

THE ETHICIAN FOUNDATION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
Texas Non-Profit Foundation #30-0736697

January 22, 2017

Special Board Meeting

The special meeting of the board called to order by GHR at 11:22 a.m. on Sunday, January 22, 2017 at Pelican II on the Rain Lilly Sanctuary's Ethician Foundation Institute for Strategic Biospheric Planning Conference Center.

Board Members present:

MARGARET ANNE RUSSELL (MAR)  
JANE RUSSELL MCCULLAH (JRM)  
KAREN LEE ROBINSON (KLR)  
SUE BENNETT RUSSELL (SBR)  
GEORGE HAW RUSSELL (GHR)  
GEORGE ANDREW RUSSELL (GAR)

Member of the Committee of Scientists present:

DR. WILLIAM GODWIN, Committee Chair

MAR read board minutes from November 2016 meeting.

GHR moves to accept the minutes.

SBR seconds. Unanimously approved.

GHR addresses his agenda as written and distributed to board in advance of meeting. The meeting is precipitated by a need to discuss alternatives for the adaptive reuse of the Birmingham house.

SALE OF BIRMINGHAM HOUSE TO DISCOVER LIFE:

The first is to discuss the possible sale of the historic Birmingham House, a.k.a. Chateau Malbec to Dr. Pickering's 501(c) 3, called the Polisties Foundation, which administers Discover Life.

George asked the board to consider an outright sale (as alternative plan to a \$1 annual lease) to Polisties/Discover Life in exchange for DL to finishing external rennovations to historic standards and to fund the design of the interior as needed to meet the needs of DL (not necessary for interior to maintain historical integrity).

Necessarily, this would include the installation of an elevator and fire sprinkler system. The sale of the property to DL would be for an amount reflecting the investment to date by George H Russell and EF.

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It is understood that if DL receives the funding from Dr. Pickering's donation of proceeds from the sale of his database software and website, then Dr. Pickering would be interested in this arrangement.

Several circumstances must be determined first, however, including the status of Dr. Pickering's employment with SHSU long term and the broker's valuation of his software and ultimate sale price. Currently, Dr. Pickering is here for three months with SHSU. His ability to invest in the Birmingham property is contingent upon the sale of software technology. Fifty-five percent of the proceeds of the sale would be endowed to Discover Life. In the time span of ten weeks to three months, Dr. Pickering is expected to receive a valuation of the software by a technology broker.

Either plan would free the EF from the cost of restoration. Covenants placed on the deal would include a requirement to maintain the original historical exterior of the building and, in the event of catastrophe, that the building not be replaced with any other new construction but instead left as green space or else a historic building in keeping with the others in the district be moved and restored on site.

JRM moves that the President of the Ethician Foundation enter into a discussion as to option A versus option B – outright sale of the Birmingham property to Discover Life versus the \$1 annual lease to Discover Life.

KLR seconds.

Unanimously approved.

#### PROPERTY MANAGEMENT: CONFERENCE CENTER PROPERTY PELLICAN 1

The second item is to discuss immediate action required to deal with hydrocarbon fumes safety issue associated with the Ethician Fire Department equipment and supplies housed in the garage of Pelican I foundation property.

It was determined that fumes from a garage where fire trucks and fuel are stored has penetrated a wall and have traveled into living quarters.

Dr. Godwin suggested elevated tanks as being the safest and that perhaps they could be mounted on foundation army vehicles. GHR said that tanks have been vandalized in the past.

KLR moves to ask foundation property and fire manager to secure the common wall and to find an appropriate place for gasoline storage.  
SBR seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.



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ETHICIAN FOUNDATION WEBSITE:

KLR addressed some concerns about the EF website being organized poorly. She reported problems finding scientific data she sought to read.

SBR moved for Dr. Godwin to investigate the possibility of having the Ethician Foundation's website content and scientific data hosted on the Discover Life website.

MAR seconded. Motion passed.

GAR suggested that as an alternative, a website designer could be retained by EF.

GHR moves that KLR research website designer to manage EF content instead of EF doing their own content and management.

JRM seconded. Unanimously passed.

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD REPORT:

GHR called for the report from Dr. William Godwin as to any updates in scientific and biomedical research .

Dr. Godwin, Chairman of the Board of Scientists, submitted a report outlining on going and future research on natural areas owned by or administered by the Ethician Foundation as well and updated list of members of the Scientific Advisory Board. This three page report was read by Dr. Godwin and a copy is attached.

THREATENED SPECIES PRESERVATION:

Dr. Godwin discussed two species that might be helped by efforts to improve their habitat on EF land – the Monarch butterfly and the Big Brown bat.

Milkweed is the diet of the Monarch butterfly and can be grown in pastures to improvement of butterfly population. Sue Ranch could propagate milkweed for the subsidy if it went through the process of having a farm number assigned it for USDA records.

MAR moved that KLR investigate the existing milkweed subsidy for Moo Ranch and the survey requirements for acquiring a farm number.

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JRM seconded. Passed.

Big Brown bats were observed at the UEC chapel site on Saturday, January 21.

GAR moved that MAR research creation of bat habitat in order to establish larger colonies.

SBR seconded. Motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS:

It was determined that there was no other new business to address.

JRM Move to adjourn meeting.

SBR seconded.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:45 pm.

Signed,



Margaret A Russell



Report of Science Committee January 2017. The last report was made on September 2, 2016

On September 16, 2015 Dr. Godwin met with GHR and subsequently was asked to create and chair a science advisory committee for the Ethician preserves. Many of these reports are inconclusive or appear to have made no progress, but keep in mind that this is not an annual report. It has only been three winter months since the last report As of January 2017 the committee consists of:

Dr. William Godwin Chair, entomologist, curator of SHSU Natural History Collections

Dr. John Pickering, entomologist, head of DiscoverLife.org and the Polistes Foundation

Mr. Matt White, botanist, historian, author of "Prairie Time" and "Birds of NE Texas"

Dr. Phillip Matich, expert in fishes, esp. sharks, ecology.

Mr. Mike Gras, expert in freshwater mussels.

Mr. Joe Ligio has agreed to serve as a member. JL is expert in Texas orchids and board member at Watson Preserve.

- I. Tracking research
  - a. No more research proposals have been submitted in the last three months.
  - b. EF has received a verbal request to be added to a survey of toads. GHR and WG have told the researcher that this is desirable and the EF property should be added to the list of study sites in the proposal under preparation.
- II. List making/record keeping
  - a. The SHSNHC has agreed to be a clearinghouse for plant lists. Most recently the museum has perfected a barcoding system and a system of data managing. Now it is ready to archive lists of species recorded from the preserve and serve this data through Pickering's Discover Life.
- III. Documentation
  - a. All members of the committee need to have official written communication from EF about the terms of their appointment. Members of the Science Committee request documentation about the committee role in the EF bylaws.
- IV. Discover Life
  - a. This biodiversity site is now housed at SHSU. Pickering has retired from UGA as of Dec. 31 and is working at SHSU now to build and improve DL. DL will be the best venue for serving EF data.
- V. Ongoing projects
  - a. Alligator survey, P. Matich and W. Lutterschmidt (SHSU) have filed a research proposal to conduct a survey of alligator populations. This is approved and was to begin Fall 2016. It has not begun yet, because alligator surveys in winter would not be recommended.
  - b. Freshwater mussel surveys of creeks and shoreline. Mike Gras has requested permission to do this. Work has begun in August 2016 but no reports have been made. Mr. Gras has made two attempts to collect mussels from pool creek and the shores of Lake Livingston. He is preparing lists of what was collected, but it will not be a very long list because mussels were difficult to find.
  - c. An effort was made to recruit Dr. Fran James to give a talk on RCW. She was interested at first, but then backed out/postponed because of age and frailty. Now



in December 2016 Dr. James says she is feeling better and is willing to make the presentation. A date has yet to be arranged.

- d. Dr. Carly Tribble of SHSU is running malaise traps at the *Spiranthes brevilabris* site. She has yet to turn in a research proposal. Her authorization antedated the requests for proposals. As of January 2017 Tribble has not contacted us again, but she does have insect specimens from the malaise trap and these take a long time to process.
- e. Matt White and GHR mapped the Orchid, *Spiranthes brevilabris*. Spring 2016 plants were flagged and in spring 2017 data will be collected to see how many bloom yearly. This should occur in April. Joe Ligio should be invited to participate.
- f. Monarch research, Ethician Foundation properties are official partners in a Texas Comptroller funded monarch research project. This project is ongoing. It has submitted two progress reports to the funding agency and EF is mentioned in them.
- g. Ben Hutchins (TPWD) has visited the EF prairie to collect land snails. The committee should ask BH for this list soon. — GHR Sent this

#### VI. Acquisitions

- a. In August 2016 the Ethician Foundation purchased an important group of 48 paintings by the late Geraldine Watson, of Silsbee Texas. Watson was one of the founders of the second movement to save the Big Thicket. Paintings are on loan to the Sam Houston State Natural History Collections. Currently we are in three-way discussions between EF, WRNPP and SHSNHC to pursue grant funding to properly curate the paintings. These are ongoing Discussions. All paintings have been photographed in high quality digital images by Steve Korevec. Two have been included in a new book on endangered species of Texas that is in the late stages of editing.
- b. GHR has gotten 20 Pleistocene megafauna bones from EF property identified by Texas Authority Ernest Lundelius. These are deposited in the SHSNHC.
- c. WG has located more GW paintings at Scrappin Valley and has yet to go photograph them. The owner has expressed interest in contributing to a book on the GW paintings. SHSU has asked for this book to be produced, hence the photographs. All of GW papers have been databased and deposited in SHSNHC Archives.

#### VII. Partnerships

- a. Watson Rare Native Plant Preserve is in discussion about cooperating between both conservancies.
- b. In May, 2016 the Ethician Foundation joined the Society for Ecological Restoration. The committee recommends that this membership not be renewed

#### VIII. Comparing burned/unburned areas

- a. Dr. Phil Matich and Kaya Moore have collected data on these comparisons at a site on FM 135. The photographic evidence has yet to be viewed by Matt White. White will identify all the plants in the photographs and make statistical comparison possible. These photographs are due to be made again in March when spring vegetation is there.

#### IX. Annual bald eagle population survey



- a. The committee has no data on this survey.
- X. Initiated discussions with TxDot about using highway ROW's for the propagation and protection of milk weed populations to aid in the recovery of Monarch Butterflies.
- XI. GHR has made ongoing efforts at forest restoration efforts via mechanical and prescribed fire.
- XII. GHR reports to the committee that he has done the following:
  - a. Initiating communications with the Forensic Science Department to work toward more scientifically accurate data than can be gained at the current body farm.
  - b. Developing a list of species that have or may have value in biomedical research.
  - c. Creating an "outreach" program to encourage a consortium of colleges and universities to develop programs at the Institute for Strategic Biospheric Studies.
  - d. Initiated discussions about the feasibility of connecting the Museum of Gene-o-Cide and the Environmental Holocaust with the Biological Field Station at the Fish Hatchery property via Sam Houston National Forest and working with the USFS to protect the area as a Research Forest.
  - e. Opened the Museum of Native American Genocide on University Avenue with displays of artifacts and art.
  - f. EF is in the process of adding approximately 500 acres to the conservation lands.
- XIII. Databasing EF collections
  - a. A volunteer was trained in how to collect data and about to begin in December, but health problems have caused a delay. The volunteer is recovering and should begin databasing in Feb.
- XIV. Future for 2017 the Science Committee would like to recommend:
  - a. Searching for new species
  - b. Conducting amphibian surveys and inventories.
  - c. Conducting Timber Rattlesnake surveys.
  - d. Conducting investigations into the populations of fungi on the properties, but this would require adding a fungus expert to the team.
  - e. Investigating the possibility of selling conservation credits

xv ask for succ Beetle trapping, Report  
xvi Champion Tree Bounty \$100