

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS  
Minutes of Board Meeting- November 1, 2016  
Host- Eileen Cowtan.

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

1. Call to Order: 6:43 pm.
2. Review of GN Board Minutes from October 4, 2016. Minutes were accepted. Motion CARRIED.
3. Additions to Agenda:
  - a. **WebCam Project and Budget:** Hugh and some other members will be going to the Heron nest location at 10:00am Wednesday to pick out the best site for a camera. The City has volunteered all the electricity we need. The cost of this project has not been established yet, but Hugh said we may get ATB Financial, TD Environmental, and other Grants to cover most of the cost.
  - b. **Wildflower Brochure and Budget:** This will require funding.
  - c. **Birding Trails Brochure and Budget:** Hugh and other members attended the meeting on Thursday Oct 27<sup>th</sup> with Canadian Badlands Limited. Phil Horch gave a presentation which was well received. Canadian Badlands would like a similar presentation on Birding Trails to be given to all CBL groups.
  - d. Following the above updates given by Hugh on the WebCam, Wildflower Brochure, and Birding Trails Projects, a MOTION was made to request that seed money be made available in the 2017 GN Budget in the amounts of \$500.00 each for the Wildflower and Birding Trails Projects, and \$1000.00 to the WebCam Project, if they so require it. CARRIED.
4. Action Items:
  - a. **UERAB** (Urban Environment and Recreation Advisory Board) applications due November 4, 4:30 pm. Three openings are available. One application from a GN member has been submitted so far.
  - b. **Budgets** need to be submitted to Paul Thibault by November 15, 4:30 pm. Most are in at this time. John Slater sent a note to this Board meeting that the Budgets for Issues Committee and MHIP Operations Committee are already submitted to Paul Thibault.
  - c. **SEAWA** (South East Alberta Watershed Alliance) Urban Sustainability Forum on November 4 at MH College. Two shifts have volunteered to promote the GN/MHIP display; they are Morganne Wall and Hugh Armstrong, and John Slater and Dave McKenzie. Martha Munz Gue has volunteered to help as needed.
  - d. **GN Issues sub-committee** to formulate input to City Environmental Policy: John Slater's notes to the Board said, Issues Committee scheduled to meet Tuesday morning Nov 8<sup>th</sup> to setup sub-committee and formulate GN's input to City's Environmental Policies in the Municipal Development Plan. Please volunteer or suggest who should be on the sub-committee. Thanks. Hugh stated that Marty Drut, Hugh, John Slater, Tina Regehr, and Martha Munz Gue agreed to be on this sub-committee.
  - e. **Renewal of Chief Interpreter Contract:** Moved that the CONTRACT FOR SERVICES Renewal for Chief Interpreter, Corlaine Gardner, 2017 be approved. CARRIED.
  - f. **Draft MHIP Budget:** The draft Medicine Hat Interpretive Program Budget was submitted to the GN Board and accepted.
  - g. **Nature Alberta AGM**, Saturday Oct 29, in Edmonton. (Action item from previous Board Minutes Oct 4)  
John Slater sent a written report to the Board: GN Rep Gary Martin away, but Ian and Wendy unable to attend because meeting was in Edmonton, so John arranged teleconference session to listen to reports of the AGM.
    1. Annual report of year's activities following NA's 45 anniversary. NA now in partnership with Land Stewards.
    2. Living-by-Water program still a priority; name of Young Naturalists Club changed to Nature Kids with most material available on NA website; Biodiversity program being formulated outlining backyard activities for families; NA Awards program to be further promoted.
    3. To help build membership in clubs, NA Executive Director or other NA Board member will likely visit clubs to give presentations on NA programs and meet with club's Board.
    4. Copies of AGM reports forthcoming.

5. Reports:

- a. **Treasurer's Report:** Eileen reported a balance of \$23,475.00.
- b. **Membership:** Eileen said membership is 81, with 38 families and 43 individuals.
- c. **Correspondence:** Eileen noted GN had received The River Current magazine.
- d. **MHIP Operations Committee Report:** John Slater submitted a written report as follows:
  1. Last committee meeting held Monday Oct 17.
  2. City contract funding 2017 has no increase from last year due to City's Financially Fit for the Future review.
  3. Current City contract runs to 31 Dec 2017. Discussions in the new year planned for contract renewal for January 1, 2018.
  4. Nature Centre upgrades, renovations, expansion: application submitted to CFEP for additional grant. Work could start as early as March 2017.
  5. Chief Interpreter's reports on current projects, events schedule, grants and budget received and accepted. Draft Budget already submitted to Budget Committee; see 4.b. above.
  6. MHIP Financial report received from bookkeeper.
  7. Renewal of Chief Interpreter's contract approved and submitted to the Board; see 4.e.
  8. Renewal of contract for Year-Around Staff approved.
  9. MHIP Bookkeeper Duties reviewed and Bookkeeper Service Agreement drafted for signature.
  10. Next major event at Police Point Park is the Lion's sponsored Christmas Hayride, Sunday Dec 4. Volunteers needed.
- e. **Issues Committee:** John submitted a written report as follows:
  1. Last committee meeting held Thursday Sept 29.
  2. Ranchlands Project 2016: invoice prepared and proposal 2017 drafted for submission to City/LABS.
  3. Request for assessment of Ranchlands Archeological Site replaced with part-time employment of Brenda Powder to document on video her information on First Nations Culture.
  4. Wildflower Brochure meeting was held Tuesday Oct 25 to finalize the list of flowers. Pictures being collected and sorted. Front cover picture of Teepee and Saamis coulee selected. Descriptive page being drafted. Plan to have Brochure layup available on the GN website in the new year. Funding grant; see 3.b and 3.d.
  5. Hampton Phase 3 Development Plan: John and Tina did walk of site to view current condition of trees and wetland (i.e. it is an old dugout) and irrigation canal. Contact with the City's Planning and Development Services concerning the proposed pond development has led to offer from City for GN to meet with the City's PDS; see 4.d.
- f. **Indoor Committee Report:** Dave has several guests lined up as speakers in the coming months. Kris Samraj from the MH Public Library will be speaking in November about his hike along the Appalachian Trail, in the Eastern US.
- g. **Fund Raising Committee Report:** Hugh reported that an application has been submitted to CFEP, Community Facility Enhancement Program for an additional grant. Funds may also be coming from The Canadian Badlands Ltd. as well as from the Horticultural society. The budget for the WebCam should be determined before the end of the year.
- h. **Field Trips Update:** Gary away until November 15. John sent a written report as follows:

Enjoyable walk around Ranchlands Phase 4 last Thursday afternoon. Suggestion to have X-Country Ski party in the same location when snow condition is suitable. Also ski outing in Elkwater.
- i. **Communications Committee Report:** Angela said the Committee is working on a budget. They hope to start the GN Banner project by the end of November or early December.
- j. **Birding Trails Project Update:** see 3.c and 3.d.
- k. **Bird Tales Update:** Dee Armstrong reported the program at Meadow Ridge started last month. Dee and Paul Thibault direct the program for one cottage and the Recreation Director manages the program for the other cottages. The program at Masterpiece is on hold for now, but the feeders there are a success.

6. Other Business:

- a. **GN/IP Volunteer Appreciation** November 15, 7-9 pm. RSVP by November 7 to Lisa Bey.
- b. **Location for next AGM:** Anne noted the Library is under construction. Possibly the College? To ask Corlaine if the Chicks and Bunnies program is going on at the Nature Centre then. Date of the AGM is March 28, 2017.
- c. **December Bird Count and Pot Luck Dec 18:** Contact Marty for details of Bird Count. Potluck to start at 5:30pm.

7. Next Board Meeting on December 6 at Hugh's house starting at 6:30pm.

8. Meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm. Refreshments served.