

TPE Board Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2022

The meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order at 7:03 pm by Board President Scott Fulton. Board Members present: Gary Eldred, Scott Fulton, Harvey Halvorsen, David Hamel, Evanne Hunt, Rich Henderson, Alice Mirk, Jerry Newman, Jon Rigden, Jim Rogala, Jay Rutherford and Stephen Winter. Absent: Caroljean Coventree, Deanna Pomije. Staff present: Debra Behrens, Caleb DeWitt, Khris Miller and Jerry Pedretti.

The meeting notice and agenda, along with a link to the Board package containing the materials for this meeting were emailed to the Board members on March 1st.

Motion by J Newman, second by H Halvorsen, all voting in favor, to adopt the agenda.

Motion by A Mirk, second by J Rogala, all voting in favor, to approve the consent agenda. The consent agenda includes the February 2nd Board Minutes; the February 22nd PE Trust minutes; and the February 24th Finance Committee Minutes.

The Board reviewed the Treasurer's report containing the financial data through January 31st as brought forward by the Finance Committee.

Motion J Rutherford, second by J Rogala, all voting in favor, to accept the Treasurer's Report.

President's Report: S Fulton updated the Board on the progress of the Land Management Committee's work on the burn policy. The draft is being reviewed by the Attorney. Before the policy is brought before the Board for approval, the next steps will be to have a conversation with TPE's insurance agent, and then to have a broad review by those in the Chapters that conduct burns.

Executive Director Report: D Behrens has prepared a written report, which is in the Board materials, and asked if anyone had questions.

New Business:

2022 Annual Conference: The 2022 Conference had 688 registrants; 248 signed up for the burn school. The Conference Planning Committee met and discussed what worked and what did not, and started to discuss what next year will look like. Virtual vs. In-person vs. Hybrid.

There is a desire to have an in-person conference with a virtual component. The Board discussed several pros and cons of the options. While we all miss the comradery of the in-person event, there is also the extended reach we gain from a virtual event, and the higher revenue, to be considered. The strength of the conference is in the programming. When we are virtual, we can have speakers that would not otherwise be available.

It was also noted that the wider audience does not lead to people coming to work parties or joining in on other Chapter related activities. Having the social event in-person could be supplemented by finding a way of making the content available online at a later date.

Potential New Chapter(s): There has been some interest in the Fond du Lac area about forming a new Chapter. S Fulton has been in contact with a small group, but no one has stepped forward to drive the process yet. There is also some interest in the Minneapolis area, in Ohio, and in eastern Iowa.

The materials TPE has on the website regarding new chapters is somewhat out dated and it was felt that this could be a good topic for the upcoming strategic planning meeting.

Annual Giving Analysis: D Behrens prepared a presentation on donor trends. Donor trends is a different topic the financial results. Financial reports do not give you a picture of the people that support TPE's mission. The report compared TPE's results against the *Fundraising Effectiveness Project (FEP)* data. In 2021 TPE has a 57% growth in dollars, compare to the FEP's 10.6%; TPE's growth in donors is at 26% compared to FEP's 7.3%; and TPE's retention rate is 70%, compared to FEP's 43.6%.

Endowment Distributions: Annually the Board considers requests for distribution from the endowment funds. Reports were presented detailing the amounts available for distribution, and the amounts requested.

Motion by J Rogala, second by H Halvorsen, all voting in favor, to approve the endowment distribution requests as presented.

Prairie Enthusiasts of the Year: This award is given by the Board from time to time. There is no policy and no criteria. E Hunt and R Henderson both agree it is time for the Executive Committee to draft some criteria and create a policy. Jim Rachuy was nominated for the award, which will be presented at the June meeting.

2022 Annual Picnic: J Rutherford will bring this up to the Chapter to see if NIPE will host the picnic.

There will not be a September 10th meeting.

Gary Eldred inquired about TPE's willingness to join the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame. The cost is \$200 per year. Membership would entitle TPE to vote on potential inductees. S Fulton asked Gary to defer this to the next meeting.

The 2022 TPE Board meeting schedule is as follows:

- Strategic Planning (place TBD): Friday June 10, 4:30pm to Saturday, June 11, 3:30pm.
- Annual Meeting and Picnic (host, place, and time TBD): Sunday July 17th
- ~~Annual Planning: Saturday, September 10, 9:00am, Viroqua office.~~
- Annual Planning: Saturday October 8, 11:00am, Viroqua office.
- Wednesday, November 30, via Teams, 7:00pm.
- Wednesday, December 28, via Teams, 7:00pm.

Motion by E Hunt, second by J Rogala, all voting in favor, to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted by J. Pedretti