

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS
Minutes of Board Meeting, June 2, 2020
Board Meeting via Skype

Present via Skype: Hugh Armstrong (Chair), Betty Rainville (Secretary), Phil Horch (via phone), Eileen Cowtan, Ian and Angela Turner, Linda Fisher

1. Call to Order: 1:32 pm
2. Review and Adoption of GN Board Minutes from May 5, 2020. **CARRIED.**
3. Additions to the Agenda:
 - a. **New GN Club Website:** Thanks to Paul Thibault for setting up a new GN website at www.grasslands-naturalists.org. Board members now each have a new GN address, and Paul will add more for Committee Chairs and other interested Committee members.
 - b. **Digitized Past General and Board Meeting Minutes:** Hugh will ask Paul Thibault to contact Philip Pype at the Esplanade about digitizing past GN Minutes.
Eileen, Phil and Betty will search their files for past Minutes and let Paul know the results.
Moved that Grasslands Naturalists digitize General and Board Meeting Minutes from 1990 forward. **CARRIED**
 - c. **Native Prairie Speakers Series:** Free Webinars will be available June 15,16,17,18 & 19. Information is found online at SK PCAP. Native Prairie Appreciation Week runs June 14 to 20.
 - d. **myMHDraft Plan now on the City website:** (See item 5e.1) below)
 - e. **Insurance:** Thank you to Phil for reviewing the very substantial Insurance policy which covers both GN and MHIP. Moved that the Board invite Lisa Matheson of Reliance Insurance to an in-person meeting, to review the Insurance policy with the Board. **CARRIED**
 - f. **June GN Meeting:** A discussion was held about a June outdoor GM meeting, but with social distancing issues, potluck supper not allowed, AV equipment use impractical, and speaker unavailable, the meeting was cancelled.
Moved that the Grasslands Naturalists AGM will be held in place of a General Meeting in September 2020 with elections. **CARRIED.**
Hugh will place a notice in the June Chronicle to provide a 90 day notice for members.
4. Action Items
 - a. **Lifetime Membership Presentation:** After Board discussion, it was decided that Hugh will check with Paul to see if a presentation to Jan Scott is preferable this June, or in September.
One, or both of the excellent documents from Paul Thibault and Valerie Martins, will be posted in the Chronicle after the presentation.
5. Reports:
 - a. **Treasurer's Report:** Eileen/Angela. Eileen reported she will talk to David Gue about picking up a QuickBooks's CD to download. Eileen noted she sent \$130.00 to David for QuickBooks.
Ian suggested that the Treasurer have a dedicated PC just for the purpose of doing the bookkeeping.
Hugh will speak to Corlaine about this. It will be discussed at the next Board meeting during the Treasurer's report.
Eileen noted she would phone Revenue Canada to let them know we have not yet held our AGM, hence, are unable to provide a date as requested.
Eileen reported the Casino Balance is \$6673.00 as of May 31, 2020.
The "Club" Savings Account stands at \$16,562.42 as of May 31, 2020 and the Chequing Account Balance is \$5,008.94.
Common Shares are \$1.35, bringing Total Current Assets to \$21,572.71. Other Assets of prepaid insurance expense bring Total Assets to \$22,218.90
 - b. **Membership:** Eileen reported that 13 members have not renewed. She will place a notice in the June Chronicle, and send an email to those who have not renewed.
 - c. **Correspondence:** Eileen received a newsletter from the citizen science project called the Alberta PlantWatch Program, with Elisabeth Beaubien.
Eileen also received the spring 2020 Issue of Nature Alberta. The 3 articles in this Issue that would catch GN members' attention were: **1)** a 2 page article on Dennis Baresco, Lifetime Member of GN
2) an article on Ord's Kangaroo Rat by Pat Fargey with Sandi Robertson and **3)** an article on the recent River Otters in Medicine Hat by Dennis Baresco, with photos by Dan Shiebelbein.
The free online version of Nature Alberta may be seen at naturealberta.ca/magazine/
Individual Lifetime Memberships may be purchased during their 50th Anniversary through to April 2021 for only \$10.00.
 - d. **Operations MHIP Report:** The Nature Centre is still closed to the public but staff is in attendance and may be contacted by phone or email. The Interpretive Program will continue to post activities on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (see 6.a

below about Friday live broadcasting). These include documentaries on Cottonwoods, Heritage Trees in Medicine Hat, and Local Baby Animals, as well as suggested Hikes, and Interactive Activities, National Indigenous Peoples Day with the Story Walk-“As Big as the Sky, As Tall as the Trees”, and a visit to “Old Man Buffalo Stone”, The Night Sky documentary, Summer Solstice Activities, Rock Painting and more to follow.

An update on MHIP programming and activities will be published in the June Chronicle.

e. Issues Committee: The Issues Committee has been working on the following topics:

- 1) The draft Municipal Development Plan provides a link for survey feedback until June 25 at <https://shapeyourcity.medicinehat.ca/municipal-development-plan> The Issues Committee is meeting for discussions on the plan and meets with the Planning Superintendent later in June. (See 3.d. above).
- 2) Grasslands Conservation and Invasive Weed control. Identification and reporting done through the EDDMapS app.
- 3) Echo Dale Regional Park upgrade. On-line survey with consultants was completed.
- 4) Mountain Bike Trails in Echo Dale Regional Park and east to Gas City Campground.
- 5) Location of recreational infrastructure in Crescent Heights approved earlier. GN might increase awareness of surrounding grasslands and riparian areas with skateboard participants, by offering learning opportunities.
- 6) Networking. Several Issues Committee members belong to various community groups in order to network and learn from others.

See the complete Issues Committee Report in the June Sagebrush Chronicle.

f. Indoor Committee: Linda Fisher will ask Rob and Corlaine Gardner if the slide presentation on their trip to Mauritius is possible, pending a September AGM. Conditions for a meeting might possibly include outdoor seating with social distancing in place and use of private chairs.

g. Fund Raising Committee: Martha is checking into possible funding for GN Historical work.

Angela suggested this could be on the agenda for a student project in the future.

Hugh will look at funding possibilities.

h. Field Trip Committee: Cancelled

i. Communications Committee: Angela

j. Birding Trails: Phil noted there is not much activity to report this month. He has 1 box of Birding Trails of Southeastern Alberta and Hugh reported he has 7 or 8 boxes. Hugh suggested the Veiner Centre may be a good location to distribute some B.T. Guides.

Phil reported that he will see Jace Anderson, executive director of Tourism Medicine Hat; when the office is open, to deliver some guidebooks to the visitor centre. Phil wants to encourage Jace to include the guidebooks in the tourism promotion of our area.

k. Bird Tales: Hugh reported this is on hold because of Covid-19 restrictions.

l. Nature Alberta: Ian and Angela. Angela reported a N.A. Board of Director's Meeting was held May 23, 2020.

They noted Nature Alberta magazine may be delayed because of the Communication Director's resignation.

Ian and Angela will submit highlights of the May 23 meeting in the June Chronicle.

Eileen reported she will submit payment of the GN membership to Nature Alberta

m. Web Cam Update: On hold.

6. Other Business

a. PPP Holding Live Program Broadcasts on Facebook: May 15 featured a live broadcast with Marty Drut on Early Wildflowers in Police Point Park. More presentations will follow, every Friday on Facebook.(See item 5.d above)

b. Letter to the City: Hugh noted that he will confirm Phil's letter on the City's Environmental Master Plan, was sent to the Superintendent of Planning.(Note: This has been verified in an email from Hugh to Board members June 6, 2020).

c. Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, September 1, 2020 at 1:30 pm via Skype.

d. Adjournment: 3:05 pm