

Minutes
May 3, 2022
Grasslands Naturalists Society Board Meeting
Via Zoom

1. **Call to order** – The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Phil Horch at 3:03 p.m.
2. **Roll Call** – Members present: Phil Horch, Hugh Armstrong, Ian Turner, Angela Turner, Linda Fisher and Martha Munz-Gue. Guests present: Paul Thibault and Corlaine Gardner. Absent: Martha Maudsley.
3. **Review and adoption of minutes** – MSC the minutes of the April 5, 2022 board meeting were reviewed and approved as circulated.
4. **Business arising from the minutes**
 - A. **Community spirit awards** – Phil reminded everyone that the City of Medicine Hat's Community Spirit Awards will be taking place on May 19, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. with a reception and awards program taking place at 7 p.m. at the Esplanade. Award recipients connected to Grasslands Naturalists are Gerry Ehlert, Martha Munz-Gue and our own Medicine Hat Interpretive Program. All GN members are invited to attend. Since Gerry will not be in town to receive his award, Phil will be delivering his acceptance speech on Gerry's behalf.
 - B. **Indigenous wording** – Linda reported that she is still involved in discussions with various indigenous representatives regarding the appropriate wording usage. **This is tabled until the next meeting and Linda will report back.**
 - C. **Issues Committee Chairperson** – Martha reported that 2 meetings have taken place to address the need for an Issues Committee Chair. The first meeting included members of the GN board and the second included members of the Issues Committee plus Cathy Linowski. **So far no person has emerged as a Chairperson but efforts will continue to secure one.**
 - D. **Symplik online donation platform** – After further investigation by Hugh, Alicia and Paul it was agreed that this is a solid and secure platform for the Medicine Hat Interpretive Program to use for securing donations. **There was consensus that MHIP could go ahead and use this** and that this is really a decision to be made by the Operations Committee.
 - E. **Wildflower brochure printing** – Martha reported that we seem to have enough brochures for immediate needs and that a reprinting of these brochures can wait until the new fiscal year when it can be budgeted for.
 - F. **New GN Brochure** – Phil reported that these new brochures produced by David Gue inadvertently got printed before he remembered to notify David after the last board meeting decided to hold off on the printing. Phil has reimbursed David personally for the \$566 cost of printing 250 of these brochures and the upcoming budget committee will determine what action needs to be taken in regards to this.
 - G. **Youth recruitment at MHC** – Phil and Martha reported that plans are in the works to hold meetings with MHC Science students in September and October to introduce them to GN and hopefully encourage some to become members. Gerry has been working with Brent Smith at MHC to set these meetings up and the College has agreed to hold them. There may be a

small cost involved to pay for drinks and pizza at these meetings but more information will be forthcoming. **GN will also need to enlist people from our society to conduct these sessions and prepare an impressive presentation.**

H. Emerald Awards – Phil reminded members that the Emerald Awards will be taking place at the Calgary Library on June 1st and that he, Annalora, David and Martha Gue will be officially representing GN at the awards dinner and ceremony. There is no cost to GN for their attendance. Other members of GN are welcome to attend if they wish at a personal cost of \$30 per ticket which can be arranged through David Gue.

5. Current Business

A. AGM – Discussion took place on the upcoming GN Annual General Meeting which is scheduled to take place on June 28 either inside or outside at the Nature Center depending upon the weather. Martha, Chair of the nominations Committee reported that no nominations have been submitted for any executive position and the deadline for nominations has past. Phil reported that Corlaine Gardner has consented to be a Director at Large on the GN Board. **It was MSC that Corlaine be appointed as a Director at large effective immediately.** Phil reported that 2 nominations for lifetime membership have been received. Martha said she needs to recuse herself from the nominations committee because. Phil said he would arrange a zoom meeting with Eileen Cowtan and Jan Scott, nominating committee members to discuss these two nominations and make a recommendation to the board. **Discussion took place that we need more members who can arrange GN zoom meetings as presently only Ian can do it. Linda and Paul both volunteered to learn how to do it and Ian will train them. Phil will contact Eileen and Jan to arrange a meeting date.**

B. O’Shea Memorial Service – Phil reminded everyone that a memorial service for GN Past-President Mike O’Shea will be taking place at the Glenview Nazarene Church on June 11, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. He stated that GN needs to appoint someone to represent GN at this service and deliver an oral memory of Mike’s contribution and involvement with our society. **MSC that Phil Horch be appointed to speak on GN’s behalf at this service. Phil will notify Marie O’Shea of this appointment.** Phil also reported that he has been in contact with Marie and that he believes that Donna Steele has also been asked to speak at the service about Mike as a personal friend.

C. Trade Show and Trex art show – Phil and Martha both gave positive reports on the outcomes of these two events. The Trade Show revealed that most of the public is aware of the Medicine Hat Interpretive Program but most are not aware that GN is managing it. Martha reported that at least 130 people attended the opening of the TREX Art Show reception.

D. Governance and Budget Meetings – Paul gave an overview of the upcoming agendas for the Governance and Budget meetings that are coming up the following week. He stressed that it is important that all position holders in GN be familiar with the Constitution and the policy and procedures of the society that apply to them and their positions. Training will be upcoming for this purpose. Since covid GN’s system of committees have splintered and our society has to address this situation because too much workload is reverting back to the board. We are especially in need of committee chairpersons for Issues and the Communications Committee.

E. Bird Friendly City status – Phil gave a report on the current status of the effort to make Medicine Hat a Bird Friendly City. Currently the ad-hoc committee titled Bird Team is made up of Phil (Interim Chair), Marty Drut, Ian Turner, Angela Turner and most recently Dan Schiebelbein. There are others who are consultants to this committee. Phil reported on a recent meeting he had with Kevin Redden, Director of Environment, Lands and Government Relations with the City of Medicine Hat. Kevin has agreed to work with the Bird Team to help move our proposal forward with the City in the coming year. **The objective will be to have the City of Medicine Hat announce it is working to become a bird friendly city by May of 2023 on official Migratory Bird Day.** Phil also reported that plans are underway for several activities to take place on Bird Migratory Day, May 14, 2022. These will be done in conjunction with the Medicine Hat Interpretive Program with a Birding 101 Training Session, Bird Walks at Police Point Park and Bird Friendly City displays at the Nature Center on that day. The Bird Team is coordinating this with Ian Langill at MHIP.

F. Communications Committee – Considerable discussion took place on the need to appoint a communications chair. It is also recognized that GN needs a central location to store its publications and records. Paul reported that he is looking into having a lockable filing cabinet to be located at the Nature Center. Presently we have one that is not lockable. It is also recognized that this committee needs to take control of all GN publications and supervise their use in various displays and budget for their reprinting. This committee also needs to handle public relations and advertising for GN

6. Committee Reports

A. Treasurer's Report – Angela submitted the GN monthly financial reports as well as the Casino financial report. **MSC carried that they be approved without changes.** Angela also reported that the year-end review of GN's financial and casino books has been conducted in preparation for the Annual General Meeting. Paul asked if the year-end review has also been done for the MHI{P finances. It appears that was not done. **Hugh will look into this and arrange with Alicia and Jane for this year-end review to be conducted.**

B. Membership Report – Angela reported on the progress with 2022 membership renewals. We are almost up to last year's renewal numbers to date.

C. Correspondence – Nothing to report.

D. Operations Committee – Hugh reported on several grants that have been recently raised to help fund MHIP Operations. He also reported that staffing is now in place for summer with a total of 6 full-time and part-time staff in place. Presently the MHIP budget has an operating surplus of \$25,000 for 2022 budget year.

E. Governance Committee – Paul reported that he had nothing new to add as we have discussed governance issues adequately earlier in the meeting.

F. Budget Committee – Same as 6E.

G. Indoor program – Linda reported that she has a last minute indigenous replacement speaker for the May indoor program. It was decided that this meeting would continue to be on

zoom as covid is still alive and well in our community. It is hoped that we can resume indoor programs in-person in the fall.

H. Field Trips – Phil reported that he is working with Milt Spitzer on a field trip at Police Point Park to be called a Warbler Walk on May 14. He is also planning to lead a birding outing at the Cypress Hills in June with a date yet to be determined. Milt may also be working on some on others. Martha reported that there are continuing neighborhood walks happening every week.

I. Communications Committee – Nothing new to report here as discussion related to this committee took place earlier.

J. Birding Trails Committee – Nothing to report except that distribution of Birding Trail Guidebooks is ongoing. This committee could be disbanded as it no longer meets. If another birding group forms in the future it may simply be called Birding Committee as it would deal with more than just Birding Trail Guidebooks.

K. Nature Alberta – Presently we have no rep with Nature Alberta as a result of their new restructuring plan. Phil reminded the group that Nature Alberta has made available to us, at no charge, at least six copies of their beautiful Alberta Bird Atlas which would make great indoor speaker gifts in the future. **Anyone travelling to Edmonton in the near future can arrange to pick these books up and also some others that they are making available. Phil has the necessary contact information if anyone is going to Edmonton.**

L. Issues Committee – Nothing new to report as this committee was previously discussed.

M. Fundraising – Hugh reported that a grant that the Scenic Views committee was hoping to secure was not approved. Scenic Views will be seeking other grants in order to complete their project.

7. Other Business – No other business to report.

8. Next Meeting – TUESDAY, JUNE 7 AT 4 PM. Hopefully we can have this meeting outdoors at the Nature Center or in somebody's back yard.