

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS
Minutes of General Meeting, May 28, 2019
Police Point Park

1. Call to Order 7:00 pm with Hugh Armstrong presiding and Betty Rainville Secretary.
2. Review and Adoption of General Meeting Minutes from April 23, 2019. **CARRIED**
3. Exciting Sightings: Members reported the following sightings:
(Hugh noted the Spring Bird Count was held Sunday, May 26th).
Ian Wallis reported seeing a Lazuli bunting and a Swainson's thrush.
Wendy Wallis also reported seeing 4 Long-Billed Curlews.
Phil Horch reported seeing 5 species of Ducks. He also spotted Cormorants, Great Blue Heron, and Swallows.
Dave McKenzie reported seeing Turkey vultures.
Milt Spitzer reported that Bill Haysom may have seen a Marmot on a trail in Police Point Park
Angela Turner observed a bird's nest located in the hollow of a tree.
4. Treasurer's Report and Membership: Eileen reported a balance, as of May 28, 2019 in the Chequing Account, of \$3,613.00, and a balance of \$16,433.56 in the GN "Club" Savings Account as of May 28th. Cash to be deposited stands at \$220.00 for a total of \$20,267.56. The Casino Account balance presently stands at \$2699.78.
Eileen noted that 72 members out of a list of 86, have renewed. She also said that we have had several new members sign up in the last few months.
5. Correspondence: No correspondence.
6. Priority Business:
 - a. **Casino June 6th and 7th**: Dave McKenzie asks that members confirm their volunteer shifts on the "shift sheet" at tonight's meeting.
 - b. **Community Spirit Awards**: Martha noted the nomination deadline is this Friday, May 31. The Board moved previously to nominate SEAWA and/or Marilou Montemayor. Thanks to Martha for filling out the involved Nomination papers.
 - c. **Co-op Community Spaces Prairie View Point**: Opening Thursday, May 30 1:30 pm. Corlaine suggested that members arrive before 1:30 and everyone will walk to the new Prairie View Point for the opening ceremony. Corlaine explained that Co-op Community Spaces provided funding after the old View Point rotted away. She said the 2 large Co-op stores will receive thank you plaques for their generous donation.
 - d. **Nature Centre Grand Reopening**: Corlaine reported we hope to have this celebration and a rejuvenation of the Nature Centre. More details will be forthcoming.
7. Interpretive Program Report: Corlaine reported that the 3 new summer students are Amara, Benjamin, and Elijah. She said they will be around all summer, and invited members to stop in and meet them.
Corlaine pointed out the fridge hangers that list upcoming events such as the walk in Redcliff Park next Wednesday, and the painted rock activity to be held the morning of June 8th from 10am to noon. That same afternoon Dave McKenzie will lead a 2 pm Butterflies and Bumblebees walk. Meet at the Nature Centre.
The start of paving on the West Access Trail along the river is good news, Corlaine noted. Meet at the Nature Centre June 5th evening to walk or ride your bike and celebrate the trail re-opening. Details to be announced.
8. Committee Reports:
 - a. **Issues Committee**: Martha reported the committee is emailing rather than meeting in person at this time. The following points highlight Martha's oral report:
 - Our awareness of plant life around us is enhanced through brochures, walks, etc.
Places for a Pollinator Garden are being looked at .We are learning more about this exciting project.
 - Native Plant Rescue takes place in Edmonton. Anyone interested in a similar group here speak to Martha at the coffee break tonight. Possible to form a volunteer group?
 - SEAWA riparian restoration project needs volunteers for watering and weeding. Ball teams or Scout groups would be ideal
 - Alberta Plant Watch is looking for volunteers to record the bloom time of certain plants. Reports may be made online (link to www.plantwatch.ca) or by downloading the data sheet in PDF.
 - The Waterton Wild Flower Festival is held June 13 to 18th. Attendees will see unique and abundant species.
 - The Weekly Walks are well attended. Martha will be away Thursday for a week. Any members who will volunteer to look for wildflowers then?
 - Martha provided 3 cards containing seed pods from last year. (Ian Wallis noted Pin Cushion Cactus will be in flower in a week).

- SEAWA has sent a letter to Mayor Clugston. Meeting with Parks Department is a positive step.
- Municipal Development Plan is still “in the works”. Watch for notices and information in the MH News or go to mymh.city for developments of the new MDP.

b. MHIP/Operations Committee: No Report.

c. Field Trips: From the Chronicle:

Tue. June 4, 10:00 am. Neighbourhood Walk Saamis Archeological Reserve. Meet at the Teepee.

Wed. June 5, evening. Walk and Wheel on PPP West Access trail. Details to be announced.

Tue. June 11, 10:00 am. Neighbourhood Walk NWCH Coulee Trail. Meet at start of McCutcheon Drive (East end). Led by Martha and Dave

Tue. June 18, 10:00 am. Nature Walk in Ranchlands Environmental Reserve. Meet furthest NE end of Ranchlands Blvd. Led by Ian and Angela.

July and August walks will be announced by email, and on the GN Facebook and Website as well as the MHIP Website and at the Nature Centre.

d. Indoor Program Speakers: Linda Fisher reported Sandi Robertson, provincial wildlife biologist, is speaking tonight on Ord’s kangaroo rat. There are no speakers during July and August. September speaker is not confirmed at this time.

e. Fund Raising Committee: Hugh reported that Alberta Native Plant Council declined a request to help fund the May Invasive Species Workshop, because the workshop did not fit the necessary primary criteria.

f. Birding Trails: Phil Horch reported that distribution of the Birding Trails of Southeastern Alberta Guide continues. He left books in Winnipeg recently at the Fort Whyte Environmental Centre as well as a second centre. (While on his trip, Phil also happened to see a White-breasted Nuthatch successfully guarding a red squirrel from the Nuthatch’s hole). Milt Spitzer, another member of the Birding Trails Committee, reported giving a copy of BT Guide to a Calgary birder recently.

g. Bird Tales Update: Hugh reported for Paul and Dee, that the Bird Tales group has had 4 sessions, using local wildflowers and local colour in the two terrariums. They are fortunate to have two enthusiastic volunteers, as well as excellent support from the Sunnyside/Sunnyview recreation staff.

Bird feeders have been ordered.

h. Communication Committee: Angela reported that the GN Club and Interpretive Program website updates, offered by Sandfly Marketing, will cost approximately \$1,500. for each website.

i. Nature Alberta: Ian and Angela reported that Nature Alberta is requesting volunteers to help with their upcoming Edmonton Casino fundraiser on July 8 and 9th. Contact info@naturealberta.ca

9. New Business:

a. June Pot Luck: The yearly June pot luck will be held June 25 at 6 pm.

Martha suggested inviting Parks staff to attend. The suggestion will be discussed at the next Board meeting.

b. Bee City Initiative: Dave McKenzie reported that 23 cities have joined this initiative so far, to make pollinators a priority. He will write a brief article for the June Chronicle explaining the benefits.

Dave hopes to discuss this at the September GN General Meeting and possibly have a vote on the idea.

As a member of UERAB, Urban Environment & Recreation Advisory Board, Dave noted he will also bring up this topic at the June 13th meeting with the group.

10. Other Business:

a. General Meeting Set Up: Volunteers are needed to unlock doors, set out chairs, and make coffee shortly before General Meetings at the Nature Centre. This will be postponed for now, but Corlaine will need to know before the General Meeting on September 24th.

b. UERAB Nomination: Three GN members are needed to assist in writing the nomination for Dawn Dickinson for the UERAB park-naming proposal. Dave McKenzie suggested Dawn’s name go toward a nature park, or possibly for the Ross Creek natural area?

Martha asked if there is a write-up involved in each park selected for naming.

David Gue noted we need background information if a short biography is to be included.

c. GN Meeting with Parks Department: Hugh reported that he, and other GN members, will meet with Parks and Recreation Department on June 12 or 13th.

d. Next Board Meeting: Tuesday June 4, 6:30 pm. at Hugh and Dee’s House.

e. Adjournment 6:50 pm. Attendance at GM is 26.

f. Refreshment Break

g. Program Start 8:00 pm. Attendance is 27. Speaker is Sandi Robertson on Ord’s kangaroo rat.

