PRAS Board Meeting

January 9, 2020

The meeting was called to order by president, Ron Mills at 5:30 pm. The following board members were also present: Barb Taylor, Sandy Artman, Vikki Carpenter, Cindi Macri, Nancy Turner, Michelle Kloese, Rob Mills, and Mike Krzyzkowski. Also present were Larry Behrens, Sue Galvin and Phyllis Cady. As Julie Black was unavailable to attend this evening, Ron Mills asked Vikki Carpenter to take the minutes and she agreed.

Ron announced that Anne Fillion had submitted her letter of resignation from the Board. She still wants to participate as a PRAS member and agreed to assist when she can. Motion made and seconded by Barb and Sandy to accept Anne’s resignation. Motion passed. Phyllis Cady agreed to fill Anne’s unexpired position until May’s annual Board membership vote.

Treasurer’s report, membership report and 12/12/19 Board meeting minutes were accepted and approved by the Board.

OLD BUSINESS:

It was agreed that December’s holiday potluck event and speaker presentation had a good turnout. Approximately 60 people were in attendance. PRAS paid $50.00 to the church for extra tables setup.

Photo contest chair, Larry Behrens stated the photo contest committee had some good recommendations, including a third and new category. Board commented on the draft announcement and contestant rules. Some minor changes were suggested. Larry will share with committee and submit final draft. All agreed that February general meeting for display and voting was a good change. Winners will be announced at the March 19, 2020 Banquet where photos will be on display. Announcement of the contest will be made at January general meeting and publicized on PRAS Facebook site and website. Florida weekly might also be good for PRAS to get coverage.

Donations – Ron Mills shared letter received from ELCFH thanking PRAS for the $100 donation.

Nancy Turner shared her contact with Jeff Candy from Wood Warbler Coffee Co. (Fairtrade, bird friendly/shade grown coffee). Company is new and not located in Florida. A discussion ensued. Motion was made and Board voted to not have PRAS endorse or support this private initiative at this time.

FPL Grant Status Yard Certification Program – Rob Mills shared the new poster and brochures printed for this program. Brochures have already been passed out to Charlotte County libraries and Copperfish Book Store. At the Punta Gorda Library, Rob was asked to speak about the program in June. Englewood Library was interested in having its grounds certified for the program. It was also mentioned that photos of yards certified would be good PR.

Christmas Bird Count – Participating members commented that the count was successful despite the rain.
NEW BUSINESS:

Ron Mills discussed PRAS coordination with Edie Prieste on the Scrub Jay certification. It is possible that some of the FPL grant funds could be used to print Scrub Jay friendly stickers for the yards that are certified and are Scrub Jay friendly. Rob Mills will check into grant funding requirements.

Nancy Turner provided handouts announcing the free seminars about Scrub Jays on: February 1, 2020, 10-12 noon at Harbor Heights Civic Association and February 15, 2020, 1-3pm at the Morgan Family Community Center in North Port.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Bird Blind – Mike K. shared they are still fighting raccoons but everything is up and they are working on minimizing other critters accessing bird feeders. Mike indicated there was a glitch in getting feeders restocked 2X weekly but thinks that may be resolved with the volunteers. Rob M. to see about getting smaller bird friendly native bushes for the blind grounds.

Education – Michelle Klosese is working with the school contact and waiting for feedback and final count and costs for the 3rd grade project. She thinks they will be again making mini bird feeders. Ron M. indicated PRAS is looking for additional educational programs to fund.

Conservation – Ron M. read Brenda Curtis’ report for Brenda who was at the EVCO conference.

March Banquet – Julie B. was absent from the Board meeting but sent word that she is waiting for final costs from Twin Isles County Club. She has the vendor solicitation letter ready to hand out.

Hospitality/Member Relations – Sue Galvin stated Yahoo groups have changed and are not highly functional. PRAS needs a new managed email list through an administrator. Sue will get back with Calindey (IT contact) to see about a new way to communicate with members.

Blue Bird Trail – Mike K. indicated they have a dozen boxes ready to go. Looking for spots and authorization along highways, like US 17, with open fields and telephone poles.

Pennington Park - Cindi Macri said the park project is going well. Getting rid of tubulars, catching beetles and picking up trash. Rob M. mentioned 2 new cavities in the red maple trees within the week. Possibly a Pileated Woodpecker?

Scholarship- Michelle K. is waiting for an update on numbers. Hopes to have by the next meeting. She has the committee in place to review applicants and recommend candidates for scholarship awards. She could use another member to join the review and selection committee. Vikki Carpenter volunteered to join the committee.

Programs/Field Trips – Mike K. asked Board members to send recommendations and contact information for next year’s speakers to him by this summer.

General Comments – Rob M. said there is a good working relationship/synergy between Master Gardeners and PRAS. Also still looking for online opportunities to donate to PRAS, specifically Pennington Park.

Barb T. mentioned the open house on 1/10/20 from 4-7 to tour the new Peace River Wildlife Center animal hospital facility located on MLK Blvd.
Meeting was adjourned by Ron Mills at 7:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Vikki Carpenter for Julie Black, Secretary