried. Grumbles thanked everyone for joining the meeting and supporting HBF, especially during the current pandemic. She emphasized the importance of HBF supporting the work of the Station and conserving the Plateau through research and outreach.

### **Treasurer's Report, Amy Patterson**

Patterson reviewed the past year's financials. She reported HBF is in a good financial position despite the ongoing pandemic. She noted HBF was incorporated over 90 years ago, and we're still fulfilling our mission. Patterson reported that the board has set aside liquid cash reserves for challenging times like these, and HBF will be judicious this year but will still offer programs – just in a different format. She also reported the Annual Fund for FY1920 (ended May 31<sup>st</sup>) did well, exceeding its goal. The Nature Center camps were refunded as summer programs were canceled. Highlands on the Half-Shell & the Soiree did great this past year, but HBF will not have them this year due to Covid-19. Expenses went as expected, however, there was an increase in salaries due to a new part-time employee hire in August who was made full-time in January. HBF's PPP loan (\$31k) is still a liability until it is forgiven and then it will be moved to the income category. Patterson noted HBF's total assets are above 1 million.

### **Election of Trustees, Jennie Stowers**

A slate of 7 trustees was voted on by the membership. Kim Coward was elected to a second term, and Greg Gregory was elected to return after a rotation off the board.

New nominees were Tricia Allen, Bill Clarkson, Frank Langford, Alex Smith, and Carol Stewart.

A motion was made to elect these members for 3-year terms. Motion carried.

### **Director's Report, Charlotte Muir & Paige Engelbrektsson**

Muir reported that prior to March, we were prepared for one of our biggest summers yet. Last summer was a huge success and we're still celebrating. Muir thanked our board, those trustees who are rolling off the board, and our members. She introduced each of the HBF staff members including herself, Winter Gary (a former HBS student and Nature Center intern) and Paige Engelbrektsson (Nature Center Education Specialist). She noted Engelbrektsson has created a great slate of Nature Center programs for all ages and interests this year. Muir described how HBF funds research at HBS through Grants-in-Aid vetted by the Board of Scientific Advisors, and luckily, some researchers will be here on campus this summer despite the pandemic. Engelbrektsson reported that HBF is funding a new MAPS bird banding station at HBS which is for a long-term bird study that just began thanks to facilitation by Jason Love, HBS Associate Director. Over the years, the banding station will be able to gather data on how birds on campus are doing and put it into a nationwide data set to see patterns. Muir reported the Garden Committee has made great progress recently: improvements include a new bog garden bridge in honor of Dr. Lawrence Mellichamp and a homeowner demonstration garden in front of the Cottages. She also reported HBF made large capital investments in the Nature Center this year through a new A/C system, LED lighting, gift shop displays, and merchandise.

### **Programs, Paige Engelbrektsson**

Engelbrektsson reported that staff had to adjust programs due to the pandemic. She described the new virtual program offerings like Nearby Nature, Spring Sightings, Garden Tours, Weekend Wanders, etc. She highlighted aspects from the past year such as the successful summer camps, special events, daily educational programs, and new off-season programs that began last year including Nature 101s and new programming for local groups such as the Methodist Church. She also reported Nature Center community engagement was increased through tabling at various festivals.

### **Unfinished Business: North Campus Update, Julia Grumbles**

North Campus is almost complete. The dedication was scheduled for today, but canceled due to the pandemic. Orange tape is up because the state is looking into the electrical set up, however, it should be able to come down soon. We look forward to having a celebration this time next year.

### **New Business: This Year at HBF/ Adapting to COVID- 19, Charlotte Muir**

Muir reported HBF has been holding out hope of being able to do in-person programming, but it seems that majority of our programs will be digital for now. As soon as we feel it's safe to do so and WCU allows, we will reopen.

Meeting adjourned at 2:51 p.m.