

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Medicine Hat Interpretive Program Operations Committee

for the June 28, 2022 Grasslands Naturalists AGM,

The committee operating the Medicine Hat Interpretive Program has been comprised of the following GN members in the past year: Hugh Armstrong (Chair), Bob Townsend (Vice-Chair), Elaine Spitzer (Secretary), John Slater, Bruce Mcleod and ex-officio voting member Phil Horch (GN President). Also, non-voting ex-officio members are Alicia Lew (Chief Interpreter) and Scott Richter/ Natalie Weir-Parks and Rec reps.

The 2021 year saw the MHIP again affected by COVID, as has the rest of the world. Only one meeting of the committee was held on October 4, 2021. At this time, reports were received about the altered Interpretive Program operations, events and activities. Of note, a new sick leave policy was accepted in October 2021.

As Corlaine and Marty wished to retire, we set up a committee of three to hire replacements. We got eleven applicants and eventually interviewed 5. By now everyone knows Alicia Lew is our new Chief Interpreter and Ian Langill the new Assistant. Then, in February, 2022, Justine Bolen left us and was replaced by Grace Porter. They now have a full complement of staff with no changes since March, 2022. Marty and Corlaine stayed on till the end of December to make for a smooth transition to the new people.

Unfortunately, with COVID and the subsequent isolation restrictions, we were unable to give Corlaine and Marty a proper send off, but this will be done, we hope, after the June AGM.

It's hard to believe but our 5 year contract with the city ends this year. We have had preliminary discussions with Parks and Recreations and we will start negotiations this fall. We both (GN and Parks) are prepared to try and make this round much less time consuming than the last time.

In 2021 Corlaine, Marty, Alicia and Ian and staff have done an admiral job of keeping the MHIP running by using on-line and outdoor activities at Police Point Park. This past year, the quality of life in our city has been dramatically impacted by this program as people have been encouraged to combat the COVID isolation by getting out into and enjoy the outdoors and nature.

And finally, we have been extremely fortunate to have Corlaine and Marty as our main staff over these many years and we are going to miss them! They have made the MH Interpretive Program into one of the finest in the country and can feel proud of the quality programming they are turning over. Take a well deserved bow and rest and good luck on your future endeavours!

Respectfully submitted,

Hugh Armstrong, Committee Chair

