

**SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
Police Point Park Nature Centre
Tuesday, March 28, 2017.**

1. Call to Order 6:38 pm – Hugh Armstrong (chair); Betty Rainville (secretary).
Attendance – 28 people.
2. Review of the March 22, 2016 AGM Minutes. **Moved that Minutes be Adopted. CARRIED.**
3. **Committee Reports:** Hardcopy of all reports to be available at the meeting and posted on GN Website. Those with an asterisk to give an oral summary report at the meeting.
 - a. *President's Report – Hugh Armstrong thanked the Board members and said the year March 2016 to March 2017 has been a successful one. He thanked Corlaine Gardner and her staff for the programs they provide. He said it has been a good year at the Medicine Hat Interpretive Program.
 - b. *Treasurer's Report – Eileen Cowtan noted there would be a copy of her report in the April Sagebrush Chronicle. She stated the GN Club's financial situation remains almost unchanged from the previous year with total equity (net income) decreasing by \$423.00 to \$23,898.00.
The net income from the February 2016 Casino was \$14,897.00. This has not been dispersed.
Eileen reported the total equity (net income) of the Medicine Hat Interpretive Program increased by \$6319.00 for a final total of \$48,619.00. Half of the Interpretive Budget comes from the City (see Corlaine's note 3.e.) and the remainder is raised by Corlaine, Marty and Valerie. John Slater thanked them and said we appreciate their effort.

*Memberships – Eileen noted 35 people have not renewed their memberships.
 - c. *Communications Committee – Angela Turner noted there is an online report in the March Chronicle. She said the committee has been responsible for the new GN banner as well as producing rack cards. These cards have proved to be very popular in many Medicine Hat locations, and were distributed at the Canadian Badlands Tourism AGM held recently in Brooks Alberta.
 - d. MHIP Operations Committee – See John Slater's report online. He stated the members of the Committee are John Slater (chair), Bob Townsend (Vice-Chair), Anne Bernhardt (Secretary), Elaine Spitzer, and Lorine Marshall. The Committee meets three times yearly and will meet again at the end of April 2017 or the first Monday in May. The City contract will be renewed at the end of the calendar year.
 - e. *Interpretive Program - See Corlaine Gardner's online report. Corlaine stated that the Interpretive Program is an employee of Grasslands Naturalists. The IP staff are not City employees. The Interpretive Program is known to be honest and straightforward and have developed the Community trust. She noted funding from the City budget is just over half of their budget. (see 3.b. above). Corlaine thanked Hugh for all the work he has done to obtain grants. The \$10,000.00 from FCSS (Family and Community Support Services) is a highlight which will update our volunteer program.
Another highlight was the visit of Ricardo Mirando, Minister of Culture and Tourism, for Alberta Culture Days at the Police Point Park Fall Festival.
Corlaine noted the staff for 2016 included herself, Marty Drut, Valerie Martins, Lisa Bey, intern Morganne Wall, student Kyle Grimm part time, and Summer Interpreter Brenda Powder. Our bookkeeper was Louise Sjovold and is presently Lisa McMow.
Corlaine asked volunteers to see Lisa Bey to fill out forms for Workmen's Compensation. She reminded members about Seedy Saturday on Earth Day, April 22 at the Nature Centre.
On April 29 there will be a simple cleanup at Police Point Park in conjunction with the Geocaching Club. Lunch after.
 - f. Issues Committee – See John's report online. John reported the past year has been a success for the Committee. He noted that over 120 hours went into work on the Wildflower Brochure. Dwayne Meyers, Martha Munz Gue, Rob Gardner, Cathy Linowski, and John Slater all participated in the project.

- g. Budget Committee – Paul Thibault. See Paul's report online.
- h. Governance Committee – Paul Thibault. See Paul's report online.
- i. * Fundraising Committee - Hugh Armstrong. See report online.
Hugh reported 2016 was a busy year and hopefully a successful one. He reported there will be a cheque presentation on March 29 for \$270,000.00 to the Mayor, by the Medicine Hat Accomodation Association, to go toward future Nature Centre renovations.
- j. Field Trips Committee – Gary Martin absent. John Slater noted there was a new comprehensive list for the Explore our Neighbourhood Walks in the February Sagebrush Chronicle. He reminded members to check the Chronicle each month for changes in field trips. John also reminded members about the upcoming Earth Day cleanup.
- k. Indoor Program Committee – Dave McKenzie. See Dave's report online.
- l. Birding Trails Project – See report online. Milt Spitzer noted the rack cards are distributed thanks to Bob Frew's efforts.
- m. * Bird Tales Project – See online report. Dee Armstrong noted the Bird Tales Project was designed by a registered nurse and the Audubon Society to bring nature into Alzheimer's (and other) units. The recent bird painting was a success, as well as the recent wooden comfort birds carved by the MH Wood Carving Club.
She said the Bird Tales Project is in constant need of more volunteers.
- n. *Carol Porter Bluebird Trail – See Milt Spitzer's report online. Milt noted there are 92 boxes along Eagle Butte Road supervised by 23 volunteers who carry out weekly visits from May through August. Each volunteer makes about 5 trips each year. About one quarter of them are GN members. In 2016, 328 bluebirds were hatched (with some lost) and 221 tree swallows were fledged.
- o. Nature Alberta – Gary Martin/Martha Munz Gue – A second GN rep is needed for Nature Alberta.

Moved that all Reports be Accepted. CARRIED

- 4. **Elections:** Bill Knibbs led the nominations. The results were:
Secretary: Betty Rainville
Treasurer: Eileen Cowtan
Vice President: Anne Bernhardt
President: Hugh Armstrong
- 5. **Other Business:**
 - a. Director's Appointments (confirmed at next Board Meeting in April)
Past President – Dave McKenzie
Directors at Large – Gary Martin, Ian Turner, and Angela Turner
 - b. Committees Volunteers Selection (confirmed at next Board Meeting)
Committees to meet in April to select Chairperson and confirm Budget:
 - 1. Communications Committee
 - 2. Budget Committee
 - 3. Governance Committee
 - 4. Issues Committee
 - 5. MHIP Operations Committee
 - 6. Field Trips Committee
 - 7. Indoor Program Committee
 - 8. Fundraising Committee. Dave McKenzie has volunteered to act as Casino Manager
 - c. Projects: (contacts)

Carol Porter Bluebird Trail – Milt Spitzer

Birding trails – Phil Horch, Milt Spitzer, Bob Frew

Bird Tales – Dee Armstrong and Paul Thibault

Butterflies, Dragonflies & More – Dave McKenzie

Wildflowers – John Slater, Martha Munz Gue, Dwayne Myers

Beaver Tree Wrapping & Leafy Spurge Survey for the City – John Slater and Hugh Armstrong.

John said an initial survey will be done first. Volunteers will be needed; John and Hugh will be at the Heritage Building, Strathcona Park, at 9 am tomorrow, March 29. (See 6.b below)

- d. External Organization Representatives (Volunteers will be confirmed at the next Board meeting).
 1. Nature Alberta- Gary Martin will act as the main rep, but a second rep is needed for N.A.
 2. SEAWA- Who will act as GN rep at SEAWA?

6. Announcements:

- a. Saskatchewan Webinar - "Enhanced Management of Rangelands for Sage Grouse"; noon on March 29. John sent a general email out concerning this.
- b. GN/MH City Project – Beaver Watch- Tree Wrapping, and flagging for Leafy Spurge Survey along S.Saskatchewan River and Police Point Park. Initial survey starting March 29 at 9 am at Strathcona Park- Heritage Building (see 5.c. above)
- c. Field Trips – Ben Verner leads the annual trip to Manyberries area. Saturday April 1, 6 am start at Horton's by Medicine Hat Mall. Milt recommends bringing a lunch and warm clothing. Expect to see Sharp-tailed Grouse as well as lots of Waterfowl.
- d. Updated Neighbourhood Walk Schedule – Tuesdays April 4th and April 25th. Hugh / John 11 people turned out for the first walk today.
Next Tuesday, Prairie Crocuses may be out. Meet at East Glen Drive.
Please let Milt know for the Chronicle.
- e. City Wide Cleanup - Saturday April 22, Earth Day. Family Leisure Centre combined with Wildflower Watch – Meet at the parking lot near the playground at the FLC.
- f. Archeological Field Trip - led by Rob Gardner, Sunday April 23. TBD. This is postponed to early May.
- g. Butterfly Walk - to be led by Dave McKenzie, Saturday April 29 TBD.
- h. Wild Horse Birding Trail #6 - led by Milt Spitzer, Sunday April 30 TBD. Milt will check to see if the date may be moved to May 6th.
- i. Mixed Grass Forum – Thursday April 8th, 8 am-4:30 pm at MH College, S159. Attendees need to register. Information was printed in the last Chronicle.
- j. 2017 Environmental Recognition: Nominee Selection – Hugh reported that John Slater has been nominated.
- k. Jan Scott - will be speaking next Thursday April 6 at 7 pm at the Esplanade on The Moths of Medicine Hat. This is in conjunction with the travelling Moth exhibit called Winged Tapestries.

7. **Next Board Meeting**- April 4th, 6:30 pm at Hugh Armstrong's house.

8. **Next General Meeting** – April 25th, 7 pm at the Nature Centre. 8 pm Indoor Speaker Don Watson P. Biol., presents Prairie Species at Risk on Alberta's Working Ranches.

9. **Meeting Adjourned** - 7:38 pm followed by coffee and cookies. John Slater presented door prizes of 3 Litter pick up tools and 1 Federal Park Pass to winners.

10. **Tonight's Indoor Program** – MULTISAR – Multiple Species at Risk by Rachel Whitehouse, Rangeland Agrologist.