

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS
Minutes of Board Meeting January 7, 2020
Hosted by Phil and Annalora Horch.

Present: Hugh Armstrong (Chair), Betty Rainville (Secretary), Phil Horch, Eileen Cowtan, Ian Turner,
Absent: Anne Bernhardt, Linda Fisher, Angela Turner.
Guest: Martha Munz Gue

1. Call to Order: 6:38 pm.
2. Review and Adoption of GN Board Minutes from December 3, 2019. **CARRIED.**
3. Additions to Agenda:
 - a. **Lifetime Membership Nomination:** due 60 days before AGM. Hugh will include this announcement with the President's Report in the Chronicle.
 - b. **Location of Upcoming AGM:** Hugh reported the AGM will be held at the Nature Centre on March 24.
 - c. **Timing of Second Invasive Species Workshop:** After talking to Gerry, Hugh reported that there will be no 2020 Invasive Workshop similar to the one held last May 2019.
Gerry will be talking shortly to Keziah and Dave from Parks and Recreation Dept., who will be taking the lead on developed plans for Invasive Species (re. Next Steps Oct. 2019 Meeting notes).
 - d. **Request to Methanex** for a presentation or written report on Climate Change actions: Ian reported the CAP (Community Advisory Panel) will meet next Tuesday with Ian acting as Chair.
 - e. **Winter Walk Day, Feb.5:** John Slater sent an email regarding a previous Winter Walk in March, with cold temperatures, winds, and a poor turnout. John suggested a better turnout would be achieved by starting from the Nature Centre with an Interpretive Walk returning through treed areas.
(See Issues Committee Item # 5.e.below).
4. Action Items:
 - a. **Official Opening Young Artists Inspired by Nature:** Corlaine announced that Julie Friesen, City Councillor, will attend the reception on Jan. 9 at 7:00 pm. Everyone is welcome. This display continues Jan. 2 to Jan. 26.
 - b. **GM Agenda and Wildlife/Nature photos on screen:** Hugh noted these two suggestions will be brought up at the next General Meeting, Jan.28. This involves showing the GM Agenda, and member photos, on screen before and during each General Meeting.
 - c. **Board to examine best approach to PIPPA Workbook:** Hugh noted too many Board members were absent, due to illness and extenuating circumstances, to make an informed decision. Board members are to read through the Workbook prior to the next Board Meeting Feb.4.
Hugh will talk to Paul Thibault about choosing a contact person for receiving PIPPA communication.
5. Reports:
 - a. **Treasurer's Report:** Eileen reported the Casino Balance stands at \$11,780.09 total asset. The "Club" Savings Account stands at \$16,526.65 as of December 31, 2019 and the Chequing Account balance is \$4,400.73 on December 31, 2019. Common Shares are \$1.35 bringing Total Current Assets to \$20,928.73. Other Assets are the prepaid Insurance Expense of \$51.36, bringing the Total Asset to \$20,980.09.
 - b. **Membership:** Eileen noted that GN Memberships are due this month.
 - c. **Correspondence:** Eileen received the following:
 - A workshop for non-profit groups is offered by Alberta Gaming Liquor & Cannabis on Feb.20 in Medicine Hat at the Baymont Inn.
 - The Community Foundation of Southeastern Alberta sent a statement for \$100.00
 - AGLC Charity Link Newsletter. (Hugh reported that he sent the Final Report, including the Financial Statement and Cover letter, for the completed CFEP Grant Project).
 - Email from the Community Foundation of Southeastern Alberta Workshop on Grant Writing, Feb. 4

- d. **Operations Committee/MHIP Report:** Hugh reported the Operations Committee/MHIP will meet in March 2010.
A suggestion was made at the last Board meeting, that the Operations Committee might ask Parks to erect a permanent sign, to prohibit parking on the right hand side into PP Park.
- e. **Issues Committee:** After discussion between Martha and the Board, it was agreed that GN register for Winter Walk Day, to be held February 5, 2020 at Police Point Park. The event will be advertised through the Chronicle. (See item #3.e.above).

Martha submitted the following written GN Issues Report to the Board:

- **Bottled Water and Support for AWA and CPAWS'** opposition to trucking water to Calgary to a bottling company. 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 and CPAWS. May like to meet with the two local MLAs. Marilou has asked upstream WPACS if they have a position on bottled water. Response was that they prefer to establish relationships to discuss the project.
- **Stormwater ponds:** Gerry leading. These are part of City Water treatment. Water and soils are toxic. Ponds need to be dredged every 20 years. Vegetation is volunteer and needs to be cut back if interfering with function of the stormwater pond. Parks Dept. works with City public works to strike a balance between cutting back cattails or functionality of the stormwater pond, while leaving enough for aesthetics.
- **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. Volunteers needed in spring to help with watering newly planted woody protection on 9 km of riparian edges. See explanatory posters at Arcade SEAWA Art show and reports on SEAWA websites the GNN/IP riparian health assessment of the river in a form that can be displayed at the World Water Day displays?
- **Climate change:** Climate Conversations Friday at 4 pm. Resilient.SEA and Council of Canadians leading.
- **Wildflowers:** Martha leading. **Pollinators:** Dave McKenzie leading. Preserving and restoring natural spaces. **Invasive Species:** Gerry leading & coordinating with City Parks Dept. Gerry & John locating invasives. Also, maybe another Invasive Workshop at the Nature Centre.
- **Beaver issue:** etc.: Hugh leading, Significant/sensitive habitat & Wildlife: Meeting with Parks Dept.
- **Environment Advisement:** UERAB; Gerry applied. Marilou's term has expired. Marilou met with Kris Samraj and some Issues committee about how to get environmental advisement more systemic throughout the system, rather than limited to one department. Subsequently Marilou submitted a written report/rational for improved environmental advisement.
- **Connecting with Elected Representatives:** City and MLAs. Could combine with #1 and 3 above with reception at Arcade and restaurant next door.
- **Effects of Wind and Solar Developments on Landscape:**
- **Proposed New Greenhouses with All Night Lighting:**
- **Coming Dates**
 - Jan.15, 2020 Democracy Movie at MHPL 7 pm
 - Jan.17, Fair Deal Panel. Need to register
 - Date ? Tri Municipal Plan Open House:
 - Jan.22, Council of Canadians AGM F161 College
 - Jan 25, Stuff Swap at Café Verve 6 pm
 - Jan 29 7 pm Café Verve Movie. The sequel. (Brent sponsoring). i.e. what will the world look like?
 - Feb. 20, 21 Teachers Convention. Groups may register for a display table and/or a presentation session. Go to SEATCA website.

Jan/Feb/March SEAWA Winter Water Art Show at Arcade Plaza on 3rd Street downtown. Check out SEAWA Riparian restoration experience.

March 22. World Water Day. Check out the website. Plan how you are going to participate.

March, last Saturday. Earth Hour. Check out the website. Plan how you will participate.

- f. **Indoor Committee:** Linda Fisher absent. The January General Meeting speaker will be Brent Smith, Instructor at MHC, speaking on the New Agroecology Program at Medicine Hat College.
 - g. **Fund Raising:** Hugh reported that all required paper work for renovations on the Nature Centre has been completed.
 - h. **Field Trip Committee:** from Chronicle
 - “Young Artists Inspired by Nature” through January 26
 - New Winter StoryWalk launches end of January, “Sleep, Big Bear, Sleep”
 - Family Day, February 17. Please phone Nature Centre to volunteer.
 - Tuesdays and Saturdays to March end, enjoy X-Country skiing in Elkwater, on a 10km trail. Meet 9:30 am Walmart.
Contact John at jslater@telusplanet.net or H. 403-526-7003 or cell 403-866-8415
(Ian Turner suggested the option of a shorter 5 km trail be offered at Elkwater for members who prefer a less demanding route).
 - i. **Communications Committee:** Angela absent. Ian has offered to send out the Chronicle in January.
 - j. **Birding Trails:** Phil. There is nothing to report this month.
 - k. **Bird Tales:** Hugh reported, for Paul and Dee, that Bird Tales will start again on Thursday.
 - l. **Nature Alberta:** See December Chronicle for the highlights from the N.A. Board of Directors Meeting on November 30. Ian and Angela Turner participated through tele-conference.
 - m. **Web Cam Update:** Hugh reported there is no update on the web cam. He will be checking with Medicine Hat College about possible collaboration with GN on the Web Cam.
6. Other Business:
- a. **Volunteers for pre GM set up:** Ian and Angela are volunteering to set up the Nature Centre prior to the General Meeting on January 28.
Martha suggested the Issues Committee might volunteer for February set up.
Hugh will include a request in the February Chronicle, with the President’s Message.
 - b. **Openings on Operations/MHIP, Budget, and Governance Committees:** Hugh will put this information in the upcoming Chronicle.
 - c. **GM and Board Minute Updates:** Betty reported that December Board Minutes will be sent to Paul to be posted online, after being approved at January’s Board Meeting.
November GM Minutes will be sent after approval at January’s General Meeting. And March 2019 AGM Minutes will be sent for posting after approval at the upcoming AGM in March 2020.
 - d. **UERAB Application:** Gerry Ehlert has applied to become a member of the Urban Environment and Recreation Advisory Board.
 - e. **Filing Cabinet Update:** Phil reported that Dennis Baresco has finished going through 2 boxes of GN files. Thank you Dennis.
 - f. **Update on December Bird Count Dec.15:** Marty Drut will post the results of the MH 38th Annual Christmas Bird Count in the upcoming Sagebrush Chronicle. Thank you Marty.
Phil noted that 40 deer were seen in the City, during the bird count, which is a relatively high number.
 - g. **Next Board Meeting:** 6:30 pm, Feb. 4, 2020 at Betty’s house.
 - h. **Adjournment:** 8:10 pm
 - i. **Refreshments**