

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS  
Minutes of Board Meeting, February 6, 2018  
Host-Eileen Cowtan.

Present: Hugh Armstrong (Chair), Betty Rainville (Secretary), Eileen Cowtan, Ian and Angela Turner.  
Absent: Dave McKenzie, Anne Bernhardt

1. Call to Order: 6:56 pm
2. Review and Adoption of Board Minutes from January 9, 2018. **CARRIED**
3. Additions to Agenda:
  - a. **Kiwanis Family Day February 19.** - Hugh reported that all of the February activities will continue to be held at the Nature Centre, including the General Meeting on February 27. He called Anne Bernhardt to cancel the booking for Family Day activities previously set up at the Unity Lutheran Church.  
He reported that most Volunteer positions for the day are filled, with some indoor spots still available.  
No buses are being used for this event.
  - b. **Extension of previous Contract obtained-** Hugh noted the existing MHIP Contract with the City has been extended until May 31, 2018.
  - c. **Webinar February 14, 11 am to noon:** This will now be held at the MH Public Library in the renovated Theatre. The Honor Currie room will serve as a back-up room if needed.  
Eileen will send a general email to GN members on this Webinar about Climate Change and Canadians, Tina Regehr will put the information on Facebook, and Angela in Communications will announce it in the Monday MH News Community Events. The Library will advertise this as well, and Hugh will mention it in the Chronicle. Corlaine will advertise it at the Nature Centre.  
Keith Walker at the Library is covering the \$20.00 Webinar charge but GN will offer to cover the cost of refreshments.
  - d. **Book Donations:** Eileen reported an out- of- town member asked about donating Birding books. She determined that the MH Public Library is unable to take any except for the biannual book sale. The Board passed a motion that Eileen contact the member to say we appreciate the offer but are unable to accept books at this time, and suggest he contact Nature Calgary (Calgary Field Naturalist's Society) **CARRIED**
4. Action Items:
  - a. **Call for Nominations for Board Positions:** The present Board members indicated they will let their names stand if nominated. However Anne Bernhardt relayed a message to Hugh that she would let her name stand as Vice President on an interim basis only.
  - b. **GN Display Table at Canadian Badlands Tourism Development Conference and 2018 AGM:** at MH Lodge March 13-15<sup>th</sup>. Rob Gardner will give a 45 minute presentation on the Birding Trails Guide if Phil Horch is not back from Arizona.  
Hugh will ask Marty Drut about the Riparian Assessment Display for March 14<sup>th</sup> at the Conference.  
Angela Turner will locate the banner. Brochures, rack cards, and copies of the Sagebrush Chronicle will be displayed as well. Birding Trail members will be attending the Conference.
  - c. **World Water Week March 19-24<sup>th</sup>:** Hugh will ask Marty if the same Riparian Assessment Display (see 4.b) may be used at the Library. If it is available after the CBT Conference, Ian, Angela and Hugh have offered to move it directly to the Public Library. The theme of WW Day, March 22, is 'Nature for Water'-exploring nature-based solutions to the water challenges we face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
  - d. **GN Insurance coverage:** Eileen reported she sent \$4,624.00 for necessary insurance coverage due February 7.
  - e. **AGM in March:** The Grasslands Naturalists AGM will not likely be held at the Nature Centre. Hugh will check with Anne Bernhardt to confirm where a room is booked for the March 27<sup>th</sup> event.  
He will also ask Dave McKenzie the name of the person scheduled as Indoor Speaker for the AGM.
5. Reports:
  - a. **Treasurer's Report-** Eileen reported the GN balance as at Feb.5 2018 is \$22,218.70
  - b. **Membership-** Eileen noted a new member Jill has joined GN and is presently volunteering. Thank you Jill. Membership stands at 83, with some family memberships increasing the actual number to about 100 people.
  - c. **Correspondence-** Eileen reported mail concerning current use of proceeds from Casino funds. A letter was also received from an out of town member asking about possible Birding Book donations. See 3.d. above.
  - d. **Operations Committee/MHIP Report-** John Slater submitted a written report as follows:  
The 2017 Annual has been drafted and submitted for review.

(John) is offering to remain on the Operations Committee if Bob Townsend chairs it.

Update on new contract Agreement was covered previously under 3.b. above.

e. **Issues Committee-** John Slater sent a written report of the Highlights of the meeting:

Last meeting held January 26<sup>th</sup> hosted by Marty (minutes were attached to the email with draft list for MDP)

- 1) Drafting list of Significant & Sensitive Areas for MDP. After further discussion, plan to arrange 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting with City Planning Dept.
- 2) Wildflower Brochure to be printed soon. Distribution of brochure to be arranged; perhaps with the Birding Trails Guide.
- 3) SEAWA/GN Partnership: project concerning riparian restoration of Seven Persons Creek. See item 6.d.
- 4) Single-use plastic bags and recycling materials: continue to promote.
- 5) Alberta EcoTrust 3<sup>rd</sup> Gathering: March 8-10. Should GN pay for 2 attendees from the Issues Committee Budget? Martha, and another GN member, to be arranged.
- 6) Alberta EcoTrust Grant: see Fundraising Committee Report 5.g. below.

f. **Indoor Speaker-** Dr. Dinesh Mategaonkar Ph.D., EP, P.Biol. will be speaking at the February GM on Environmental Assessments. He is currently teaching at Mt. Royal College in Calgary.

Angela mentioned that the Horticulture Society will have a presentation on Urban Bee Keeping by Toby Newton at 7:30 pm Feb.12, Unity Lutheran Church.

Hugh will check with Dave McKenzie to see what speakers are booked for the upcoming months.

g. **Fundraising Committee-** John's written report of the Issues Committee Highlights 5.e.(6). above, asked if GN should apply

for Alberta EcoTrust grant of \$7,500 for a project involving the development of "Nature Website" as proposed by Dave McKenzie at the last General Meeting. Hire a student or contractor to start developing the website with current information such as the Birding Trails Guide, Wildflower Brochure, Butterfly and Dragonfly data and pictures, wildlife pictures, MHIP projects, Riparian Health Assessment, recreational use of waterways, Invasive weed control, City tourism info, etc.

The Board discussed the idea of setting up another website as suggested. Hugh will discuss this with Dave.

h. **Field Trip Updates and Upcoming Events-**

1) EcoTrust gathering March 8-10<sup>th</sup> in Calgary. (See 5.e (5) above). Hugh will ask GN members in his President's Report in the February Chronicle if anyone other than Martha would like to attend.

2) Ben Verner's annual birding trip end of March/beginning of April. To ask Milt to check with Ben about the date.

**The Issues Committee** has generously offered to assist the Field Trip Coordinator with listing GN events and Field Trips in 2018, or even act as interim FT Coordinator for 2018. They suggest the Board ask Wendy Blackwell & Ian Wallis to be FT Coordinators. Hugh will speak to Wendy and Ian.

i. **Communication Committee-** Angela reported she has purchased tags and strings from Logos Embroidery for 50 member names, and stick-on labels for visitors or occasional member attendees. She described the set-up with a border around the edge of the card, and the first name printed larger than the surname Thank you for printing and setting those up Angela. Ian suggested using a filing system with alphabetical filing cards for ease of access.

j. **Birding Trails Project-** Moved that the Birding Trails Guide Committee be nominated for the Cindy Amos Tourism Award.

**CARRIED** Cindy served twice as Executive Director for Canadian Badlands Tourism. Her vision for CBT was to preserve rural values, western culture, and strengthen the economies of the region through sustainable tourism development and investment attraction.

**The Issues Committee**-(see 5.e. (2) above) asked if the distribution of the Wildflower Brochure could be included in the dispensing of the Birding Trails Guide. Rob Gardner, who is looking after distribution, agreed that the Wildflower Brochure could be part of the handouts. He has looked into recommended methods and venues used in other cities.

2,500 copies of the B.T. Guide have been printed with 320 already distributed. Prime Printing is storing the booklets at present.

k. **Bird Tales Update-** Hugh reported for Dee Armstrong, that the Bird Tales Program will be starting at Sunnyside Care Centre (South Country Village) on March 1, 2018. The Bird Tales Program will expand to include plants and music as well as birds. Volunteers to assist with the Program are always needed and welcome.

l. **Nature Alberta-** Ian and Angela spoke about the Namibia Nature Tour promoted by Nature Alberta. It is offered the last two weeks in March 2018, and takes 10 participants. More information at <http://naturealberta.ca/last-call-experience-namibia-nature-tour-march-2018/>

Ian and Angela said they will be taking copies of the Birding Trail Guide to share with NA Board of Directors when they attend future meetings.

m. **Webcam Update-** Hugh reported that the Webcam at the Nature Centre is functioning. Paul is working to speed up the computer.

6. Other Business:

a. **General mailing of GM Minutes-** The procedure of emailing General Meeting Minutes to GN members before the minutes are approved was questioned by Board members at the meeting. Hugh will check with Paul.

- b. **Governance Meeting**-Storage of Documents and Records- Topic is Tabled.
- c. **Committees and External Organizations**- Topic is Tabled.
- d. **SEAWA Project Partnership**- The Issues Committee noted the SEAWA Project Partnership is asking for GN volunteers to help with their project of riparian restoration along Seven Persons Creek. The Board agreed that GN members may volunteer for SEAWA projects but, to date, no members are stepping up to act as a liaison person between SEAWA and GN.  
Hugh noted the Parks Department have not identified the 2 summer projects planned for GN yet.
- e. **Kaykima Wilderness Skill Camp**- Rob Ross has inquired if GN is interested in workshops he would offer. (MH News ran an article on this today). Hugh will email Rob saying that due to the upcoming renovations the MHIP is unable to commit at present but may be able to in the future. We will stay in touch.
- f. **Next Board Meeting** 6:30 pm Tuesday March 6<sup>th</sup> 2018 at Betty's house.
- g. **Adjournment** 8:53 pm.
- h. **Refreshments served**