



HIGHLANDS BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

2021 Annual Membership Meeting

June 30, 2021

In attendance at Highlands Nature Center: Jennie Stowers, Linda Barlow, Vernon Skiles, Karen Patterson, Amy Patterson, Frances Oakley, Frank Langford, Monte Gaillard, Julia Grumbles, Lisa Armstrong, David Martin, Susan Cohen, Sarah Morgan Wingfield, Paul Manos, Cathy Jones, Ruthie Edwards, Marc Hehn, Carol Stewart, Bill Reeves, Jim Costa, Melanie Mauldin, Carol Stewart, Martha Stibbs, Paige Engelbrektsson, Charlotte Muir, and Winter Gary

In attendance via Zoom: Alexa Forman, Cookie Patterson, Bill Stiefel, Marianne Jenkins, Russ & Helen Regnery, Tricia Allen, Jim Milby, Paul Manos

Meeting called to order at 3:01 p.m. by President Julia Grumbles.

President's Report, Julia Grumbles

Grumbles began by reviewing HBF's mission as it guides everything we do. She thanked HBF members and emphasized how important member support is.

A motion was made by Karen Patterson to approve previous meeting's minutes. Seconded by David Martin. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report, Amy Patterson

Patterson noted that HBF had an excellent 20-21FY even with pandemic. Some things were different: PPP loans, amended budget to reflect \$100k investment in UNC IE program, not as many GIAs, and more expenditures for North Campus that were not anticipated. Muir noted HBF trimmed expenses and raised about \$100k over annual fund goal.

Education Report, Karen Patterson & Paige Engelbrektsson

Patterson thanked HBF Staff: Paige, Charlotte, and Winter. She reported that HBF has developed excellent year-round programming with Paige's lead and highlighted the virtual education programs, HBF Book Club, and the spring climate lecture series. She noted that the Nature Center still has COVID restrictions. The Education Committee has a goal of increasing camp capacity, because the waitlist is extensive. Night programs and Zahner lectures are back. Zahner lectures started in Nature Center in 1942, and HBF is now looking at different venues due to social distancing requirements. This year, there will be a mix of in-person and virtual lectures. Patterson asked members to give the Committee

feedback on this year's lectures so we know how to evolve. Our first lecture will be Rose McLarney's virtual presentation "A Literary Field Guide to the S. Apps" on July 15th. It is a great example of art meeting science.

Engelbrektsson emphasized the impact HBF virtual programming has made, noting that we've had several requests to keep them going. Camps filled up very quickly with over 300 on waitlist. Now the question is how do we serve more people? We're becoming a site for outreach for organizations like Lonesome Valley, HCCDC, and Highlands School. We want to be a resource for our community. This summer, we've already had 2600 people come through the NC and BG even with COVID measures. We've reached 13.5k people through all virtual and in-person programming this FY.

Grumbles noted how HBF has talked about implementing year-round programming for years, so this is so exciting.

Development Report, Monte Gaillard

Gaillard highlighted how HBF did not know what goals to set at the beginning of the pandemic. HBF members and trustees came through for our annual goal and beyond. She thanked them tremendously. HBF raised \$285k this FY, well over our goal! Another goal was to build membership. Gaillard noted that with everything the Education & Outreach Committee has done, this change has happened and is amazing. Gaillard thanked the Development Committee for showing up with great ideas and noted how leading the Committee has been a great experience.

Garden Report, Lisa Armstrong

Armstrong noted the HBF Garden Committee has transitioned to primarily serving as a funding source as HBS now has their own Garden & Grounds Committee. This year, HBF is not funding HBS's Horticulturist position. Rachel Martin, the new HBS Horticulturist, is doing a wonderful job. The HBF Garden Committee's focus will be the North Campus – the Committee has some nice improvements planned.

Grumbles thanked both the HBF and HBS Garden committees.

HBS Report, Jim Costa

Costa also noted how appreciative he is of both garden committees. He gave a shout out to HBS staff and volunteers as they've been able to get some big projects completed. Costa reported HBS is now back at full staff after hiring Rachel Martin and David Ford this year. He noted his excitement about the UNC IE program coming back to the Station this fall. Costa thanked HBF membership for supporting this program and the new HFS Director position. He reported that HBS received a National Science Foundation grant of \$170k for walk-in environmental research chambers. HBS also received funding from Mountain Top Rotary to continue rehabilitating trails in the Botanical Garden (root exposure, trip hazards, etc.) and will seek additional funding.

Nominating Report, David Martin

Grumbles thanked Martin and the Nominating Committee for their work. Martin also thanked his fellow committee members.

Martin reported that the HBF Nominating Committee is not bringing on any new trustees this meeting, however, five individuals are transitioning into their second terms: Monte Gaillard, James Milby, Amy Patterson, Bill Reeves, and Sarah Morgan Wingfield.

The Committee nominated these five members to be elected for their second (3-year) terms serving on the HBF Board. Martin called for a vote, and the HBF membership voted in favor of the nominees.

Martin thanked Martha Stibbs tremendously as she rotated off the HBF Board after several years of service.

Unfinished Business:

North Campus Update, Charlotte Muir

Muir reported HBF is waiting on state construction to give us the final thumbs up. Muir encouraged members to visit the North Campus area. Camps are being held there now. Sonya and Hutch designed the site to evolve throughout the seasons, so there's always something new. Kudos to HBF for being able to execute this project, and thanks to the HBF membership for support along the way.

Grumbles thanked Jim Costa, Liz Sargent, and Sonya along with Hutch Kerns. HBF gave this gift to students, researchers, and the community overall.

UNC IE Update, Susan Cohen

UNC IE will return to HBS this fall for the semester-long program. Last fall, HBF voted to support this project. Grumbles introduced Susan Cohen of UNC's Institute for the Environment to the membership.

Cohen reported that experiential field sites are one of the best things UNC offers. It offers students an advantage in hiring and experience for graduate school, etc. Cohen reviewed the UNC IE program with the membership. She noted that these field sites were the only domestic experiential education opportunities that remained at full capacity through the pandemic. How do we keep growing the program? She noted that UNC has contemplated including WCU, local community college, and other field site students into the mix. She added that some changes have been made to the field site's past curriculum noting that the major theme will be understanding human-impact. Writing and communicating science will be a major topic along with remote sensing and landscape analysis. The courses have been refreshed and updated.

Cohen encouraged HBF membership to send ideas, etc. to her at susanac@email.unc.edu

Cohen reported that UNC is hoping to announce the new HFS Director by the end of this week.

Meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.