

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS
Minutes of Board Meeting, December 5, 2017
Host- Hugh and Dee Armstrong

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

1. Call to Order: 3:31 pm
2. Review and Adoption of Board Minutes from November 7, 2017. **CARRIED.**
3. Additions to Agenda:
 - a. **New City Contract:** One meeting was held with Scott Richter, Superintendent of Parks Operations, with 2 more meetings needed before the end of 2017. The proposed 2018 city contract, with total allowable approved increase of \$21,500.00, = \$166,439.00 (this includes cost of living, internet payment, and additional benefits). The Board **ACCEPTED** Hugh's report on the New City Contract.
Hugh is away after December 15 so Anne Bernhardt is available to sign as Vice President.
Anne suggested that GN find ways to ensure membership is kept up.
 - b. **Freedom of Information and PIPA (Personal Information Protection Act):** The Board looked at a form put out by the Historical Society of Medicine Hat and District whereby members could authorize by Yes or No, that their personal information be used for membership purposes only. Hugh will check with Paul Thibault about the way personal information is protected in Grasslands Naturalists.
Hugh will also research non-profit group member confidentiality in Alberta, as it applies to GN.
Eileen Cowtan will put a note in the Member's Corner of the December Chronicle, asking members to contact her by the end of December 2017, if they do NOT want the quarterly Nature Alberta e-magazine to be sent to their email address. This will ensure GN member emails are not shared with Nature Alberta if they specify No.
 - c. **Member name tags:** Angela Turner will pick up sleeves and string for the tags. Approximately 100 need to be printed.
 - d. **General Mailing of G.M. Minutes:** Hugh recommended that General Meeting Minutes be emailed to GN Members starting after the January 23 meeting. This will keep those who do not attend meetings informed, as well as speed up the GM by having those members present prepared to discuss or move acceptance.
 - e. **Location of January General Meeting:** This meeting will likely be held at the Nature Centre as usual, but Anne will check with Corlaine. Betty Rainville will be out of town, so an acting Secretary will be needed. Thank you for filling that position at the Meeting.
4. Action Items
 - a. **Three positions to be filled:** Hugh will speak to individual members about filling the **Board Member at Large** position. **Field Trip Chair** was previously filled by Gary Martin with valuable assistance from John Slater. Hugh is looking into this. Although SEAWA is a very worthwhile not-for-profit society, finding **an external rep from GN** would be less urgent than filling the two previous positions mentioned above.
 - b. **Bird Count, and Pot Luck set-up:** Angela and Ian to help set up tables for the Potluck Dinner at 5:30 pm, December 17.
 - c. **Young Artists Inspired by Nature:** Show support at the Opening Reception tonight December 5, 7:00 pm sharp, at the Nature Centre.
 - d. **Mic and Committee Chairs to give reports:** Hugh has asked that Committee Chairs stand at the front to give reports, or to use a microphone for clarity. He will check with Corlaine Gardner to see if there is a mic available for use. If not, Casino funds could possibly be used to purchase this item.
 - e. **Webinar:** Why Data Sharing? (re Sask.'s Wild Species) Wed. Dec. 6 at 12 pm CST. Free Registration at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1147809162073924867>
Webinar: Top 10 non-compliance points for non-profit groups-by Revenue Canada, on Dec.7 at Hugh's house, 15 Partridge St. N.E.
 - f. **GN Club and MHIP 2017 Budget Updates, and 2018 Budgets:** The Board reviewed both the GN Club and MHIP 2017 Budget Updates. The General Membership will review the Budget at the January 23 meeting.
 - g. **Steward Program Check:** Rob Gardner has volunteered to act as rep for both the Kennedy Coulee Ecological Reserve and the Milk River Natural Area. Thank you Rob.
5. Reports:
 - a. **Treasurer's Report:** Eileen reported that the Bank Balance for the GN Club as at November 30, 2017 is \$23,401.49. The Casino revenue as at November 30, 2017 was \$14,814.38 after Casino Operation Expenses were deducted. Moved Treasurer's Report be Adopted. **CARRIED.**
 - b. **Membership:** 83
 - c. **Correspondence:** Eileen received a Newsletter from Partners for the Saskatchewan River Basin (PFSRB).

- d. **Operations Committee/MHIP Report:** John Slater's written report follows:
1. Last meeting was Monday, October 30.
 2. The IP Contract renewal, now called an Agreement with Lease, is being reviewed this afternoon (Dec.5). Some changes are likely. Hugh will report on the status.
 3. Renovations of the Nature Centre to start in early 2018 with plans to finish by June 2018.
 4. Christmas Hay Ride sponsored by the Lion's Club last Sunday afternoon was a great success with perfect weather. Approximately 900 people attended the event. Hugh suggested sand boxes would provide better traction on the hill when icy.
 5. Kiwanis Family Day Feb 19 to be held at Echo Dale Park Swim Centre.
 6. Chicks and Bunnies School Programs March 19-30 in Kin Coulee Toboggan Kitchen Shelter.
 7. Easter Weekend Extravaganza March 30 to April 2 to be held in Echo Dale Park Swim Centre.
 8. Chief Interpreter's Report, Current Projects, and Events Schedule presented by Corlaine. (Report in November Chronicle).
 9. MHIP Financial Reports presented by Eileen.
 10. Proposed MHIP Budget for 2018 presented by Corlaine. Budget approved on the basis of anticipated 2% increase in the city contract for 2018. Budget submitted to the GN Board.
 11. Motions to renew Chief Interpreter's and Year-Around Staff employment tabled until the City Contract is signed. The Committee is hoping to vote on these motions before the beginning of 2018. *(Anne Bernhardt noted the Committee will meet in January to draw up a contract for Corlaine and Staff).
 12. Percentages of Insurance to Liability of Public Programs, and GN Board, etc. to be obtained, because that portion of the premium can be paid from the Casino Account.
- e. **Issues Committee Report:** Written report by John Slater.
1. Last meeting was on Thursday Oct.26. Draft Budget for 2018 set.
 2. Environmental Issues in the City's MDP were discussed at the joint SEAWA/City/GN meeting Oct.5th. Further meetings are to be held to discuss GN's input to the new MDP, including the environmental Significant and Sensitive sites in the City and surrounding area.
 3. SEAWA/GN Partnership and Collaboration to be decided by the GN Board.
 4. Plans for World Water Week in March 2018 being discussed with MH Public Library, SEAWA, Council of Canadians and Praxis. Suggest that the focus be on Riparian Health.
 5. Wildflower Brochure has one error in the naming of one of the Grass species. Dwayne Myers is checking with Cathy Linowski and Judith Golub to make the correction, then the brochure will be ready to go to Prime Printing for producing 5,000 copies for \$1,029 (lowest price compared to CopyWorks and Boylans).
 6. SEAWA Forum held Nov.2nd. Tina Regehr and Marty Drut attended. Tina reported the forum was well attended. She wrote that Robert Sissons is interested in attending another meeting to discuss the MDP with GN and SEAWA at the Nature Centre in late November or December. Tina suggests having another Issues Committee meeting in late November before meeting with the Planning Department to go over the "talking points" they will have posted on the mymh.city website by then. Marty Drut explained the details of the Riparian Area Assessment Project done by GN in 2015/2016, to Robert Sissons, and will email his Draft Report to him.
- f. **Indoor Speaker:** Linda Fisher as new Chair. Thank you Linda.
Jan.23 speaker is Todd Sharpe regarding the Updated Municipal Development Plan.
Feb.27 speaker is Dr. Dinesh Mategaonkar on Environmental Impact Assessments.
- g. **Fund Raising Committee:** Nothing to report at this time.
- h. **Field Trip Update:** Upcoming events:
1. Beaver Symposium Cochrane Ranchehouse, Dec.7, 7:30 am to 4:30 pm. \$70/person. Rob, Corlaine and Marty are attending.
 2. Annual Waterton Christmas Bird Count, Dec.15. Phone Dianne 403 859-5107.Meet at 2:00pm at Waterton Park Lodge or email results to Pat Lucas at pat.lucas.alberta@gmail.com
 3. Manyberries Annual Christmas Bird Count: Jan.2. Contact Rob Gardner for more information 403 527-2052.
 4. Native Prairie Restoration/Reclamation Workshop in Saskatoon, Sask. Feb.7 and 8, 2018. Topics include Climate Change, Species at Risk, Soil Remediation, Grazing, and Prescribed Burning etc. Contact 306 352-0472 or pacap@sasktel.net
Marty and Corlaine may be attending.
 5. Alberta EcoTrust 2018 Environmental Gathering: March 8-10 Calgary Alberta .contact www.albertaecotruster.com
Cost is \$250. Some financial assistance for registration may be possible. For information contact Martha Munz Gue who has attended previous sessions at mmunzgue@telusplanet.net

- i. **Communications Committee:** Member name tags. See 3.c. above.
 - j. **Birding Trails Project Update:** Hugh will check with Milt Spitzer to see if the printer will be willing to store the 2,500. BT Booklets.
 - k. **Bird Tales Update:** Hugh reported that B.T. have received the \$1,200. From the MH Realtor's Foundation. Committee members will meet with the South Country Village Facility in January 2018 to start a programme for residents there.
 - l. **Nature Alberta:** Ian and Angela Turner reported on Webinar Part 1: Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA).Part 1 discusses IBA's in Alberta's Boreal Region. Thursday, December 7 from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm. Preregister online at: <http://bit.ly/2B4b8mx>
 - m. **Webcam Update:** Hugh reported Telus will be coming to check for improved speed. Software is working from Paul Thibault's location but not from the Nature Centre location.
6. Other Business:
- a. **Insurance Coverage:** John is checking details of the Insurance Coverage for the new IP Contract (Agreement with Lease) renewal.
 - b. **Volunteer Party and Farewell:** party for Lisa Bey, Volunteer Co-ordinator, on Sunday afternoon Dec. 10 at Police Point Park. Lisa will be missed.
 - c. **Wildflower Brochure:** This should be ready for spring. See 5.e. item #5 above for details.
 - d. **Shaping Future Conversations:** Held Nov.28 Clarion Hotel, MH. Tina Regehr suggests the presenter would be excellent as a future GN indoor speaker. Questions from the Nov.28 seminar may be filled out online at talk.aer.ca Tina to speak to Linda Fisher to set up a possible presentation date at a GN General meeting.
 - f. **Governance and Meetings:** Storage of Documents and Records.
Finances: Banking, Investments and Loans
Finances: yearly Review
Committees and External Organizations.*(Board Members check Policies and Procedures from your manual to prepare for discussion)
 Discussion of four parts of 6.f. (above) was **postponed** to the next Board Meeting on Jan.9, 2018.
 - g. **Next Board Meeting** 1 pm, Tuesday January 9, 2018 at Anne Bernhardt's house.
 - h. **Adjournment:** 5 pm