

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS
Minutes of Board Meeting December 3, 2019
Hosted by Hugh and Dee Armstrong.

Present: Hugh Armstrong (Chair), Betty Rainville (Secretary), Phil Horch, Eileen Cowtan, Ian and Angela Turner, Linda Fisher, and Anne Bernhardt.

1. Call to Order: 8:35 pm.
2. Review and Adoption of GN Board Minutes from November 5, 2019. **CARRIED**
3. Additions to Agenda:
 - a. **Arrange Next Meeting with City Parks Department:** Hugh reported there is some transition taking place within the department presently, with retirements and new people being hired. Once these changes are finalized, a meeting between Parks and GN will be set up.
 - b. **Suggestion that GN partner with Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) programming:** (See 5.e.1)
 - c. **To discuss possible written and/or oral presentation by Methanex regarding their actions on emissions that may affect climate change. (Brought up at the last General Meeting):** Ian Turner will contact Methanex to find out their plans for such a presentation at a future GN General Meeting.
Eileen suggested we would not want to devote an entire GM to the topic.
 - d. **Issues Committee suggestion on sharing energy conservation tips at General Meetings:** Hugh reported he will mention this topic in the December Chronicle President's Report.
Board discussion brought up the following ideas;
 - Staying local in scope and starting small.
 - The goal of getting members to talk about energy conservation, as well as tips on climate change.
 - Sharing photos of the month (wildlife etc.) on the screen during General Meetings, from a flash drive.
 - Display the GM Agenda on screen during meetings to save paper and increase access to the Agenda.
 - Ask Gerry Ehlert about submitting a chart of carbon emissions in an article to the Chronicle or Nature Alberta
 - e. **Revised P&P for Budget Committee and Governance Committee, and Addressing PIPPA regulations:** Governance Committee Meeting held Monday, December 2, 2019.
 - Paul Thibault sent out documents to the Board outlining the MHIP Budget for 2020 at \$246,000. The Board unanimously approved the 2020 Medicine Hat Interpretive Program Budget.
 - Changes to the Bird Tales Ad Hoc Committee: GN to put \$250 toward the cost of bird seed. The Board approved the Change to the Budget of \$250 for the Bird Tales Committee.
 - The Board unanimously approved the revised P&Ps which changed Budget Committee meetings to a minimum of once a year from three, and Governance Committee meetings to a minimum of once a year from twice a year.
 - The Board is to go through the Pippa Workbook for Non-Profit Organizations before the Jan.7 Board meeting to decide how to approach the PIPPA regulations. The link is:
www.servicealberta.ca/pdf/Protecting_Personal_Information_A_Workbook_for_Non-Profit_Organizations_-_npworkbook.pdf
Eileen suggested spending 15 minutes at each Board meeting and trying to finish the workbook this coming year. She suggested having a PIPPA contact person.
 - f. **Archived Sagebrush Chronicles:** Eileen reported that the early Chronicles, which she and Anne Bernhardt organized and disassembled, have been archived and stored at the Esplanade.
 - g. **Update 2019 General and Board Minutes on GN Website:** Betty has sent most of the 2019 approved Board and GM Minutes to Paul for posting. October and November approved Board Minutes still need sending, as well as November 2019 GM Minutes.
March AGM Minutes will be sent once they are approved at the 2020 AGM. Thank you to Paul for posting the GN Minutes online for ease of access.
4. Action Items:
 - a. **Opening on Operations Committee:** Hugh noted that no members have stepped forward at this time to fill the opening on this Committee. One replacement is needed.
Anne suggested meetings at 4:30 or 5 pm, immediately after work, might be easier for working members
 - b. **Annual Christmas Bird Count, Feeder Count and Potluck Supper:** Hugh reported 2 volunteers are needed to help. Corlaine and Nature Centre staff will set up for the supper.
Hugh will post this in the Chronicle.

- c. **Volunteers arranged for January General Meeting:** Thanks to Ian and Angela for volunteering to set up prior to the January 28 General Meeting. Corlaine needs to be notified before the meeting.
- d. **Deadline for December Chronicle:** Milt requests that submission deadline be Saturday December 7.

5. Reports:

- a. **Treasurer's Report:** Eileen reported that November was a quiet month. The Casino Balance stands at \$12,356.50. The "Club" Savings Account stands at \$16,516.13 as of December 3, 2019 and the Chequing Account balance is \$3,540.22 on December 3, 2019, Eileen reported. Common Shares are \$1.30, and Cash to Deposit is \$65.00 bringing Total Current Assets to \$20,122.65. Other Assets include prepaid insurance expense of \$149.54 bringing Total Current Assets and Total Capital Assets to a Total Asset of \$20,272.19
- b. **Membership:** Membership stands at 86, Eileen reported.
- c. **Correspondence:** Eileen noted the only mail received was a Newsletter from Alberta Wilderness.
- d. **Operations Committee/MHIP Report:** Hugh (for Bob Townsend) reported from the Minutes of the MHIP Operations Committee October 7, 2019 Meeting. Some highlights were;
 - The Chief Interpreter accepted the employment agreement including a 2% increase to her salary. Corlaine was commended for her excellent work.
 - Elaine Spitzer was added as a signing officer of the MHIP's Bank Account, while Anne Bernhard's name was removed. (After discussion at tonight's Board meeting, it was decided that Anne Bernhardt may still retain her signing authority).

At tonight's Board Meeting, Ian suggested the City place permanent no-parking signs on the right side of the road all the way down to the Nature Centre. The Operations Committee would need to request this from the Parks Department if this suggestion is followed.

- e. **Issues Committee:** John Slater and Martha Munz Gue compiled 9 issues prior to the Thursday Issues Committee meeting. These are:
 1. Support for AWA and CPAWS' opposition (See 3.b.above)
Key Points: Gerry is enquiring what is/are current government policy(s); both provincial and federal. Then we can determine best approach to support AWA, CPAWS and others to have the policy(s) changed to protect water and wildlife habitat with letter of support to AWA & CPAWS. May like to meet with the two local MLAs.
 2. Stormwater Pond: Gerry leading.
 3. Riparian Health: SEAWA leading. Display at Arcade Plaza about snow, water and weeds as lead up to the WWW display in MH Public Library in March and SEAWA Spring Forum and maybe another Invasive Workshop at Nature Centre. May want to organize public reception at the Arcade.
 4. Climate Change: Climate Conversations and Resilient. SEA leading.
 5. Wildflowers: Martha leading. Pollinators: Dave McKenzie leading.
 6. Invasive Species: Gerry leading & coordinating with City Parks Dept. Gerry & John locating invasives. Also, maybe another Invasive Species Workshop at the Nature Centre.
 7. Beaver Issue, etc.: Hugh leading. Significant/sensitive habitat & Wildlife: Meeting with Parks Dept.
 8. Environment Advisement: UERAB; Gerry applied.
 9. Connecting with Elected Representatives; City and MLAs. Could combine with #1 and 3 (above) with reception at Arcade and restaurant next door.

Tina is attending an open house tonight on the Proposed Brier Run Area Structure Plan at the Family Leisure Centre.

- f. **Indoor Committee:** Linda Fisher reported the following speakers will present at upcoming GMs.
 - January- Brent Smith, Instructor at MHC, speaks on Agroecology
 - February- Roxanne Doerksen reports on Vermicast Products and benefits of worm castings.
 - March- Rob and Corlaine will be presenting at the AGM on one of their trips
 - April- Paul Von Heune will speak on the Ross Glen Flooding 10 years ago
 - May- Brian Keating. Topic TBA.
- Hugh will ask Corlaine tomorrow if the Nature Centre will be available for the AGM.
- g. **Fund Raising:** Hugh said there is nothing to report. He will check with Gerry about the timing of a possible second Invasive Workshop.
- h. **Field Trip Committee:** (Chronicle)
 - Day-time Bird Count, and Potluck supper at 5:30 pm on December 15. Contact Marty to participate in the count.
 - January 2 to 26: Young Artists Inspired by Nature. Official opening on January 9 at 7 pm.
- i. **Communications Committee:** Angela. Nothing to report.
- j. **Birding Trails:** Phil. Nothing to report.
- k. **Bird Tales:** Hugh reported, for Paul and Dee, that they will start again on Thursday after a week off.

- I. **Nature Alberta:** Ian and Angela participated in the November 30 N.A. Board of Directors Meeting by tele-conference. Please see their entire report in the upcoming December Chronicle.
Hugh asked to see a copy of the N.A. financial report for review.
 - m. **Web Cam Update:** Hugh noted there is no update presently.
He will talk to Gerry Ehlert about the robotic features of the Web Cam. MHC may be interested in this.
6. Other Business:
- a. **GN File Storage:** Phil reported that Dennis Baresco is going through the first lot of old GN files which are stored at the Nature Centre. Thank you Dennis and Phil.
 - b. **Local Wind Farms:** Anne Bernhardt brought up this topic after an article in the MH News today (Dec. 3) described a new wind farm to be located near Bow Island.
Phil questioned what monitoring will be carried out, as far as wildlife safety is concerned.
 - c. **Next Board Meeting:** 6:30 pm, January 7, 2020 at Phil & Annalora's house
 - d. **Adjournment:** 8:20 pm
 - e. **Refreshments**