

RAS Board Meeting, Thursday March 18, 2021

Present: Thomas Narten (TN), Jamye Carr (JC), Curtis Smith (GCS), Maggie Poole (MP), Caroline Morgan (CM) [last half], Michael Maieli (M2)

Regrets: Chris Smith

Minutes produced by: Thomas Narten

Meeting length: 1H30min

Meeting starts late, only 4 participants 15 minutes in.

Topic: membership cards/flyer. M2 has not sent out cards yet, waiting on flyer. Discussion of flyer. Need final closure on bios/pictures from board members. Discussion. We get closure. JC to print, have them sent directly to M2 (to save time). He will send them out to members in postal mail along with membership cards.

Topic: Review of previous meeting (5 mini talks). Overall very nice meeting. Good participation and a lot of interaction. Total of 48 persons joined the call. Only potential negative was that 5 talks may have been too many, and maybe next time we should limit it to 4.

Topic: Room availability at Vet School. Any update on room at NCSU. M2: in talking with vet school, they hope to have things back to normal in November. TN: think that october/november earliest we'd realistically get back in. All universities will focus on getting through the first month of the semester without issues. That means focused on their own staff/students. Outside parties will be the last to be given green light to get back in, and that will be once they have reopened broadly with minimal problems. If semester starts OK without major covid issues, only then are we likely to be allowed back onto campus.

Discussion about other venues and hosting face-to-face events. With availability of covid-19 vaccines, things should start opening up over the next months. Discussion about vaccinations and can we (should we?) ask members about vaccination status. Will that somehow help. Asking individuals about their status is sensitive, there are legitimate reasons for people to keep such information private. We should just assume that by May/June, everyone who wants a vaccine will have been able to get one, and for those not vaccinated, it will be an individual choice whether they participate in a face-to-face event.

Picnic discussion. TN: I assumed it was July 4, but historically it has been in August and was not tied specifically to July 4. Need a venue. Requirements: Need to be able to reserve it. Need a covered area. Ability to do auctions? (Not necessarily for picnic.) Curtis will take action to investigate Lake Crabtree site as possibility.

Topic: PAR meter. TN loaned it out to new member who hasn't been to face-to-face meeting. Drove up from Fayetteville. Brought it back the next weekend. Has reef tank, was happy to have been able to measure light levels. TN has also put up a page about the PAR meter on web site. Information about borrowing (must be a member, deposit required), with a form to submit name in order to get in contact with us. On web site under "HAP > PAR Meter".

Topic: Zebra mussels. TN: I have been chatting with Jay Levine. He sent out questionnaire/form. 20 responses. Only one had the mussels (through FAN buy). What should we (as club) be doing? How much responsibility should we take here? M2: it's a big deal. I got mail from Raleigh Parks "adopt a

stream" program about the topic. Discussion. Can we wait for an "all clear?" from the state? TN: We will never get an "all clear" from NC wildlife. We really don't know extent of problem and whether people have them in their tank. JC did sterilize her tank (she had infected mossballs). It was a small tank so manageable in her case. Used bleach, was able to save shrimp. Followed official guidelines.

M2 asks: what are the big negatives of having them in a closed environment? Like in a tank? JC: adult zebra mussel is essentially unkillable. They can close up and survive bleach treatment for 24H. Problem with having them in aquarium is water changes. Where does that water go? It can end up in the ecosystem. E.g., draining tank water in your yard may result in water reaching local stream. Most of the time, this won't happen. But it can. E.g., if you do water change during middle of big rain storm. Depends on many factors (e.g., how close are you to a stream)

What can club do: advocate safe ways to transfer fish/plants into tanks. How to treat plants (just for safety). Advocate not transferring outside water (e.g., fish bag you just got) into tank.

So what concrete actions should club do? Choices: a) do we do nothing, continue auctions/trading as before b) make people prove they don't have them through some attestation? c) something in between? Where we educate people and assume they will do the responsible thing? Should we suspend plants sales? What about substrate? TN: Substrate is easy. Just bleach it. CM asks if there is any new info/recommendation on what to do. TN: not really. If you have them, sterilize including plants. CM: back to choices, c) seems only reasonable choice. It will have to be honor system no matter what in any case.

Further discussion. What to do about auctions? JC: no plants/mossballs for next 3 months. (Not forever though.) CuS: agree. Maggie: lot of people sell plants at auction. It would not be fair to say they can't. What about people selling on FB? do we say no to that? How is that different from our auctions? Individual sales are not a RAS thing, just between two individuals. TN: not entirely true. Happens under our watch. Hard to justify allowing trading between members but not auctions. TN: would like to be able say "if you trade, here is what you should do". Advice for both seller and buyer. To protect you and others. Consensus: for now, continue auction of fish, but block plants/moss sales temporarily. Need to put together guidance on what people should do.

Topic: Carolina Aquatics Expo. It is in Fort Mills, SC. April 3. Appears to be a place to rent tables (i.e., like our tag sale). Includes vendors. Would be a good place for us to have brochures for handout. But too late for this specific event.