

(Draft) SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS  
Minutes of Board Meeting - January 3, 2017  
Host – Betty Rainville.

Present: Hugh Armstrong (Chair), Betty Rainville (Secretary), Eileen Cowtan, Ian and Angela Turner, Gary Martin, Anne Bernhardt

Absent: Dave McKenzie

1. Call to Order: 7:03 pm.
2. Review and Adoption of GN Board Minutes from December 6, 2016. Minutes were accepted. Motion CARRIED.
3. Additions to Agenda:
  - a. **BioBlitz 150.** John Slater sent a written notice that a sub-committee together with the Field Trips Committee are to meet to discuss and draft list of events for 2017. Watch the Chronicle for announcements or go to <http://bioblitz.ca/default.aspx> for information on BioBlitz 150.
  - b. **Potential Draft of MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) between Praxis and SEAWA.** The question of GN and Praxis formalizing a partnership with SEAWA to increase awareness of the South Saskatchewan Watershed will be discussed at a later date.
  - c. **Alberta Badlands/GN Attendance at Annual Meeting** The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Tourism Development Conference and AGM will be held March 15-17 in Brooks at the Heritage Inn Convention Centre. Rob Gardner will be speaking on the GN Birding Trails Project, and Hugh will be assisting. Volunteers are needed in the afternoon to assist with a GN Display Table. Eileen and Anne offered to attend one afternoon, and Ian and Angela volunteered to be present another afternoon.
4. Action Items:
  - a. **World Water Display March 22.** SEAWA would like GN to host a display table. Two volunteers are needed. Hugh will discuss this with Martha.
  - b. **GN Issues sub-committee to formulate input** to City Environmental Policy. John's written report to the Board stated that the MDP (municipal Development Plan) sub-committee is to meet in the next few weeks to formulate the way-ahead and initiate preliminary tasks such as listing issues and inventory of environmentally and culturally significant/sensitive areas in Medicine Hat.
  - c. **March AGM.** Will be held at Police Point Park Interpretive Centre on March 28, 2017. Anne and Angela kindly offered to bring snacks for the meeting.
  - d. **Outstanding Bills** to Eileen by year end.
5. Reports:
  - a. **Treasurer's Report:** Eileen reported that December was a quiet month. The balance as of December 31, 2016 is \$24,395.48. Eileen will send a thank you letter to Cenovus for their annual \$300.00 donation.
  - b. **Membership:** Eileen mentioned that memberships for 2017 are due now.
  - c. **Correspondence:** ALTALink sent a memo to GN.
  - d. **Operations Committee/ MHIP Report:** John submitted a written report to the Board:
    1. Art show at the Nature Centre of "Young Artists Inspired by Nature" starts January 3 to 29 Reception Wednesday Jan. 11 at 7:30 pm.
    2. Following concerns expressed by the MH Fire Department about access for emergency vehicles as well as public parking in general during major events, Corlaine to meet with Scott Richter at Police Point Park on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January to discuss solutions to Traffic Congestion.
    3. City and GN/IP equipment inventories to be finalized for insurance purpose.
    4. Winter StoryWalk to open on January 21<sup>st</sup> and the Kiwanis Family Day on Feb 20<sup>th</sup>.
    5. Next MHIP Operations Committee meeting to be on Monday afternoon January 23.
  - e. **Issues Committee Report:** John submitted a written report to the Board.
    1. On the morning of Dec 12, Rob Gardner gave informative presentation on Stream Management and riparian restoration. Then Rob led a brisk tour of two locations on Seven Persons Creek, just east of

- Ogilvie Flour Mill and in Strathcona Island Park near the South Saskatchewan River.
2. MDP Sub-committee to meet next few weeks to formulate way-ahead and initiate preliminary tasks such as listing issues and inventory of environmentally & culturally significant/sensitive areas in Med Hat. (see 4.b. above)
  3. Wildflower sub-committee continuing to meet to collate pictures for the brochure.
  4. Article on Ranchlands Project 2016 to be printed in the January Chronicle.
  5. Next meeting of the Issues Committee in early February.
  - f. **Indoor Committee:** No message from Dave. January speaker will be Sara Joan Armour.
  - g. **Fund Raising Committee:** Hugh said the next Casino assisted by GN volunteers will be held in 2018. The grant request to Co-op has been sent in.
  - h. **Field Trip Updates:** Gary noted that there are always the same core of supporters who attend field trips. Then Hugh remarked on the large turnout that took place for the summer evening, Mitchell Ranch field Trip. Why do certain GN field trips have a larger turnout than others?  
John Slater and Gary Martin will meet to discuss ideas for BioBlitz. (See 3.a above).
  - i. **Communications Committee:** Angela said this committee will meet January 4 to discuss ideas for the design of the new banner.  
She noted the committee will submit advertising for the upcoming speaker.
  - j. **Birding Trails Project Update-Brochure and Budget:** Hugh showed the Board a very attractive copy of the new Rack Card designed by the Birding Trails Project. These will be available at the Nature Centre and distributed throughout the area.  
The Birding Trails Project is hoping for a possible grant from the Canadian Badlands in 2017.
  - k. **Bird Tales Update:** Hugh noted that the Bird Tales program was put on hold at Masterpiece Retirement during the change of ownership. Hopefully this useful program will be restarted in the future.  
The program at Meadow Ridge was cancelled due to a flu closure of the facility, but will start again in January 2017.
6. Other Business:
- a. **Webcam Project and Update:** Paul Thibeau and Scott Hoyland are working on a robotic camera mount. The new webcam project will cost approximately \$2000.00 to purchase a Canon T5 camera and development of the robotic arm. Casino funds will be used for this.  
Hugh said the majority of birds seen at the feeder are Woodpeckers, Pheasants, Chickadees, and House Finches.
  - b. **December Bird Count and Pot Luck:** Strong gusty winds caused reduced bird activity during the count on December 18. On December 28, Rob and Corlaine Gardner counted 20 sage grouse at the Manyberries Christmas Bird Count, although other bird numbers were down.  
The annual Pot Luck was a success.
  - c. **Inventory Count at MHIP:** Hugh noted the inventory count was completed last Thursday, December 29, 2016. Several people volunteered at the count.
7. Next Board Meeting February 7 at 6:30 pm at Ian and Angela's home.
8. Meeting Adjourned at 7:59 pm. Refreshments served.