

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS

Minutes of Board Meeting, March 7, 2017

Host – Anne Bernhardt.

Present: Hugh Armstrong (chair), Betty Rainville (secretary), Ian and Angela Turner, Anne Bernhardt, Gary Martin.

Guest, John Slater.

Absent: Dave McKenzie, Eileen Cowtan

1. Call to Order: 6:40 pm
2. Review and Adoption of GN Board Minutes from February 7, 2017.
3. Additions to Agenda:
 - a. **New Casino Manager**-Notice will be put in the March Chronicle about a Casino manager needed. It is necessary for the manager to submit all paper work at least 60 days before the upcoming dates of September 28 and 29. Gary Martin has agreed to help a new Casino Manager get started.
 - b. **Prairie's Got the Goods Week, March 12-17**- John explained that this is a series of online webinars from Regina. Martha Munz Gue submitted a suggestion that the Nature Centre might be set up so a group of people could watch these together. The Webinars run Monday to Saturday, with Wednesday discussing Beavers.
 - c. **Nature Alberta Meeting, March 25** – Gary plans to attend the NA meeting held in Edmonton.
4. Action Items:
 - a. **World Water Week** display starts Thursday March 16 at Medalta Market 4:30 to 7:30 pm, and moves To MH Public Library March 17 to March 25. It may move on Saturday afternoon to CofC Panel Discussion at the MH College Cultural Centre. John said he would be available to help. Angela will email Milt about having 25 extra colour Chronicles printed for these public events, and Angela will get 300 of each rack card.
A volunteer may be needed at the Library display on Tuesday evening March 21 during the documentary, *Water on the Table* by Maude Barlow. David Condon from The Council of Canadians will be commentator. John suggested it would be helpful to have a GN representative present.
Wednesday is a children's event day put on by SEAWA, Praxis, and the Library, for 3 to 6 year olds.
 - b. **GN AGM March 28**
 - (1) All Committee heads need to send 2016 annual reports to Paul Thibault, to be put on GN Website by March 15. Hugh will have his report in the March Chronicle.
 - (2) Nomination Chairman – Bill Knibbs agreed to be Nomination Chair for Board nominations.
 - c. **SEAWA Rural Stewardship Forum March 10**: Alyssa Roth from SEAWA asked if GN is interested in setting up a display table. John and Martha will take GN and Birding Trails rack cards to promote GN to Forum attendees and agreed to take water related maps and other materials for display.
5. Reports:
 - a. **Treasurer's Report**- Eileen is away.
 - b. **Membership**- Eileen is away.
 - c. **Correspondence**- Eileen absent.
 - d. **Operations Committee/MHIP Report**- John reported that the turnout for Kiwanis Family Day event was excellent. The Fire Department visited 3 times and was happy with results. Weather was good, as well as the programs offered to the public. Doug Knowles, City Parks Dept., said a Shuttle Bus may be arranged to run from Unity Lutheran Church to the Nature Centre over the 4 days of the Easter activities, April 14-17. John noted the bus should help decrease traffic.
 - e. **Issues Committee Report**- John reported that he; Dwayne Myers, Martha Munz Gue, Cathy Linowski and Rob Gardner have spent approximately 100 hours working on the Wildflower Brochure so far. They have made a list of the flowers and Dwayne is putting pictures of the flowers on Google Drive. Judith Golub, in Edmonton, will collate this into a PDF file and Paul will put it on GN Website so GN and the public will be able to view the brochure. Later in the fall when all errors are corrected, the brochure will be printed. Meanwhile, John suggests that rack cards be designed and printed which would be sent to the Tourism Centre, Garden Centres, MH Public Library and similar outlets. The Wildflower group will meet again next Tuesday morning.
After the GN AGM, the Issues Committee will meet again to arrange another meeting with Robert Sissons, Superintendent of City Planning Policy, to discuss the Environmental Policies in the City Municipal Development Plan. This may take place end of April or early May, John said.
On Tuesday March 14, the City Planning Department will be holding an open house at Riverside School to present the Area Redevelopment Plan of the Riverside Neighbourhood.

- f. **Indoor Committee**- Dave will be submitting his report to Paul by March 15.
 - g. **Fund Raising Committee**- Hugh reported the grant applications are all in, with approximately \$413,000.00 yet to be received. That consists of \$262,000.00 from the Community Facility Enhancement Program and \$150,000.00 from the Co-op Funding Grants. \$1,000.00 is likely to be received from Walmart to go toward the Bird Tales Program. The Casino account stands at \$14,897.00 at this time.
Hugh noted that \$1,000.00 was received from The Alberta Native Plant Council to go toward the Wildflower Brochure, as well as \$500.00 received from the Horticultural Society. GN is on the short list to receive \$5,000.00 from Canadian Badlands Association to print the Birding Trails Booklet.
 - h. **Field Trip Updates**- Gary reported the Chinook Greenhouses Tour will start at 9 am at the Bridge Street location on March 11. It will likely last from 1.5 to 2 hours.
World Water Week commences March 16 to 25 as noted in item 4.a.
On March 28, John Slater will be leading a 3 coulee walk. Meet at his house at 10 am.
April 14 – 17 will see the Easter Weekend Extravaganza take place at the Nature Centre.
On April 22 GN plans to participate in the morning City Wide Clean-up. Location is yet to be decided.
 - i. **Communications Committee**-Angela presented the new mobile GN Banner to the Board this evening. It is truly an attractive and eye-catching banner. Angela thanked all those who assisted with design ideas as well as the photographers who provided the photos. A special thank you to Angela for her hard work and dedication in getting the banner designed and produced in such a short time.
 - j. **Birding Trails Project Update**- Hugh reported we are waiting on the funds from the Canadian Badlands Association to print the Birding Trails Guide.
Hugh showed a brochure to Board members from Bird Studies Canada that described bird watching tours with the Eagle Eye Tours, to the Canadian Badlands and South East Alberta. Hugh said GN hopes to have some of the GN Birding Trails such as Cypress Hills and Pakowki Lake included on the tour in 2018.
 - k. **Bird Tales Update**: Hugh reported for Dee, that the Meadow Ridge project is running well. Masterpiece Retirement will be operating under a new name in the spring of 2017.
6. Other Business:
- a. **Webcam Project and update**- Hugh reported the new webcam is working well at its location at the Nature Centre. We are still watching the nesting activity of the eagles to determine the future location of the webcam.
 - b. **Canadian Badlands Annual Meeting March 16-18 at Brooks** – Hugh noted this will run Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm. Hugh will talk to Bob Frew since he has the Birding Trails rack cards. Hugh will send out emails showing each volunteer's schedules for this meeting in Brooks. GN volunteers will supervise a display table.
 - c. **Bird Watching Tours**- covered under item 5.j.
 - d. **Potential Draft of MOU between GN and SEAWA and possibly Praxis**- Cathy Linowski has drawn up the Partnership Agreement (Mutual of Understanding). Hugh would like to see what that entails, so he will be talking to Cathy to get a copy of the MOU.
 - e. **MH Accommodation Association March 9 presentation**- Hugh said Rob is not available for this presentation. Hugh will talk to Phil Horch about a possible presentation in May or June of this year.
 - f. **Projects and Partnerships 2017**: Hugh and John met with Doug Knowles of the City on February 15. GN is asked to conduct a survey on the south side of the SS River as well as Police Point Park during 2017. Starting on Wednesday, March 29, Hugh and John will do a walk to locate beaver lodges and areas of Leafy Spurge. The Parks Department will supply wire mesh for GN to protect trees from beaver activity. GN will only flag the Leafy Spurge, not spray it. Also a project is being considered with wildflower beds in Police Point Park to attract bees and other pollinators.
 - g. **Civic Environmental Recognition Award**- March 17 is the call for nominations deadline. The topic was discussed briefly. A general call for nominations for the Civic Recognition Award will be placed in the March Chronicle.
 - h. **Next Board Meeting** April 4 at 6:30 at _____ home.
 - i. **Meeting Adjourned** at 8:12 pm. Refreshments served.