

# MEETING

## Grasslands Naturalists General Meeting (Zoom)

Tuesday, November 23, 2021, 7:07 PM

- 1. Call to order and Welcome – Phil Horch** Thanks to Ian, we appreciate all the work you're putting into this.
- 2. Zoom instructions – Ian Turner :** Once the meeting is started, mute speakers/mic so no background noise. If you want to speak you can raise your hand physically or on zoom, and Phil will let you know when you can speak. Remember to unmute! As this is our first zoom meet, there will be hiccups. Top right corner of your screen says view: you can click it to show various format options. Ian suggests changing it on 'speaker' so the person's talking shows bigger. When Rob does his presentation, use 'side by side' to make their screen easier to follow (as you don't need to see anyone else's screen).
- 3. President's Report – Phil Horch** We will not be doing any voting in this meeting as our bylaws say no electronic voting. We regret not having indoor meetings and regret not being able to meet members in person. Linda's report will consider indoor programming to resume later and how. Will we require vaccinations? Will we continue offering online programming?  
Overview of things GN has been doing in spite of COVID including outdoor programs like neighbourhood walks and birding. We hope to resume full programs in the near future. Christmas bird count Dec. 19 by MHIP. Because of COVID restrictions, there may be no potluck afterwards. Coraline and Alicia to talk of shakeup at MHIP . Casino on February 26-7 and we'd like to see a full volunteer slate. Justine Bolin is to replace Dave McKenzie. Volunteers get full training. New committee called Climate symposium meeting. Steering committee formed for feasibility and parameters, including budget, funds, grants, sponsorships, partnerships. This is geared to the average Medicine Hatter to see change in the next 30 years because of climate change. Our society can act as leaders to give hope for the future. Hope to happen early next year, planning committee

to be formed. We'd like to hear from anyone interested. Issues committee run by Martha Gue and John Slater is our most active committee besides the Board. City has been working on a master plan. We've sent a response including major protection of sensitive habitats on city property. Brent Smith has identified these areas in maps including native grasslands and riparian areas. Gerry Elhert did major work on this response. Another area of concern is Ranchlands where a new trail is being developed but is of concern due to tiny crympath and tipi rings. A letter has been sent to the city urging them to contact and consult us sent to land manager Ian in hopes to save. Another concern is new mountain bike trails in the river valley to Echodale. The work doesn't seem to have a minimal impact which opens the door to invasive plants and erosion. It's probably too late to do anything about it. Meeting has been arranged with Martha Gue with the Mayor and council for an environmental master plan for protection of natural habitats. The city has hired someone in the past to do this. Hopefully the new council is sympathetic as other cities do have environmental plans. Another important element is the buckthorn plan that has been underway. Also irrigation system improvement and changes paid by the federal government. Massive project underway at Rattlesnake and enclose irrigation canals (which are used by wildlife). Part of this will be done at Murray Lake to expand the capacity. How is this going to happen? Will it damage existing shorelines? We've joined up with Lethbridge Naturalists to look at this. Hearing about a possible new reservoir. Where will it be? Buffalo Trail project has agreed to stay off native grasslands except trenching. The Scenic Views project is about half done. Acknowledgment loss of Ben Velner who did a lot of volunteer work for society. Mike O'Shea, past president will be missed. He was also active with field trips and birding

4. **MHIP Report – Coralaine** Things are going along well although with COVID limits which is fun and making events enjoyable and smaller groups such as workshops and preregistration. Been talking with Alicia about past projects and what we've been building on. Phil congratulates a program well run.
5. **Issues Committee Report – Martha-Munz-Gue** Not many in-person meetings but lots of emails exchanged. The committee welcomes anyone

else who wants to consider or be a champion of an issue. The many issues can be boiled down to 5 categories: 1. Shovel ready projects sought for COVID relief projects. Unfortunately the projects looked at grassland and saw 'nothing' (including the Projects for repair/new build of paths). Nothing was solved but we're paying attention. 2. Issue climate and biodiversity emergencies which include Grasslands. Looking to get a book study going with the library, and the online community Climate Conversations. 3. invasive species focus including buckthorn, leafy spurge, russian olive. Reporting continues to be a problem. For help with Invasive species ID and reporting call SEAWA, IP, or City Parks & Rec. We can organize weed pulling through GN and SEAWA. 4. Trash. We're doing well with the adopters of 20 ponds and creek picking up trash. Hardly anything to pick up on weekly walks. 5. Awareness, Appreciation, Noticing, Nature Deficit Disorder. Our outdoor activities all help. Reminder of tomorrow's walk at Echo Dale. Join us on the Wednesday Nature Walks for your personal health, and for the health of our club.

**6. Questions From Members – Phil Horch n/a**

**7. Other Reports: Linda Fisher** COVID numbers to determine if there will be a potluck after bird count. Jan 25 Biologist Cliff Wallis will be speaking. Watch the January Chronicle for the topic.

**8. Treasurer's Report Angela** donation of \$500 from a member, and spent \$40 on registration. Also stamps, and Chronicle printing. Checking = \$8297.18 Savings= \$16612.77 in accounts.

**9. Adjourn General Meeting – Phil Horch at 8:52 pm**

**10.BREAK**

**11. Introduce Guest Speakers – Linda Fisher**

**12. Mauritius Presentation – Rob and Corlaine Gardner**

### **13. Closing Remarks – Linda Fisher**