

**Minutes of the
Grasslands Naturalists Society Board Meeting**

February 1, 2022 4 pm

Via zoom

1. **Call to order 4:00 pm**
2. **Roll Call Members present Ian Turner, Angela Turner, Hugh Armstong, Linda Fisher, Phil Horch, Martha Maudsley guest Paul Thibault**
3. **Review and adoption of previous minutes adopted by Linda, 2nd Angela.**
4. **Business arising from the minutes**

A. **Bird Friendly City - Phil** In order to move ahead, Nature Canada would like to conduct a webinar by Autumn Jordan with 3 dates: Phil will attend and would like others, especially birders involved. Angela suggests Marty Drut. Ian asks if it's premature to ask someone from the city? Phil says yes. Monday Feb. 7, Thursday 10, Friday 11th. Open for times. Ian and Angela have gone through the workshop before, forwarded slides to GN board. Time? Phil says we can work it out with them. **Phil will contact them and try Marty for a time.**

B. **Emerald Award Nomination - Phil** says Martha and David Gue are well organised. Now we need a letter from someone not in the city. Names suggested include Julie Friesen, Ted Clugston, Bob Wanner, Cathy Linowski, Dwayne Myers, Kris Samraj. **Linda to contact Kris or Bob. Phil to contact Julie and Ted.** David can help to say who has to receive the letter. Has he received any letters yet? No.

C. **Lifetime Honorary Membership - Paul** concept was to have a nominating committee which can also act as recruitment for board and committees. Should include lifetime members as well as others, to fill gaps such as who knows who. Review documents by a committee of longtime members who would add information and evaluate. This must be confidential. Committee members and board members must remove themselves if they want to make a nomination. Ian suggests that as these people are the most knowledgeable they should be allowed to stay on, for their knowledge. Paul says it has the appearance of favouritism. Angela points out they are only 1 vote. Make a decision as to who/ how many by ranking. Board can make a final decision. Should the committee provide comments? Does the board need more information? Phil suggests including a brief rationale. Does the committee still need to meet if there's only 1 nominee? Paul thinks yes, at least a discussion. So does Linda. Martha KM thinks it better to simplify the process and have fewer meetings. People have been shy to nominate because no one has stepped up to do it. Paul suggests sticking with the mandate, forwarding it to the committee, who can make recommendations and possibly forward it to members. Recruiting: objective to actively recruit new members. Because nominations can only be made by members, the committee cannot nominate people. Meetings at least once a year, number for quorum. Board needs to approve the mandate, and members. Eileen Cowtan, Martha Munz Gue, Phil Horch, Jan Scott. If there is another member, we can inform the committee and they can decide to add. **Hugh motions to form a Awards and Board Recruiting committee with mandate as in policy and procedure section. Linda seconds. All in favour, carried.**

D. **Spring Trade Show - Phil** thinks we need to be actively recruiting new members there. Martha MG suggests sharing SEAWA's booth. Cost approximately \$300. Dates are Friday, March 4, Saturday 5, Sunday 6. Angela says we've done free monthly booths at Farmers market Saturdays. **Linda motions we spend \$300 on sharing a booth with SEAWA, Hugh seconds, Phil, Martha, Hugh, Linda in favour. Angela and Ian opposed. Carried.**

E. **Guest speaker compensation - Linda** will gather information for an expense form for guest speakers, can be tweaked such as Paul's suggestions of adding guidelines including mileage. Phil says a lot of places also include breakfast so Linda will choose a hotel that includes breakfast. Linda will make sure to let members know during the monthly meetings what gifts will be given to Zoom guest speakers.

5. Current business

A. **GN Insurance - Angela** coming up for renewal. Policy quotes have come in. Because we had a deficit last year (due to double salaries) one company refused insurance. Due on 7th, Angela will mail tomorrow. It's \$1780 for executive liability, up 20%. \$3800 comprehensive business. GN portion stayed the same at \$950.

B. **Trex Art Show - Martha** initiated a sponsorship partnership with SEAWA. 3rd Street and 5th Avenue. No cost involved. Martha has put out a call for submissions. Angela suggests putting up our banner. As an aside, Linda wonders if there are places where we could set up the GN banner so it's being used all the time. Ian suggests the communications committee did this before. Maybe at MHIP or the library? Hugh to talk to Alicia. **Angela motions to participate in TREX art show, Linda second, all in favour.**

C. **Upcoming Environmental Days - Phil & Martha MG** proposes things to be done for World Water day March 19, trash pickup at Connaught pond and Marlborough Coulee, after a demonstration of cottonwood probogartion. Earth day April 23 Wildflowers Environmental week June 4th. We can think of some activities. Linda suggests a boot sale at Police Point Park in the theme of reduce, reuse and recycle.

D. **Credit Card Signing - Phil & Paul** for MHIP Where does the signing take place? Paul says the loan document was made up, Hugh says it's never been signed. **Hugh will prepare a document approving Alicia and Ian as credit card users to be signed by board members.** Because it's a swipe card, Alicia can give the card to Ian to purchase MHIP supplies

E. **Indigenous Acknowledgement - Linda** did research and has been in touch with Miywasin and asked for input (sent in an email with their statement). Ian says actions need to be put behind it to give it meaning. Phil suggests finding an Indigenous speaker to meet with us to give it meaning and background. **Angela motions Linda looks into wording of an Indigenous statement. Ian seconds. All in favour, carried.**

F. Upcoming AGM - Phil wonders if COVID will be clear by March? Or should we delay till May or June and then we have the option of being outdoors. Linda suggests June at the new Echo Dale far east end camping area. Cost is \$33/ 24 hours- this can be booked online. June 28- 4th Tuesday is open. There is a cook shelter there. Also available is the hut at the boating lake - \$24/ hour. Linda to check if the lean-to shelter near the farm is another option. Hugh suggests outdoors at the Nature Centre then, for free. So the AGM meeting will be June 28th, location to be decided later. **Phil will put notice in the Chronicle that the AGM has been moved to June 28.**

G. **Online Voting - Phil & Paul** issue that GN membership cannot vote online as our policies forbid it. Paul has drafted a new policy. Is electronic voting only allowed in special circumstances or any circumstances? Hugh suggests seeing how it works for now. Paul says bylaws are not quickly reviewed and changed. Ian says this special circumstance isn't realistic anymore and is really splitting hairs as we are doing it now. There were always people who didn't attend meetings (such as not driving at night, or out

of town). We have been getting good turnout since going online. Paul says there have been controversial meetings and decisions in the past. Ian points out online meetings can be recorded and transcripts made for review. Paul points out that last zoom meeting many faces/audio didn't show. Paul talked about the need for secret voting, such as for an election. Paul says this could be done by mail, using double envelopes. Anonymous electronic voting is available on zoom, but only 1 vote / device (but families are entitled to 2 votes). This will probably need further discussion. **Phil suggested that the Governance deal with this issue taking into account the issues that have just been discussed by the board.**

H. **Martha Gue GN role - Phil** - Martha has resigned from the chairmanship of the Issues Committee and John Slater will be the sole chairperson. She has done this in order to volunteer for the role as temporary Vice-President subject to the board agreeing. Her prime responsibility in this role will be recruiting new members and filling vacant society positions. **MSC that Martha Munz-Gue be appointed pro tem Vice-President at least until the next AGM.**

6. **Committee Reports**

A. **Treasurer's Report** - Angela \$10 461.69 savings \$16621.14 casino \$583.90 Methanex donation came through. Bought zoom subscription. A roll of stamps. 5 thermos from MHIP as gifts for guest speakers.

B. **Membership** - Angela reported 15 family, 18 individual, 2 free, 6 lifetime. 4 paid by e transfer so far. Can she send out an email with membership forms attached? Good idea!_

C. **Correspondence** - Angela

D. **Governance** - Paul has sent all proposed revisions to the Governance Committee for review. Background: 2012 bylaws redone. Policies are only as good as their implementation. Changes are done and sent to governance and then board. Non Compliances need to be dealt with. Bylaws we have a problem (due to voting online). Storage is all over the place, things getting lost. Paul is looking for central storage on a cloud and cabinet. Lawsuits: we need a lawyer for contracts and agreements. People need training for board, committee and MHIP. Privacy hasn't been addressed / tied to storage. Next meeting late February or early March after the steering committee meets. Thanks to Paul for all the work done. Paul is happy to say some committees are now in compliance! For the P&Ps we still need help with storage. For the Indoor Program Speaker Compensation, we should have a PDF fillable form that includes some of the rules such as for mileage. We should also have a fillable PDF form for membership applications. **Angela will ask insurance companies what is needed on forms. Paul needs a copy of the full insurance policy. Angela to send digital copy**

E. **Budget** - Paul no

F. **Indoor Program** - Linda has spoken with Alicia Lew, who will prepare a talk in case of speaker cancellations. Paul van Huene a no for now speaking on 10 years after the Ross Creek flooding of his ranch. February 22 : local retired governmental botanists Ron and Cathy Linowski - Rare Mosses and Ferns of the arid mixed grass prairie. March 22: Dr. Glynnis Hood Professor of Environmental Science, U Of A Augustana campus at Camrose -The Beaver, the Switch and its Wardrobe. April 26: Longtime GN member Bob Townsend speaking on the History of the MHIP from 1972 to the Present. May 24: looking to arrange for an Indigenous Speaker. June 28: Historically has been the Potluck

Picnic, this year the AGM. September 27: Gillian Chow-Fraser on Alberta's Caribou Conservation Draft or finalized Plan. October 25: Morganne Wall, past MHIP summer student will present her Masters thesis research on the Burrowing Owl. November 22: Local Alberta government Biologist Sandi Robertson returning with data from her field work on 3 years of Ord's Kangaroo Rat translocation. Perhaps have the multiple Members Speaker Night in January 2023 - needs to be done when we can all safely meet - not with Zoom.

G. Field Trips - Milt, Phil, John

H. Communications Committee - no

I. Birding Trails - Phil no

J. Nature Alberta - Phil e-mailed Nature Alberta with GN concerns about the new representation by region instead of by club. Nature Alberta replied that they are still planning to go ahead with this new organization but so far have no volunteers for the south region. They are also reviewing their plans and will notify us in the future if there are changes or developments.

K. Operations- Hugh: Deficit for 2021 of \$36 110. 71 due to no casino income, no program income and overlapping wages. (Should be much less in 2022.) Even with Emergency funds from the government. Preliminary discussions with Scott Richter reveal we can renew the contract for further 5 years, with the same terms but don't know the figures till the City budget is set sometime in May or June. Begin discussions in the fall. The final payment of 183000.00 will be forthcoming by end of Feb,2022

L. Issues - Martha Gue Looking for someone to take irrigation in hand but no volunteer.

M. Scenic Views - Gerry- It's progressing. Maps the city has put some strict restrictions on use of maps.

N. Fundraising- Hugh - everyone's been contacted at least once by Bruce, all positions filled with replacements in case of COVID.

7. Other business. Ian has a meeting with the Methanex Community Advisory Panel. Is there anything we need to bring up? Linda suggests bringing up Emerald Award nominations. Ian says he will figure something out to say. Hugh says we're always looking for recruits!

8. Next Board Meeting - March 1, 4 pm. Will decide closer to date if it's in person or zoom.

9. Adjournment 6:37 pm