

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS

Minutes of General Meeting May 23, 2017

Police Point Park

1. Call to Order 7:05 pm
2. Review of General Meeting Minutes from April 25, 2-17. Item 8.c. corrected to read "No June speaker at the pot luck", rather than "...June speaker will be Rob Bourchier..." Adopted CARRIED.
3. Exciting Sightings: John saw a pronghorn and baby near Suffield with a coyote approaching.
Angela reported a coyote in the ring road in full pursuit of a gopher (Richardson's ground squirrel).
Dave saw a bald eagle out of water with a fish in its mouth, about one week ago.
Hugh noted a bald eagle confronting 2 geese on a sand bar.
Finally, Rob commented on seeing a doe, with triplets on the road, as he came from Cypress Hill Thursday or Friday. The doe slipped under a wire fence while a baby went over the wire. Rob said the wires are hard on the baby deer.
4. Treasurer's Report and Membership: Eileen reported the GN balance is \$23,019.82. The Casino account stands at \$11,174.29.
Membership total is 65 renewed members, while 18 have not renewed at this time.
5. There is no correspondence.
6. Priority Business:
 - a. **Farmer's Market Volunteers:** Ian and Angela will sit at the GN table on May 27, Anne and possibly Eileen will volunteer for June 3. Angela said she is not worried about filling the September 16 position.
 - b. **Civic Environmental Recognition Award:** May 25. 7:00 pm Esplanade to recognize John Slater.
Hugh suggested that as many people as possible be there by 6:30 pm to see John arrive by limousine.
GN banner, rack cards and Sagebrush Chronicle will be on display.
 - c. **Casino Volunteers:** Volunteer list is needed 60 days before September 28th and 29th, 2017. Dave McKenzie will pass a sign-up sheet at tonight's meeting.
 - d. **June pot luck: June 27th 6:00 pm Nature Centre.** There will be no speaker at this pot luck. Please bring your own chairs, plates and cups. 2 people are needed to help set up and take down after.
 - e. **Canadian Badlands Tourism: funding of Birding Trails Booklet.** Hugh noted the Association will likely be able to provide \$12,000 toward the booklet, however they have a few stipulations. GN members will meet Thursday morning with Chris McLellan.
 - f. **Spring Bird and Wildflower Count:** This is held on May 28, 2017. Marty said there are still a few slots open. He asked members to please call him if they are available for the count.
7. Interpretive Program Report: Corlaine reported there are a lot of activities going on at PPPark and the Nature Centre. A new addition sees Lisa Bey speaking on CHAT News Updates.
 - 1) Come to the Nature Centre on Sunday 2-4:00 pm May 28 for the last Koffee Klatch. Corlaine said this was a fun idea that worked well.
 - 2) Saturday, May 27 Geocachers meet at 10:00 am for a walk and casual gathering.
 - 3) From 2:00- 3:30 pm Siew Mak, Master artist, demonstrates Chinese Brush work. If you would like to try it, put your name on the list.
 - 4) Spring Bird and Wildflower Count takes place Sunday, May 28
 - 5) World Environment Day is held June 5. Visit Kin Coulee Park at 7:00 pm by the Kinette Kitchen and look at the dock.
 - 6) See the information sheet for other activities, Corlaine suggested, including the Full Moon Walk starting at 9:00 pm June 9.
 - 7) Join Dave and Val. at 1:30 pm June 10th for Dragonflies and Friends.
Corlaine reported she recently attended a conference in Vancouver focused on getting children into nature
Approximately 900 people from 22 different countries attended.
8. Committee Reports:
 - a. **Issues Committee:** John Slater sent the following written report:
 1. Committee met Thursday May 11th. John confirmed as Chair, along with Marty, Hugh, Dave, Martha and Tina as members. New members always welcome.
 2. Marty is completing the final report and website on the Riparian Health Assessment project. New project grant received on Wetlands and Invasive Species. (Marty said at tonight's meeting that the grant comes, in part, with support from the Alberta Conservation Association).
 3. Martha and Tina are planning to meet to review the current Environmental Issues in the City's Municipal Development Plan (MDV).
 4. John and Marty are initiating list of Environmental Significant and Sensitive Areas in the City and Area.

5. The GN/City Parks Department Project is continuing with locating Beaver Lodges, wrapping trees and flagging invasive plants. 130 trees wrapped along River Road and 47 trees wrapped in PPP. Dave is flagging Baby's Breath in Brier Run Prairie Patch south and west of the FLC. More volunteers needed. (At the meeting Marty suggested more ads might be helpful. The group is down to 4 people; Dave, John, Hugh, and a College student).
6. Wildflower brochure and Rack Cards. John is hoping to have a sample ready by Thursday May 25.

- b. **Field Trips Update and BioBlitz 150:** Gary reminded members of the Spring Bird and Wildflower Count on May 28th.
 - For the Cypress Hills Butterfly Count meet at 8:00 am at Visions, or at 9:00 am at the Visitors Centre Cypress Hills
 - Writing on Stone May Species Count Saturday, May 27
 - BioBlitz 150/ Dragons and Friends mentioned in the Interpretive Program Report above.
 - Neighbourhood Walk in Riverside Park, Redcliff June 13, 10:00 am to Noon. Meet at Riverside parking lot.
 - Please note the correction for the Neighbourhood Walk along SE Hill on Tuesday May 30th. Meet at the end of 11th St.SE. **not** 12th St.SE.
- c. **Indoor Program Speakers:** Dave McKenzie has been accepted on the City Urban Environment and Recreation Advisory Board so will no longer be in charge of the Indoor Program speakers. Thank you for booking such excellent speakers for our General meetings Dave.
- d. **Fund Raising Committee:** Hugh reported the Committee is waiting for \$150,000.00 from the Co-op Community Spaces Grant as well as the \$262,000.00 from the Community Facility Enhancement Program. The Medicine Hat Accommodation Association presented a cheque to the City for \$270,000.00 on March 27, as reported in previous Minutes. The City has received a \$49,000.00 Federal Accessibility Grant to be applied to the renovations for the bathrooms and access doors.

Corlaine thanked Hugh for the work he has done to raise funds for renovations and upgrades to the Nature Centre. She said volunteers will be needed in the fall in the event that the Centre moves to the Heritage Pavilion for 2 months.

- e. **Birding Trails Project:** Rob Gardner said the project is going well.
- f. **Bird Tales Update:** Dee Armstrong reported Meadow Ridge residents greatly enjoyed the last day of the program. She thanked Phil and Annalora Horch for their presentation and said that Milt and Phil did a great job. Dee reported Bird Tales will not return to Masterpiece Retirement because of an issue with bird droppings. South Country may be the next facility to welcome the Bird Tales Program. As always, Dee said 1 on 1 volunteers are needed to work with residents. Bird Tales will be taking a break for the summer.
- g. **Communications Committee:** Angela noted a GN table will be set up at the Farmer's Market on May 27, as well as June 3 and September 16. There will also be a Bird Tales display at the Civic Recognition night on May 25.

9. New Business:

10. Other Business:

- a. **Webcam Project and Update:** Hugh said there was nothing to report.
- b. **Medicine Hat Accommodation Association:** The next meeting will be held in June.
- c. **Bird Watching Tours to Cdn.Badlands and SE Alberta:** Hugh reported he is talking to the group about tours in 2018.
- d. **Dave McKenzie** reported he will be going to Pinhorn Grazing Reserve on June 24. Ted Pike may also be available to attend .Dave noted this is an area where Weidemeyer's Admiral Butterfly may be seen. Dave and Ted may also camp in the Del Bonita area on June 25. Dave will send these dates to the Chronicle in early June.
- e. Next Board Meeting: Tuesday June 6, 2017 at Anne Bernhardt's home.
- f. Adjournment at 7:45 pm. Attendance 17
- g. Refreshment Break
- h. Program start 8:05 pm. Attendance 22. Speaker: Dustin Zdan, Superintendent of the Connaught Golf Club.