

Michigan Botanical Club - State Board Meeting
Norris Hall 104, Albion College, Calhoun County – Sat., January 27, 2018



Board members in attendance: Sheila Bourgoin, Garrett Crow, Irene Eiseman, Craig Elston, Phyllis Higman, Michael Huft, Lynn Kirkpatrick, Leslie Kuhn, Emily Nietering, Larry Noodén, Wayne Roussel, Dorothy Sibley, Dan Skean, Alice Ward, Dave Wendling, John Zimmerman, and Renée Zimmerman (17). Guests: Jelanie Bush, Ted Reuschel

1. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order by President Garrett Crow at 9:29 a.m.

2. Approvals

- A motion was made by Dan Skean to approve the meeting agenda, which was seconded by Renée Zimmerman and unanimously approved.
- Phyllis Higman moved to accept the minutes of the previous board meeting held on Oct. 7, 2017 at Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. Second by John Zimmerman and unanimously approved.

3. Robert's Rules of Order govern the proceedings, as announced by Garrett Crow^[1]_[SEP]

4. Announcements

- Neil Billetdeaux is the new President of the Huron Valley Chapter.
- New Directors-at-large for 2018-2020: Larry Noodén, HVC; Renée Zimmerman, SEC; David Hazelswart, WPC.
- The MBC 501(c)(3) Solicitation Form renewal was submitted to the Michigan Attorney General's Office by Garrett Crow; it was due to expire Feb. 28th. This provides the right to solicit funds in Michigan as a non-profit. [The Solicitation Certification must be renewed annually.]

5. Committee and Officer Reports

Treasurer's Report. Bob Kelly could not attend, so Garrett Crow shared the 2017 Treasurer's summary. Discussion:

- One aspect of the budget was not immediately clear from the summary: about one-half of the total current carryforward in funds is designated for special purposes as part of the Dickinson Fund (\$5,578 current balance) and Smith Fund (\$35,980). It was noted that legally we must keep these funds separately accounted, to avoid spending them for unintended uses.
- Bob's written report to the Board stated that membership dues (\$4,340 in 2016 & 2017) failed to cover the two major expenses (70% of total expenses): *Arisaema* Newsletter (\$3,188) and *The Great Lakes Botanist* (\$2,432) for the same two years. One-time income from the Barnes book sale (\$3,000) covered the shortfall.
- Irene discussed transferring the \$5,578 in Smith Fund dollars to cover a wildflower booklet out of the General Fund and back into the separate Smith Fund. The booklet project has been dormant, and shifting the funds back into the separate account will ensure the funds are used appropriately. The timing is important because the Smith Fund CD will renew in April, and these funds can be included in the CD renewal. Dorothy Sibley moved to transfer the wildflower booklet funds back into the Smith Fund. Larry Noodén seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- A discussion of the Smith Fund followed: its purpose and why these funds haven't been used for decades. Helen Smith, the donor, wanted these funds to perpetuate the kind of publications she had created, such as the Winter Wildflowers booklet. Delays in updating this booklet relate to the need to include plants that are newly visible in winter now, e.g., forb rosettes, due to less snow, and it would be beneficial to note which species are exotic/invasive. Those leading the project (Larry Noodén and Tony Reznicek) are caught up in other writing projects. It was asked whether

these funds could be used to support The Great Lakes Botanist (TGLB), and the conclusion was that kind of publication is not what Helen Smith had in mind. A new version of the book could be published cost effectively by Google, which prints copies as they are ordered. Printed (not just online) field-friendly guides were mentioned as filling an important role, like MNFI's spiral-bound invasive species handbook. Michael Huft mentioned he is completing a northern Indiana native plant field guide and that it wouldn't be hard to modify it for southern Michigan. Garrett felt a winter field guide fills a unique niche and thought Michael should discuss this project with Larry and Tony.

- Treasurer Bob Kelly proposed that the cost for club member insurance be shared with the chapters due to the state club costs slightly exceeding income now. An alternative was suggested: because the ~\$1/member insurance is apparently specific to the foray and only covers club members, it should be paid for as part of the foray registration. However, the foray organizers noted it would be complicated to figure out who is/isn't a member (e.g., for families, guests, trip leaders and on-site registrants) in order to include those fees as part of the foray. Covering others (field trip leaders and other non-members) can be arranged at additional cost. Other club events, for instance chapter field trips (and probably the driving part of forays) are not covered by the \$335 insurance, and ridesharing may not be covered by individuals' car insurance, either. All participants at the 2018 Spring Foray will be covered by liability insurance paid from the state treasury. Garrett will work with Bob Kelly to clarify with the insurance company the amount of the extra cost and the member/non-member issue.
- It was suggested that a lawyer-approved liability waiver should be used for all club events including the foray. Greater emphasis on safety training also could be more effective in avoiding problems than arranging insurance. Liability waivers are not always enforceable if there is negligence, but it is always a good idea to have participants sign them. When facilities require insurance, it may be possible to add an inexpensive rider onto their existing policy; this is already done by regional parks. We could follow MDNR's protocol of having trip leaders ask all participants to sign waivers and collect their emergency contact information, plus carry a cell phone and first aid kit and review safety hazards at the beginning of each trip. Emergency contact information could also be gathered at foray registration, and then be provided to facilitators to take along on the field trips.
- Returning to the budget issue, if chapters were asked to contribute an extra \$1 in dues/year to the state to cover this insurance, we must consider the effect on the chapters. For instance, for MBC-GLC with current member dues of \$30, increasing the state portion of the dues to \$8/year (in addition to the TGLB charges per member) would leave the chapter with a net income of only \$300/year across all 70 members. This is not enough to support a foray student or other activities. Garrett said that after the current insurance policy (which was required by Pierce Cedar Creek Institute for the mini foray and paid for by MBC) expires in June, after the Foray, the Board will consider whether it would be better in the future for the MBC State treasury to pay for insurance only for the State-wide events (e.g. Spring Foray and Fall Mini-foray), and let Chapters decide about insurance for their own field trips, etc..
- Sheila mentioned that the \$335 Network Solutions charge on the treasury report covers five years of domain name coverage for the MBC website rather than being an annual expense.
- Dorothy Sibley moved to accept the Treasury Report. Renée seconded it, and the report was unanimously approved. (Note: a corrected report dated Feb. 3 was issued after the meeting)

Corresponding Secretary's Report – Sheila Bourgoin

- Two editions of *Arisaema* were produced in the last year, with Sheila doing the graphic design at a savings of \$100/year. The cost of printed versions is high, due to their length and low number of copies, which takes away from other aspects of the club mission. It would qualify for reduced postage as a bulk mailing (minimum of 200 copies), but would need to be completed and mailed earlier to arrive before events. Using wafer tabs (sealing the edge of booklet) instead of envelopes would also reduce cost. The online version has lots of color use possibilities plus video. Sheila is working on cost reduction and will present ideas in the future.

- Irene noted that more than half of the members want a printed *Arisaema*, which costs \$7.49 per two issues/person per year, more than the state membership dues per person. Emily suggested the default method of delivery of the *Arisaema* be digital while making the mailed paper copy a selected option. To reduce printing costs the practice of printing the state board meeting minutes in their entirety was discussed as was the idea of placing a length limit on chapter reports. Several thought a careful summary of the state board minutes would be better, with the complete minutes still being available on the website.

Nomination Committee Report – Garrett Crow for Tyler Bassett

- For 1/1/19-12/31/20, a slate of officers is needed for presentation to the state board meeting at the foray in May, so the slate can be certified. Bob Kelly wants to be replaced as Treasurer.

MBC Brochure – Emily Nietering

- Emily is now in charge of the club brochure. She circulated a current copy for feedback. An electronic copy of the state version will be shared with chapters, which can then personalize it. Michael Huft suggested circulating a current pdf of the brochure before the January meeting next year to allow board members adequate time to review it.

HVC-MBC Display Board Presentation at Wildflower Association of Michigan Conference, March 4–5

- The display board has a keeper, Andrea Matthies, who will take it to the WAM Conference. Someone is needed to take brochures to the conference and sit at the table with the display board during breaks to answer questions. Dave Wendling will be attending and offered to help. Craig Elston is on the WAM Board and will act as a liaison for MBC and coordinate with Andrea. It was noted that if MBC were to take out an ad in the WAM conference booklet our brochure would automatically be handed out as part of the registration materials.

The Great Lakes Botanist (TGLB) Editor's Report – Michael Huft

- Current edition of TGLB has been delayed due to miscommunication at the printer. The mailing facility will receive it by 2/12. This is the first printer delay ever. The typesetter will track the process in the future, since she receives a printer's proof within 3 weeks. TGLB will be a 144-page double issue this time, and the next issue will be smaller. For the second half of 2018, there is a two-page article so far, and Garrett has an article for it as well.
- Michael will seek to encourage manuscripts from a wide geographic area to help keep the pipeline smooth and on-schedule. He will engage the Editorial Board to be more involved in the review process and in the assembly of an email list of regional botanical groups nationwide. He will then send an annual email blast to these groups to present TGLB and encourage botanists and students to contribute.
- An agreement was signed with the Biodiversity Heritage Library to include the entire run of TMB/TGLB on their website. They will start scanning issues. The journal is still available for open access at Michigan Publishing (<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mbot>) and will be for some time.
- Financial summary of TGLB through Dec. 2017 (document provided to the board): typesetting costs have decreased over time: \$400/first 32 pp and \$4/page thereafter. TGLB has a separate bank account, with funds transferred in from MBC (\$3,000. in 2017), MBC chapters (\$3,954.) and sales, gifts, subscriptions and Hanes Fund support for web hosting (latter item: \$961.50). Expenditures were \$7,577.28 and income was \$10,201.65. Given a starting balance of \$6,904.34 on 1/1/17, the end-of-year balance for TGLB was \$9,528.71.
- Michael has collected approximately 40 boxes of past issues of TMB and sets of the first 25 issues from various sources. Due to infrequent requests for back issues, he proposes to reduce the inventory of back issues to a minimum amount, say 10 full sets for library requests. Authors can buy extra copies at cost for future issues.
- Larry suggested that TGLB needs to work to be more visible on the web in research searches.

Constitution & Bylaws Committee – Michael Huft

- Comments have been gathered, and questions need to be hashed out before there is a proposal to the board.

Special Awards (including Dickinson Award) – Dan Skean

- Dan sent out a solicitation this week. The only annual award is the Distinguished Service Award. The Dickinson Award (best student paper in TGLB) is now under the Award Committee VP's purview.
- It was noted that the Special Recognition Award (which is not annual) can also cover artistic or conservation contributions (e.g., Gwen Frostic was awarded in the past). The wording of the award description should be reviewed to ensure this is clear.

Spring 2018 Foray Report – Dorothy Sibley and Jelanie Bush of the hosting White Pine Chapter

- The foray over Memorial Day weekend will be held in the Chain of Lakes area in Antrim County with Shanty Creek Resort in Bellaire as the lodging and base for events. They are offering a decreased accommodation rate for several days after the foray, too – nice for family vacations. The Chain of Lakes has 75 mi of waterways, with 14 lakes connected by rivers. There are grassy riparian natural areas, cedar swamps, sedge meadows and 7 mi of trails. Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy owns properties in the area. There will be 3 full day trips on Saturday, 3 different ones on Sunday, and 3-4 choices in half-day field trips, including options with limited walking required. On Monday, there are no scheduled trips but many options.

Fall 2018 Mini-foray Report – Lynn Kirkpatrick for Neal Billetdeaux, HVC

- They are exploring the possibility of hosting a mini-foray and considering one and two-day options with a lunch or dinner talk, in late Sept. or Oct.
- Storer YMCA Camp is a possibility, but probably not for overnight accommodations.
- Garrett thinks the mini-forays are great cohesion-building activities and would like to encourage at least a full-day event.
- Larry mentioned it is good to consider special opportunities that time of year, with one option being to go back to the main foray site to see it at a different time of the year.

Website Update – Sheila Bourgoin

- The new TGLB issue has been posted.
- Sheila has investigated including a donation button on the website through Square Space (the web software being used), which works with a 3rd party, Stripe (3% service fee + 30 cents per transaction), similar to the way PayPal works. Could also sell back issues of TGLB, since an MBC store can be set up.
- The Big Tree Project is the area with the most hits on the MBC website. Can work on polishing Big Tree related features with Ted Reuschel, the new project leader.
- Sheila is happy to post items on the website that MBC chapters request and can also create pdf fill-out forms to facilitate membership form processing and event registration, too.

Update on The Great Lakes Botanist issues 3 and 4 – Michael Huft

- Michael Huft is posting the cover and table of contents of each issue on the Facebook page and connecting with 32 botanical groups of interest around the country. Helps recruit for the club, too.

Michigan Botanical Foundation Report – Judy Kelly

- Judy could not be present at the meeting; the informational report she sent for MBF was noted.

Big Trees Report – Garrett Crow

- Garrett requested the blessings of the board for Ted Reuschel to be appointed as Chair of the MBC Michigan Big Tree Committee (a standing committee), based on his biosketch and project interests that had been circulated electronically.

- Irene Eiseman moved that Ted Reuschel be nominated as Chair of the MBC Michigan Big Tree Committee. The motion was seconded by Phyllis Higman. It was unanimously approved.
- Ted Reuschel was introduced and said since childhood he has always wanted to be involved in forestry. Now, he is retired from a career as a forester with the DNR. He is fascinated by big trees and has worked with Andy Sawyer (former Big Tree Committee Chair) to find big trees that were reported. He also joined the measuring/verifying group. He noted that everyone is in awe of big trees, and they are a part of history everyone relates to.
- Ted's first goal for the Big Tree Project is to make the information very accessible to the public, working with Sheila on the website. Secondly, he is gathering a statewide group of measuring volunteers, and has recruited 12 people so far. Thirdly, he would like to get more trees on the list and be easy to contact. He mentioned they are collaborating with the Releaf project in Michigan: <http://www.releafmichigan.org>
- Ted summarized that they record girth, height, and crown spread for each prospective big tree. When asked about age, he said a chart can be used to estimate age based on species and the trunk diameter at breast height. Sheila has the spreadsheet and will put that data and photos from Andy of already reported trees into the database.
- How to protect landowners and privacy? Include a statement about needing permission to access sites on the website. May need to suppress GPS information within the photo files.
- Questions/comments about reporting trees and how data on individual trees is updated: Currently, trees can be reported directly to Ted. Provide the girth measurement, species identity, and a photo. Sheila will set up an online form for entering this information. The standard is to physically check trees in the database every 10 years to make sure they are still standing and alive; the current database is undergoing clean-up. Plaques have not been placed on trees in recent years because big trees are often supplanted by new entries. However, we could add plaques (which help to conserve the trees) in a way that recognizes the trees but does not claim they will be the biggest forever.
- Others suggested it would be good to feature big trees during foray trips, possibly by cross-referencing database entries with foray sites.

6. Old Business

- Minutes/*Arisaema*. Can the board meeting minutes be approved by email meeting of the Executive Committee rather than the entire board, and only a summary of the important actions published in the *Arisaema*? An online folder could be used for posting the actual minutes. Garrett mentioned that when he was a member of the New England Botanical Club, the minutes were recorded in an official book but never published.

Sheila moved that the minutes be posted on the website and a summary of the action items be provided in the *Arisaema*. Emily seconded the motion.

Discussion: It was agreed that at least a summary of the minutes should be provided to all members. When posted on the website, the meeting minutes should stay there. Old minutes are currently available in the Bentley Historical Library in Ann Arbor, the club's official archive. The minutes as part of the *Arisaema* are important for members who do not use computers; however, they should be condensed down into something manageable. The overall consensus was that the website should contain the complete minutes, and that the Recording Secretary, who is present at the board meetings, should also provide a condensed summary of the minutes for the *Arisaema* that focuses on the action items. Motion unanimously approved.

- Foray Program Payments document drafted by Larry Noodén. The main point of discussion was defining a policy for whom should be reimbursed, and for how much, relating to contributions (trip leaders, presenters) to club events. This is also important for budgeting for reimbursements and keeping them consistent between events and clubs.

Discussion: Foray leaders usually look back to notes on previous forays run by their chapters to define the expenses and create a checklist for organizing the event. The MBC website has foray organization information, but it does not cover reimbursement policy. Jelanie Bush mentioned

that WPC uses a different reimbursement amount for ½-day field trip leaders versus full-day, and covers lunch if the speaker is not already covered for lunch by his own registration. The registration fee may or may not be waived. Cannot cover all expenses, and many contributors never ask about reimbursement. A total of \$900 was expended on reimbursements by HVC for the St. Ignace foray. The document Larry put together was viewed as a valuable addition to the foray-preparation arsenal. Also, including recommendations on reimbursements would be helpful while keeping them flexible. For instance, some contributors have more limited financial resources than others. It was also recommended to put together a foray preparation binder that includes an overall preparation checklist and can include sensitive information such as reimbursement recommendations rather than posting them on the web. The binder can be passed along to the next foray leader. What went well or could be done better is already being discussed by the current and upcoming foray leaders at a meeting held just after each foray.

7. New Business

- Donations via smile.amazon.com - Judy Kelly suggested that we look into linking MBC as a charity under smile.amazon.com, a version of the Amazon site where ½% of each purchase is donated by Amazon to a charity of the buyer's choice. An MBC bank account must be linked directly to Amazon to do this. Bob Kelly will be asked to set up a separate bank account to receive smile.amazon funds and also, per Sheila Bourgoin, to accept online donations via a link on the MBC website for fund transfers handled by Stripe.
- Concern regarding potential sale of state game areas. Dave Wendling mentioned that MDNR is considering potential land sales to private interests (e.g., timber, mining, or other uses). The city of Portage wants to buy Gourdneck SGA. Ways to ensure that properties are conserved were discussed: encouraging conservation workdays in SGAs (such as Mid-Michigan Stewardship Initiative's work on fen restoration in Rose Lake SGA), learning how we can donate funds directly to MDNR for land conservation rather than hunting, writing letters to and speaking with the SGA managers to advocate in a positive way on conserving what is special on their land, participating in public meetings to understand how land sale/swap decisions are made, using our botanical experience to inventory plant species and provide information on natural features to MDNR (and landowners on non-DNR sites we visit), and inviting an MDNR SGA/land management speaker to our fall mini-foray. HVC will look into inviting an MDNR land manager who is interested in these issues to speak and interact with MBC at the mini-foray this fall.
- Uncovered board-related expenses at Pierce Cedar Creek Mini-foray - \$150 in room rental and \$75 in refreshment expenses were incurred by SWC for the state board meeting at the mini-foray. Bob Kelly suggested that SWC request reimbursement from the board to meet this expense. It was noted that due to the cost burden on the hosting chapter, even with donations from participants, that it would be a good idea to charge registration fees at future mini-forays. Emily moved that the board approve the payment of \$225 to SWC to cover the board meeting expenses. Dan Skean seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

8. Future Board Meeting: The spring board meeting will be held at the Foray in Shanty Creek in Bellaire, MI, tentatively on May 26, 2018.

9. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved; the meeting ended at 1:05 p.m.

Drafted by Leslie Kuhn on 2/4/18, as substitute recording secretary; published 2/12/18; revised 2/19/18 and 2/27/18.