

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS.  
Minutes of Grasslands Naturalists Board Meeting, November 3, 2020

Present: via **Skype:** Phil Horch (Chair), Betty Rainville (Secretary), Hugh Armstrong, Eileen Cowtan, Ian and Angela Turner, Linda Fisher.  
Guest: Paul Thibault

1. Call to Order: 1:30 pm
2. Review of GN Board Minutes from October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020.  
Hugh noted that "video", in item 5.1 of the October Minutes, should be changed to the plural "videos" since MHIP will be using the webcam to produce more than 1 video.  
Minutes were then Adopted: **CARRIED.**
3. Additions to Agenda:
  - a. **The Need for a Privacy Policy:** Paul Thibault.  
Paul noted that an analysis of privacy regulations on Canadian standards and European standards concerning PIPA (Personal Information Protection Act) and CASL (Canada's Anti -Spam Legislation) was provided over two years ago by the Governance Committee.  
Phil agreed this Policy has been pending for some time now, and suggested the Governance Committee could draft a P&P and submit it to the Board.  
Paul reminded the Board that Linda Fisher had volunteered to be the GN Privacy Contact at the April 15, 2020 Special Board Meeting.  
Paul explained to the Board the cost of violation of PIPA for taking photographs of children, for example, without guardian consent. The GN Membership form addresses this but Eileen noted not all members fill out a new form when renewing. The City of MH has a policy with a Photo Consent Form, for older than and younger than 18 years of age, which the Board saw in an email.  
Phil noted we need a procedure for a waiver for members and non-members. Paul will check to see who holds the waiver. The Governance Committee needs to check all details for Field Trip Waivers as well as Indoor Events.  
Moved that the Board authorizes the Governance Committee to develop a Policy and Procedure related to PIPA and CASL regulations including review of waiver form policy and procedure. **CARRIED**
  - b. **Growing our GN Society:** Phil spoke about the future of our GN Society, as he had at the September 2020 AGM. How do we appeal to younger members? Phil floated the idea of a future symposium on climate change which might be one answer. No doubt GM members may have their own ideas on how to address this. In the future, if we should decide to organize a symposium, the first step would be to form a steering committee to investigate the feasibility and desirability. Phil asked Board Members to consider the idea, along with funding ramifications and potential speakers who could address this issue, as it relates to southeastern Alberta. The Board will discuss this at the December meeting.
  - c. **New MHIP Website:** Paul noted there is an initial cost of \$1500. per site to set up the GN and MHIP website. The GN Club is already set up, but the IP set up has some issues to be resolved, including privacy, as Paul noted in an email to Corlaine and Hugh.  
Hugh will discuss the email tomorrow, Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>, with Corlaine.  
Paul suggested a GN Domain name would be easier to use by transferring the natureline.info domain name from Internet Alberta to SiteGround.  
Paul is responsible for doing monthly updates such as Field Trips etc. on our website, with Eileen's help.  
Thank you both for this.
  - d. **Gerry Ehlert Financial Request-Invasive Plant Removal:** Hugh will inform Gerry that this will be part of the Issues Committee Budget which will be presented to the Budget Committee for their November 25<sup>th</sup> meeting.
  - e. **City Parks and Rec. Department Communications Table from Scott Richter:** Hugh pointed out the Draft Table of Central Themes and Key Contacts, from Scott Richter, which is designed to improve the communications connection between GN and Parks and Recreation Department.  
Phil noted he will get back to Scott and include a note in a future Chronicle President's Report.
  - f. **Document Storage:** After researching information in charitycentral.ca, Eileen printed out a detailed copy of retention periods for registered charities.  
Phil agreed Operations Committee Minutes should be retained.  
Eileen noted she keeps Annual Statements of the AGM.  
Phil commented that old Issues Committee records would show important historical information dating back to Veronica Swan, Dawn Dickinson and others.  
Phil will contact John Slater to determine documentation of activities in this Committee.  
Eileen will continue to search for missing Minutes listed in her excel print out of historical GN Minutes. Thanks Eileen.  
Paul will ask Philip at the Esplanade if hard copies of the stored GN Minutes are retained.

Phil noted that Covid-19 restrictions (facility lockdown) have interrupted Dennis Baresco and Phil's sorting of historical GN documents.

4. Action Items:

- a. **Casino and New Board Members:** Hugh noted he will use the online form to notify Casino authorities about Board Member contact information.
- b. **Committee Chair Budgets:** Phil said Committee Chair Budgets should be in to the Budget Committee by now.
- c. **Purchase of Park Bench Plaque:** Hugh noted, that once the weather warms up suitably, he will have Jan Scott's name engraved on the plaque and have it glued to the park bench.

5. Reports:

- a. **Treasurer's Report:** As new Treasurer, Angela thanked Eileen for her help with the transition. Angela reported the 'Club' **Savings** Account stands at \$16,576.27 as of October 31, 2020 and the GN **Chequing** Account Balance is \$5,885.21.  
Common Shares are \$1.35, and cash to be deposited is \$20.00 bringing Total Current Assets to \$22,482.83. Other Assets of prepaid Insurance expense (\$252.30) bring **Total Assets** to \$22,735.13.  
Eileen reported that the **MHIP** Balance as of September 30, 2020 is \$224,447.36. The **Casino** Balance as of October 3, 2020 is \$2,232.90. Eileen will be in charge of the Casino Account until the year end 2020.  
Eileen has the legal names of the new Signing Officers and will get it to Angela, or Angela will pick it up.  
Angela needs to phone to move the Bank Account, Eileen noted.  
Angela and Phil will set up an appointment with the Servus Credit Union Ltd., Crescent Heights Branch, Medicine Hat.
- b. **Membership:** Eileen reported one new member.
- c. **Correspondence:** Eileen reported no correspondence.
- d. **MHIP Operations Report:** Hugh confirmed that Board Members received a copy of the MHIP 2021 Draft Budget. Moved that the Board accept the Medicine Hat Interpretive Program, 2021 Budget. **CARRIED**
- e. **Issues Committee:** No report at this time. The November Chronicle will have an article on Russian Olive Removal. The Board looked at the desirability of GN including links on its website to other community associations. After some discussion, it was decided that GN should limit, if not outright prohibit, links to other organizations because it becomes difficult to know which organizations to include or not include.
- f. **Indoor Committee:** Linda Fisher reported varying responses from the first Chronicle Membership survey, and a second emailed request for member input regarding thoughts on the safety of continuing Indoor GN Programs. Linda brought up the possibility of DVD's as a possible speaker option. Phil expressed concern about the difficulty of GN continuing to function without a General Meeting. He noted we cannot do this indefinitely.  
Ian suggested the availability of a vaccine, hopefully in the near future, may change people's sense of security.  
Phil noted we will review this topic at the December Board meeting.
- g. **Fund Raising Committee:** Hugh reported there is no activity at present but he is looking for various funding opportunities.
- h. **Field Trip Committee:** John and Martha. See Facebook for up to date information on Field Trips and related events at [facebook.com/GrasslandsNaturalists/](https://facebook.com/GrasslandsNaturalists/)  
Also see the Chronicle at [www.grasslands-naturalists.org](http://www.grasslands-naturalists.org) for notices of Cross-Country Skiing and/or Snowshoeing in Police Point Park (and more). Participants may rent equipment from the Nature Centre or bring their own.  
Sunday, December 20 is the Annual Bird Count. Call Marty at 403 529 6225.
- i. **Communications Committee:** Angela Turner.  
Eileen reported she will continue to pick up the Sagebrush Chronicle, stuff envelopes, and mail out the monthly Chronicles. Thank you Eileen!
- j. **Birding Trails:** Phil reported there is nothing new this month,
- k. **Nature Alberta:** Ian and Angela. Nature Alberta will be holding their virtual AGM on Saturday November 21 from 11 am to 12 noon.  
Angela reported that she sent Zoe's contact information to Phil with regard to possibly forming a Boys and Girl Nature Club in Medicine Hat. Zoe MacDougall is the Nature Kids Program Coordinator for Nature Alberta.

6. Other Business:

- a. **Letter of Support to Brooke K. at Canadian Parks & Wilderness Society:** Phil reported that he sent a letter of support regarding CPAWS proposed project for Community-Based Action. The letter expressed 3 common interests of CPAWS and GN: Riparian Health, Municipal planning with nature as high priority, and Renewable Energy Installations that avoid interference with nature. Board members felt that Phil wrote an excellent letter.
- b. **Next Board Meeting:** 1:30 pm December 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 via Skype.
- c. **Adjournment:** Motion to Adjourn the Meeting at 3:20 pm. **CARRIED**

