

EEA Board Meeting Minutes

Date: November 19, 2009

Location: Georgia Forestry Association, Forsyth

Board Members Present: Linda May, Holly Rutledge, Sharon Smith, Venetia Butler, Ginny Elliott, Jo Adang, Lisa Weinstein, Laura Aikens, Jennifer McCoy, Elise Berman, Kris Irwin, Stacy Smith, Chris Robie

Majority of Directors Present (13 attending)

Others Present: Jerry Hightower

1. Welcome and Call to Order - Lisa

Agenda provided. **Attachment A**

2. Approval of Minutes

MOTION (Ginny), Move to approve the summer meeting minutes.

MOTION seconded (Venetia). Lisa calls for vote.

MOTION APPROVED.

3. Reading of Conflict of Interest Statement - Lisa

4. Committee Assignments – Lisa

Lisa passes out committee list for updates and signup

5. Financial Report – Jo

Profit Loss Statement provided. **Attachment B**

Financial Procedures provided. **Attachment C**

Travel Policy provided. **Attachment D**

Check Request provided. **Attachment E**

Financial Notes provided. **Attachment F – review for specifics on bank account balances.**

Follow-up on July motion to move \$10,000 out of checking into money market account: Propose moving \$20,000 from checking into \$10,000 Atlantic Southern CD and \$10,000 into BBT Money Market. All money in Money Market is accessible without penalty. (\$16,000 checking, \$40,000 Money Market, \$82,000 CD). \$56,000 available for operating expenses.

Financial Statement review: 7/1/09-11/17/09

Line 9 – bookkeeper expense is \$575/month average and we've not got enough left to cover her expense. Jana's volume has not increased, we didn't budget properly.

MOTION (Kris), Move \$4000 from the mm to line item 9 pay for bookkeeper.
MOTION seconded (Laura). Lisa calls for vote.

MOTION APPROVED.

- Line 11 interest income: \$313 earned.
- Line 17 - money spent is save the date card.
- Line 22 - 09 Conference: Income \$8056 doesn't reflect Jessica's outstanding invoice.
- Line 17 - Clarifying why 2010 conference income so high – that's not profit, that's all money coming in.
- Line 23 – silent auction: \$100 income was donation from a garden group through DNC for “educational supplies”. Jo asks, is it okay to use for scholarships? Could we use it for operating supplies for conference or for Petey's Dragonfly Grants? We need to recognize them at conference.

MOTION (Venetia), Utilize the \$100 garden club donation to be part of EEA's support of the Dragonfly Grants and the club will be recognized at the conference.

MOTION seconded (Stacy). Discussion: EEA contribution is \$800 so the fund remains at \$2000.00. Lisa calls for vote.

MOTION APPROVED.

- Line 25 – two donations received: in the name of Becky Champion and Kim Bailey so \$200 more in fund.
- Line 27 – recycle store profit.
- Line 28 – sponsorships: balance of \$2000 in budgeted expense column. Jo will email Karen Garland for clarification.
- Line 29 – OCC financial update. Jo will email Karen Garland for clarification.
- Line 33 – professional development. NAAEE expense was under budget.

Return to open motion on moving money in money market account

Motion from July 2009: MOTION (Chris), Move \$10,000 from checking account into money market account. Lisa calls for vote.

MOTION APPROVED.

MOTION (Ginny), Move \$10,000 to Atlantic Southern CD
MOTION seconded (Kris). Lisa calls for vote.

MOTION APPROVED.

6. Professional Development & AL Exchange Volunteer – Lisa

Back in 2008, EEA decided to develop guidelines for how to decide and allocate professional development money. Lisa asks for volunteers to draft a policy to

present to Board at next meeting. Kim Bailey has provided some questions and suggestions that the committee can use to assist with developing this policy. Venetia suggests it should be a component of strategic planning committee.

Also we have an outstanding conference exchange with Alabama: Conference March 4-6, 210 in Guntersville, AL. AL pays conference registration, EEA pays for travel. Ginny and Venetia will attend. That requires that EEA pay for second registration fee. Could we offer the opportunity to attend our conference this year so we don't need to pay for the second registration? Jo notes that we will need to increase the Line 33 allocation to cover these expenses. Sharon notes that we've not received the NAAEE reimbursement so at least \$1200 should be coming in. Registration deadline is 2/6 cost is \$75. Jennifer will explore our options with AL and vote via email to cover the expense. Consider sending two people to these exchanges.

7. Executive Director Proposal – Lisa Proposal provided. **Attachment G**

Lisa reviews justification for hiring staff for our organization with the idea to hire a part-time E.D. with salary of \$25,000/year. Also coming up is the part-time ATEEG position. Another option is to explore making these two positions into one full-time job. This could save some money and provide more latitude to support the organization through fundraising and increased membership.

ATEEG Position Description provided. **Attachment H**

Discussion: Conversation clarifying where this person will work and that ATEEG had purchased a laptop with grant funds. Kris reports that all three classes have been piloted and they are in the process of finalizing the curriculum including assessments. Certifying agent is UGA Warnell School but they are still waiting on the official letter. The program has been approved by NAAEE. The committee is finalizing the marketing and business plan. Kris thinks the position needs to be filled so the coordinator can have input in the process before these documents can be finalized. They are inline with their budget and anticipate additional funds from NAAEE. They've set February 2-4, 2010 to meet with the person hired to finish development of the marketing and business plan.

Chris asks ATEEG if they have a preference regarding meshing these two positions. The concern is that as an accredited program that there needs to be a dedicated person to administer the program. Recordkeeping is essential. Skill set is somewhat different than the ED position.

Lisa recognized that it will take a lot of work on the Board's part to pace the position appropriately. She clarifies that the ED would be working on a lot of the behind the scenes functions that the Board isn't able to complete. Specifically working with website contractor, ensuring newsletter is completed, completing the

day-to-day functions of fundraising with board permission. The focus could be shifted as needed. Of note with the certification process, with fulltime the employee is more engaged long-term. The hiring of an ED would require a bylaw change. Membership would be informed but it doesn't need to be approved by membership. In the long run these should mesh but ATEEG has immediate need.

Jo asks, with the ATEEG position – is the hope that the position will be sustainable after the initial two years? Jennifer revisits the original motion with the approved intent from May 2008 Board Meeting (copied from the minutes)...

Chris Motions: To allocate \$30,000 (\$15,000/year) to be encumbered from the savings made available beginning July 1, 2008 toward hiring and the support of the ATEEG Program Administrator in partnership with DNR, WRD.

Jennifer 2nd the Motion

All in Favor – passed unanimously

We need do some housekeeping to address this old motion. Venetia supports the idea of revisiting the original motion to clean it up and giving the Board time to fully develop the ED position. When does the date for the budget allocation from 2008 start? ATEEG has brought in \$10,000 for the salary. The critical piece is to submit the application for accreditation and that requires the position (not sure if it needs to be budgeted, announced or filed).

Lisa recognized the need for movement but the question is, is it more appropriate to delay to allow board to be in a position of strength to reconcile this issue. We need to look at the long run. There is cost saving by combining the two positions. Ginny asks if we could hire a temp to get the ATEEG program going, hired as a short-term consultant to get it launched. Venetia supports idea of allowing ATEEG Advisory Committee to cleanup the program and Board time to fully develop the ED position. ED sustainability can be supported with membership fees plus grants. Ginny's idea does fulfill the accreditation issue, allowing ATEEG to move forward but NAAEE does require that the coordinator complete the program. Could we hire a contractor, develop the ED position, and then apply for Accreditation with the intent to have the ED complete the training?

Quick break to grab lunch and continue with working lunch...

Lisa reconvenes and clarifies that board agrees that we need to hire someone.

With that agreed, the discussion continues. Elise shares her experience with part-time position retention and the burden of retraining and lack of commitment. Chris also notes that the work we need is probably more than part-time and concerns that staff resentment could develop. Kris asks if the position is combined, could the person be tasked with an ATEEG priority initially. Laura clarifies who would be supervising the position. President oversees day-to-day activities. Committee Chair and President would develop work plan with the employee. Lisa clarifies that there will be priorities for EEA, like newsletter, that would need to be incorporated.

Would we need to provide benefits?

No they would be self-employed and work on contract.

Kris – Kim MZ should be included and have a voice in this process since she's been doing the administration duties.

Jerry shares as an observer, EEA took a credibility hit with the previous certification program. He thinks EEA needs to move forward with some urgency on this position as this is important for membership. His previous experience with other organizations is that the ED step was very beneficial.

MOTION (Kris), to table the vote and continue the discussion on combining the positions with voting on December 4th via email. MOTION seconded (Holly).

Discussion: we need to make certain that everyone on ATEEG, Advisory and EEA Board have all documents. Recognize that some members of board are not participating at an active level. Sharon will setup ATEEG@eealliance.org email for the group. Lisa proposes that Lisa and Kris draft an email together with relevant documents with a plan of action for an email vote by close of business December 4th. For those with questions, a conference call will be step on December 3rd. Please reply to all in any correspondence.

Lisa calls for vote.

MOTION APPROVED.

8. Strategic Planning – Stacy

Brook has been looking onto the process with a facilitator. Jennifer shares the results of her school project survey. Results provided – **Attachment I**. Committee will be looking at these results and developing a retreat to address these issues, develop action items, and assign responsibilities. Clarification about strategic plan, document we have is complete. The action plan component was the committee action plans with their correlation to the strategic planning components. Lisa thanks the board for their support and commitment during this transition.

9. Member Service Update – Linda

Committee needs more support. Quarterly update is online. Creating system to welcome new members but waiting until DB is updated. Plan to develop two new additional events for members: 1/23rd bird nesting basics at CEWC and 5/8th gardening with families at High Meadows in Roswell.

- Birds: Linda will conduct session with grant funded supplies, including lunch and networking opportunities. Developing registration and promotion plan with limited resources currently available.
- Gardening: for members and families, a picnic and gardening.

Other goal was to create more networking opportunities so they are working with conference committee to develop opportunities at conference socials. Sharon offers to setup page on website to promote these activities. Suggestions and additional help are welcome.

10. Dragonfly Grant Update – Laura

One application has been received. Due date is 11/30th. Please promote. Link is on www.eealliance.org webpage. Open to scouts and other groups, not just schools.

11. PR & Newsletter Update – Lisa

Thanks for Karen Garland for the newsletter. Several board members have not received the mailing. That should be resolved with database update.

Lisa reports that the committee needs help. Allison is ill. We hope she recovers quickly and feels better soon.

12. NCLI Update – Lisa

Kim MZ, Lisa, Cindy Reiting, Stacy Graison, Juan Carols and Steve Rich have been working on a letter to the governor asking him to convene a working group to draft a literacy plan using Maryland's model. Department of Education is reviewing the letter and will route it to governor's office. Edits have been given back to committee for revision.

The Turner Foundation had approached EEA and others to pursue a state-wide plan to integrate Green Schools/LEED certification for all schools in GA. Laura Turner-Sydel wants to include an education component and wants EEA to be involved. Next meeting is on 12/10th – more to follow.

Sharon requests Lisa send a write-up on the NCLI work for the website.

13. Conference Update – Laura

Registration should be active around Thanksgiving. Info is on website. Need door prizes and silent auction donations. Need committee to register early to identify any problems in the process. Lisa suggests opening only to the board initially. Promote the event and help with jobs. The signup list will be posted on website. One more in-person meeting: January 19th 1:00 pm-3:00 pm at KSU.

Venetia asks about how many buzzard patches to be printed and what design? Also, where is the buzzard? We need to make sure he makes an appearance at the conference. Design – butterfly since the hike is themes around the holocaust exhibit and the butterfly garden service project.

2011 Conference will be at KSU again, Laura will be chair. Naomi has done a great job. Thanks Naomi!!

14. **MAG Update – Ginny**

- Mexico Trip Scholarship awarded to two classroom teachers.
- Working on a banner up display.
- No Mow sign project – working with Jana to ensure checks are allocated properly.
- Campaigner being used to send emails and newsletter.
- Revising PLUs to reflect what we actually doing in the workshops and trips.
- Retreat in January to update facilitator manual.
- Applying for PLT mini-grant partnership to create pollinator gardens at schools.
- Kisner Center Project – GA Piedmont Land Trust partnership to create pollinator garden demo site, and a workshop for developing a pollinator garden. **Attachment J**
- Develop a certification protocol for a container garden that qualifies for MAG Pollinator Garden Certification.

15. **Advisory Board – Jerry**

Advisory Board FAQ provided. **Attachment K**

Venetia questions who is responsible for pulling together all the awards. Conference Committee handles organizing the ceremony. Advisory Board organizes the promotion and selection of the EEA award applicants for recognition. They will also select the Dragonfly Grant winners. Sharon requests Advisory Board update their public webpage with current members.

16. **NAAEE Report – Sharon and Jennifer**

Sharon shares the essential elements exercise from the Affiliate Workshop. She will send the write-up to Stacy for the Strategic Planning Committee.

Financial reporting packet from session passed around to share different reporting methods to ensure Board understands the information.

Other sessions on fundraising and social media were fairly basic.

Most productive session was the EPA Regional Breakout session with other Region 4 affiliates. Our regional rep was out sick but her supervisor sat down with us. The group expressed interest in coordinating a routine conference call schedule to keep regional connections and collaborations active.

17. **OCS Update – Jennifer**

Event came off well with some behind the scenes confusion. We fulfilled our goal of 175 participants. Karen and Kelly Jo are continuing with Jason Taylor also chairing. Evaluations were positive. Sharon Smith will act as Board rep until either Jason or Kelly Jo join the board. Food was good. Store sales were also good. Based on her experience with OCC, Linda needs help with store at EEA. Next meeting: December 9th at CREEC at 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

18. Website and Database Update – Walter and Sharon

We are switching servers. We will now be receiving money for hosting the SE affiliate sites. In exchange EEA won't have to pay for hosting services. We are also asking for a few changes like removing the option to add an organization to the EEA website and adding the Dragonfly Grant on the navigation. Our original goal was to manage our membership through the website. We are currently exploring our options.

Update provided – **Attachment L**

Green Teachers is asking EEA to promote subscription to Green Teacher Magazine and offering \$6.00 per subscriber from GA between now and Christmas.

We don't have an email policy and need to develop a policy. Committee needs to draft something for consideration at the next meeting.

We could include the Green Teacher promotion with the upcoming announcements for conference and bird event in December. Walter, Joey, Linda and Sharon will work on this.

Walter is working to get a functioning online management database. Heather Merbs has been hired to update current membership (not online). After completion, EEA will need to resolve ongoing and future updates and decide about online options.

Essential Tasks have been developed – cost \$9500 -\$14,000. **Attachment M**
Comparison Estimate – **Attachment N**

Other options can be explored and expenses compared. NAAEE has contracted with a company to develop a system and as an affiliate we can purchase this tool. We don't know if the systems are compatible. More info will be available in the future. NAAEE can also do it for a fee for us. If we take membership management off the website, we might not be able to have a "members only" option on the website.

MOTION (Venetia), Move to approve our membership database being updated in an access database.

MOTION seconded (Linda). Lisa calls for vote.

MOTION APPROVED.

Walter and Sharon present online options in February.

Sharon has requested quarterly invoicing from webmaster. To date we've spent approximately \$16,000 on our website. Conference registration is through KSU so there won't be any problem.

19. New Business – nothing shared.

20. Announcements

Next board meeting is Saturday, February 20, 2010 10:00-3:30 at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center. Committee reports should be posted on committee planning pages and are due from Committee Chairs by February 12th (prior to Winter Executive meeting in preparation of the Winter Board meeting).

Adjourn, 3:30 p.m.

Submitted by Jennifer McCoy, EEA Secretary

Special Note on follow-ups:

1. Jo to follow-up with Karen Garland on budget questions.
2. Strategic Planning Committee to draft professional development policy.
3. AL Conference Exchange - Jennifer will explore our options with AL and conduct a vote via email to cover the expense of two people.
4. Lisa and Kris will draft an email together with relevant ATEEG and ED documents with a plan of action for an email vote by close of business December 4th. For those with questions, they will organize a conference call on December 3rd.
5. Sharon will setup ATEEG@eealliance.org email and setup Member Services page on website to promote their activities.
6. Lisa sending a write-up on the NCLI work to Sharon for the website.
7. Help find the Buzzard!!
8. Sharon will assist Advisory Board to create a public webpage with current members listed.
9. Sharon will share the essential elements exercise from the Affiliate Workshop with Stacy for the Strategic Planning Committee.
10. Website committee will draft an email policy for consideration at the next board meeting.
11. Walter, Joey, Linda, and Sharon will draft the Green Teacher promotion with the upcoming announcements for conference and bird event in December.
12. Walter and Sharon will present online membership database options in February.