

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS
Minutes of General Meeting, November 27, 2018
Police Point Park.

1. Call to Order 7:05 pm with Anne Bernhardt presiding and Betty Rainville, Secretary
2. Review and Adoption of General Meeting Minutes from October 23, 2018. **CARRIED.**
3. Exciting Sightings: Phil Horch reported that Ben Verner saw a long eared owl in his yard being mobbed by Magpies.
4. Treasurer's Report and Membership: Eileen Cowtan reported a balance at present in the Chequing Account of \$4319.70, and a balance of \$16,387.58 in the GN "Club" Savings Account. The Casino Account balance stands at \$6620.17.

Eileen noted GN Individual Membership is 34 at present, with Family Memberships at 45, for a total of 79.
5. Correspondence: Eileen reported receiving Nature Alberta Magazine as well as The Wildlands Advocate - The Alberta Wilderness Association Journal.
6. Priority Business:
 - a. **Committees to have bills/invoices to Eileen** by the end of December 2018.
 - b. **Valerie Martins Retirement Party** November 29th Nature Centre 7:00 pm.(See items 7 and 8.b.4)
 - c. **Bird Count December 16th**: Marty reported he sent out emails today about the Bird Count. He said it is always lots of fun, and reminded members about the potluck supper at 5:30 pm. that will be held the same evening. There will be no monthly General Meeting in December. (See items 7 and 8.b.12 below)
7. Interpretive Program Report: Corlaine noted that renovations to the Nature Centre are almost finished. It will take staff approximately 2 to 3 months to move selected items back into the building. Corlaine said nothing is being put down the drains, at present, because of work being carried out. Portable outdoor toilets are in use.
Corlaine spoke about new activities being tried such as the November 23rd evening event held in Central Park that was organized by Maureen, the Volunteer Coordinator. She said staff had games set up, and there was an excellent turnout of approximately 100 people.
Valerie Martin's retirement party will be held at the Nature Centre Thursday night November 29th at 7 pm, with snacks and refreshments. Members are encouraged to sign a card for Valerie in the lobby tonight. (See items 6 b and 8.b.4)
Coming soon is the Lions Club Christmas Hayride on December 2 from 1 to 4 pm, as well as the Christmas Bird Count (See items 6.c. and 8.b.12)
8. Committee Reports:
 - a. **Issues Committee:** John Slater submitted this written report.
 1. Previous committee meeting held Monday November 5th at Martha's house.
 2. Committee Budget 2019: \$1600=\$800 for Conference and Miscellaneous Expenses plus \$800 for reprint of 2000 Wildflower Brochures.
 3. Marty would like to expand the report for the Riparian Health Assessment project by including comments and pictures and graphics. He plans to talk to Cathy Linowski at MH College about getting a student to help complete the task.
 4. Martha plans to enquire with Robert Sissons, City Planning Dept., when the next public open house will be held, and ask if GN can meet separately to provide further input to the revision of the City's MDP.
 5. Martha to check with SEAWA, MH Public Library, College Library and Council of Canadians about meeting to cosponsor the World Water Day/Week in March 2019.
 6. Joint GN and City Parks Dept. Project: A survey report was written and submitted to the City Parks Dept. concerning the beaver activities and invasive plants along the south side of the river. We are waiting to meet with the City to discuss the results, and plans for next year.
 7. A summary report of the Shoreline Cleanup in Ranchlands Environmental Reserve was completed and submitted to the City Parks Dept. We are waiting to meet with the City to discuss the removal of the very large items found there, and the future protection of the reserve.
 8. Butterfly Project: Dave McKenzie is coordinating with Dwayne Myers the expansion of the database and website to include pictures of the butterflies.
 9. Storm Water Ponds: Following the presentations by Randy Taves and Scott Richter at the last General Meeting on October 23, a walk was conducted the next morning around the NECH Pond to assess the change due to cutting some brush and the plans to include a wheelchair accessible ramp and view point as well as pond side platform. A viewing of the other Storm Water Ponds in the City Southlands area is planned; likely in the spring.
 10. Invasive Plant Species: A public workshop as educational awareness has been proposed to address the problem of invasive weeds in alleyways, streets/boulevards and vacant lots. Further discussion is underway to see if a Workshop could be arranged for early next spring.

(Marty noted at this GM, that the Workshop is planned for the 1st Saturday in May. Volunteers may be needed to assist. He also mentioned the YouTube program on Shaw TV called Prairie Adventures, from October 2017, on Invasive Plants and Weeds with Bylaw Officer Barri-Ann Hayward and MHIP staff. See www.youtube.com).

- b. **MHIP Operations Committee:** John sent a written report.
 1. Previous committee meeting held Monday November 5th at the Nature Centre.
 2. Renovation of the Nature Centre nearing completion.
 3. Construction of the View Point completed. Placement of COOP signage and ceremony likely in the spring.
 4. Retirement Party for Valerie, Thursday Nov 29th. (See items 6.b. and 7 above)
 5. MHIP Budget 2019 approved.
 6. Draft of Chief Interpreter's Job Description reviewed. Some revisions needed.
 7. Update of MHIP terms of Reference reviewed. Some revisions needed.
 8. Propose P&P covering Substance in the Workplace to be drafted and submitted to the Governance Committee.
 9. Handicap Parking (at least 2 stalls) in PPP close to the Nature Centre will be selected by the Parks Dept.
 10. Provision of Chairs and A/V equipment to be investigated by the Parks Dept.
 11. Detailed Financial Statements of expenses of money from grants for the Renovations of the Nature Centre and construction of the View Point have been requested from the City/Parks Dept.
 12. Upcoming GN MH Interpretive Programs: The Lions Christmas Hayride on Sunday Dec 2nd at Police Point Park, 1 to 4 pm. And the Annual Christmas Bird Count during the day on Sunday Dec 16th followed by Potluck Supper at the Nature Centre starting at 5:30 pm. Check the GN's monthly newsletter, The Sagebrush Chronicle, for further details. Volunteers always appreciated. (See items 6.c. and 7 above)
 - c. **Field Trip Committee:** John sent a written report.
 1. 25 Neighbourhood Walks in 2018. Generally well attended and enjoyed by the participants. Due to cold weather, Neighbourhood Walks cancelled. We plan to resume our Neighbourhood Walks in March or April.
 2. We plan to enjoy X-Country Skiing or Snowshoeing in Police Point Park and/or Elkwater when conditions are suitable. Let John know if you are interested and would like to receive an email notice.
 3. Six Birding Field Trips conducted out of town. Many thanks to Milt, Phil and Ben for leading these events which were enjoyed by the participants.
 4. Nominal Budget 2019: \$25.
 - d. **Indoor Program Speakers:** Linda Fisher reported that Jasveen Brar will be speaking at tonight's meeting. There is no speaker in December because of the Potluck supper instead. January speaker will be Lorne Fitch, Professional Biologist, and February speaker will be David Larson, Entomologist from Maple Creek.
 - e. **Fund Raising Committee:** Hugh is absent. The Casino is booked for June, 2019. Call Dave McKenzie at 403 527-1701 to volunteer.
 - f. **Birding Trails Project:** Phil Horch noted there is nothing to report this month.
 - g. **Bird Tales Updates:** No report.
 - h. **Communications Committee:** Angela Turner noted there is nothing to report at this time.
 - i. **Nature Alberta:** Ian and Angela Turner will be participating at the December 8th NA Meeting by Teleconference.
9. New Business:
- a. **GN/MHIP Websites - Redesign/Update or Leave as they are?** Member comments were:
 - That lack of response has to do with software
 - Has David Cowtan been consulted?
 - It is easy to find the Interpretive Program but not so easy to get to the GN website from the Interpretive Program.
 - How will tourists find out about us? The GN/MHIP website should be clear and easy to get to.
 - Police Point Park is on the City site.Thank you to everyone who commented on the website question at the GM.
10. Other Business:
- a. **New Board Members needed:** Anne reminded members that there are at least two openings on the Board.
 - b. **New Part Time MHIP staff:** Marty reported that the new part time staff are: Kat, Maureen, Justine, and Taylor. He said MHIP is back to regular hours today-9 am to 5 pm Tuesday through Sunday.
 - c. **Next Board Meeting:** Tuesday December 4th 4 pm at Hugh and Dee's house.
 - d. **Adjournment:** 7:40 pm **Attendance :** 25
 - e. **Program start:** 7:50 pm. Speaker is Jasveen Brar on the topic of Environmental Literacy and Passion.

