

TPE Board Meeting Minutes June 10, 2022

The meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order at 4:36 pm by Board President Scott Fulton. Board Members present: Gary Eldred, Scott Fulton, Harvey Halvorsen, David Hamel, Evanne Hunt, Rich Henderson, Jerry Newman, Deanna Pomije, Jon Rigden, Jim Rogala, Jay Rutherford, Stephen Winter and Mark Leach (filling in for Caroljean). Absent: Alice Mirk, Caroljean Coventree, 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 June 6th.

The agenda was adopted.

Motion by E Hunt, second by J Rogala, all voting in favor, to approve the consent agenda. The consent agenda includes the March 8th Board Minutes; the April 4th, 8th, and May 31st Conference Committee minutes; and the May 26th Finance Committee Minutes.

The Board reviewed the Treasurer's report containing the financial data through April 30th as brought forward by the Finance Committee.

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

President's Report: S Fulton updated the Board on the progress/status of forming a new chapter in the Fond du Lac, WI area. There continues to be a small group interested, which is centered around the Gottfried Prairie & Arboretum. They are having a 'Prairie Fest' on August 6th and would like someone from TPE to attend.

S Fulton, D Behrens, and R Henderson had a meeting with an attorney who is familiar with the CRP lease-back plan we are discussing. TPE will want to be sure this is an acceptable practice under USDA rules. There are four properties that TPE wants to pursue leasing out the CRP lands and transferring the CRP contract.

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

Progress is being made on the new website and changes to the logo. Samples of each are displayed and the Board members are encouraged to provide feedback today and tomorrow during the strategic planning.

New Business:

Minnesota Driftless Chapter-add Rice County: S Winter, on behalf of the Minnesota Driftless Chapter, is requesting to add Rice County to the Chapter's territory. There are already TPE members living in Rice County that work with the Chapter, and since the Chapter by-laws need to be revised anyway, this would be a good time to consider the expansion.

Motion E Hunt, second by J Rogala, all voting in favor, to add Rice County to the Minnesota Driftless Chapter's territory.

2021 Audit report & IRS form 990:

The timing to consider approval of the audit and 990 have been moved up so that the TPE Annual Report can be published in July, rather than August. The format of the audit now includes a two-year comparison. 2021 is another year of a clean audit, with no findings or deficiencies.

The 990 was prepared by our own R Schuettpelz. In the past Johnson Block prepared the 990 while doing the audit. The data used to complete the 990 comes from the audited financials.

Motion D Pomije, second by E Hunt, all voting in favor, to accept/approve the Audit Report.

Motion J Newman, second by J Rutherford, all voting in favor, to approve the IRS form 990.

Time is running short, but D Behrens presented results of the 2021 Member Survey. 2,400 paper surveys were mailed. 4,000 people were contacted via email. 609 surveys were completed, 423 through the mail, and 186 online.

Discussion about how to format the next survey and the desire to create a model that can be used year after year.

The 2022 TPE Board meeting schedule is as follows:

- 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 H Halvorsen, second by J Newman, all voting in favor, to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by J. Pedretti