

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS

(DRAFT) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Police Point Park

Tuesday June 28, 2022, 4:00 pm

1. Call to Order 4:02 pm-Phil Horch (Chair), Betty Rainville (Acting Secretary) Attendance 42-44.
2. Indigenous Declaration Phil read the following Declaration: The Society of Grasslands Naturalists honours and acknowledges that we live and work on Treaty 7 land, and are a neighbour to Treaty 4 Territory, traditional lands of the Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, Stoney-Nakoda and Tsuut'ina, including the Cree, Sioux and the Saulteaux bands of the Ojibwa peoples. We honour and acknowledge we are on the homelands of the Metis Nation within Region 3. We recognize and respect cultural heritages and relationships to the land. We extend our hands in peace and friendship to all Indigenous peoples who have made these places their homes since time immemorial, as we forge together towards a relationship of reconciliation, respect, understanding and healing.
3. Presentation of Life-time GN Memberships: This may be awarded to a current member, who has made outstanding contributions to the Society.(Bylaw 3.1.2)
 - 1) John Slater spoke about **Robert (Bob)Townsend** and his numerous awards for environmental advocacy, as well as his many accomplishments. A few of these accomplishments include being a member of the River Valley Authority and the Study of the South Saskatchewan River project, as well as the local trail systems. Bob was one of the original group who worked to establish the Society of Grasslands Naturalists. He has been a vital member of the MH Operations Committee for over 20 years, as well as a strong advocate for keeping Police Point Park as a nature park since its very beginnings.
Phil presented Bob with the framed award. Thank you and Congratulations Bob!
 - 2) Next, Corlaine Gardner spoke about the second award recipient, **David Gue**. Corlaine thanked David for his moral as well as his technical support and patience, in keeping the MH Interpretive Program running, and running. David has a long history of volunteering; two examples being his dedication to introducing music to young children, as well as being one of the founding members of the local Folk Music Club. David recently wrote an excellent booklet on GN achievements, for the Emerald Award GN nomination.
Phil presented David with the framed award. Thank you and Congratulations David!
4. At 4:22 pm Phil opened the Business Meeting segment of today's AGM.
Phil asked if there were any corrections needed in last year's AGM Minutes. Hearing none, David Gue moved Adoption of the Minutes from the AGM held September 14, 2021. Hugh Armstrong seconded. **CARRIED**
5. Committee Reports: Reports for the 2021 year are posted on the GN website www.grasslands-naturalists.org under **Reports for AGM 28 June, 2022**, and hard copies are available at the AGM. Selected reports may be posted in future Chronicles.
 - a. **President's Report:** Phil Horch gave a brief verbal review of the past year as President. (See detailed President's Report for June AGM 2022). He asked members how they rated Zoom GN Meetings, then asked if hybrid meetings would be of interest in the future. There was an almost unanimous show of hands indicating support for these meetings that would combine in-person attendance with online participation. Phil commented on the following major G.N. accomplishments in the past year and earlier:
 - being nominated and short-listed as one of the top three provincial groups for the Emerald Foundation Award ,with an excellent accompanying brochure by David Gue;
 - continuing outdoor programs, walks, and Bird Counts despite Covid19 restrictions;
 - the Scenic Views project undertaken by Gerry Ehlert, John Slater and other dedicated volunteers;
 - the Casino fundraiser thanks to Bruce McLeod and G.N. volunteers;
 - The Master Environmental Plan to be implemented by the new city council;
 - the Bird Friendly City initiative tentatively agreed to by the City
 - Three MH Community Spirit Awards recognizing Gerry Ehlert under the category of Environment, MHIP also for Environment, and Martha Munz Gue Award of Excellence- Heart of Medicine Hat.
 - The outstanding programs at the MHIP previously run by Corlaine Gardner and Marty Drut, and the smooth transition to new Chief Park Interpreter Alicia Lew, and Assistant Chief Park Interpreter Ian Langill.

Phil sees the biggest challenge in the coming year to be recruitment of more, and younger, members. In closing, Phil thanked Martha Munz Gue for stepping forward as interim Vice-President. He also welcomed Corlaine Gardner as a Director at Large to the GN Board, and thanked the members of the board and executive for continuing in their essential roles. This coming year will be Phil's last year as President because of pending medical procedures.

- b. Treasurer's Report:** Angela Turner thanked Milt Spitzer and Bruce McLeod for reviewing the financial books of the GN 'Club' and Casino. Thank you to John Slater for assisting Milt and Bruce review the MHIP books. Angela gave a brief verbal review of the GN 'Club' and the Casino account for the 2021 year. (See entire 2021 Treasurer's Rep. on the GN website).

Grasslands Naturalists: Angela noted the 'Club's finances remain sound. Total equity increased by \$2,132.37 to \$25,777.26. Note that only \$1837.50 of the Eco Trust grant, which was \$3040. was spent in 2021. For this reason, Angela explained, our **equity increase is actually a bit higher than it really is.**

Casino: There was no Casino income in 2021 due to COVID-19. The total equity decreased by \$726 to a total of \$608. Since the majority of the proceeds from the previous year's casino income were already spent there was very little activity in the casino books this year.

(Phil noted the Treasurer's Report would be accepted in a motion after all other reports were covered).

Financial details are summarized below (by the acting secretary) following an amendment proposed by Rob Gardner and approved by members in the September 14, 2021 AGM to show Opening Balance, Income Received, Total Expenses, and Closing Balance in the **actual AGM Minutes** as well as in GN online Reports for the June 2022 AGM:

1)	Opening Balance for GN 'Club' Retained Earnings 2021	23,645.
	Total Income	7,731.
	Total Expenses	5,599.
	Current Earnings	2,132.
	Total Equity as of Dec.31, 2021 is	25,777.

These amounts have been verified by Angela Turner.

2)	Opening Balance for MHIP Retained Earnings 2021	185,360.
	Total Income	275,667.
	Total Expenses	301,256.
	Current Earnings	(-)25,590.
	Total Equity as of Dec.31, 2021	159,770.

These amounts for MHIP have been verified by Jane McGough.

- c. **Communications Report:** no report. Phil was happy to announce that Corlaine Gardner has agreed to take over the position of Communication Committee Chair. Thank you Corlaine.
- d. **MHIP Report:** Alicia Lew, Chief Interpreter, introduced Nature Centre staff before giving a verbal report. (see online report) Ayla Wikjord was not able to be present. Alicia noted she has been working on updating the IP website with the help of Paul Thibault.
- e. **MHIP Operations:** Hugh Armstrong gave a verbal report for the MHIP Op. Committee. He noted that Corlaine, Marty, Alicia, Ian and staff have done an admirable job of keeping MHIP running in 2021 and helping to combat the COVID-imposed isolation. Hugh ended by stressing how fortunate we have been to have Corlaine and Marty over these many years.
- f. **Issues Committee:** Co-Chairs-John Slater and Martha Munz Gue. See report online. Martha spoke briefly about meeting tomorrow, June 29 at 9 am at Connaught Pond for a SEAWA Field Tour. She commented on one passive way to raise awareness about Russian Olive trees by tying a strip of used cotton cloth around each tree.

Three more opportunities to learn how to use EDDMapS are listed below:

- July 6 at noon, online from the Alberta Invasive Species Council. Pond adopters have the information already. Martha will send the information to the Nature Centre.
- Ian Langill spoke about an upcoming walk July 9 at Dan MacCharles Park by Swirls from 10 to 11 am and from 11:30 to 12:30 pm

- Ian also mentioned two workshops at PP Park on July 30 with GN and the City, to talk about Native plants in the City parks. One will be offered at 9:30 11 am, and the second from 12-1:30pm. Call 403 529-6225 for info.
- g. **Budget Committee:** Paul Thibault. See report online. The Budget Committee provides guidance to the GN Board by preparing yearly budgets.
- h. **Governance Committee:** Paul Thibault. See report online. Paul noted that Policies and Procedures are not rules, but rather help. Training sessions will be coming this year.
He said that bylaws are lengthy to change, and noted the last bylaw changes were made in 2012. This year, the Committee revised the bylaws on electronic voting, and would like to hold a vote on the changes in September 2022. He asked members to please read the revised bylaws and revised P&P's submitted to Membership for comments June 9, 2022.
- i. **Fund Raising Committee:** See Hugh Armstrong's report online.
Phil spoke briefly on the Casino at the end of February 2022 which raised \$12909.00. He thanked Bruce McLeod and Elaine Zimmer for managing it, and thanked all the volunteers who assisted.
Phil noted that Hugh has done an excellent job of fundraising, and has brought in a great deal of money for the GN 'Club' over the years.
- j. **Field Trips Committee:** John Slater noted this could be described as the Outdoor Program. (See online report). Notices of trips are presently sent to members by email and posted at the Nature Centre.
John told members that Paul and Twyla Von Hue have invited GN members to attend a second tour of their property on the Ross Creek Valley, after a successful first field trip was held there in May.
Members present at the AGM discussed alternative days for Wednesday Neighbourhood Walks, such as once a month weekend walks. Alicia Lew noted that the IP may be able to tie this in with their public weekend walks. A suggestion for group camping was also discussed, as well as booking a Sunday afternoon trip on the Sunshine Trolley.
- k. **Indoor Committee:** See Linda Fisher's report online.
Linda noted that the September speaker will be listed in the upcoming September Chronicle. Morganne Wall will be speaking on Burrowing Owls at the October 25 Indoor Program, and Sandi Robertson will speak about Ord's Kangaroo Rat at the Nov.22 General Meeting Indoor Program.
- l. **Scenic Views Committee:** Gerry Ehlert and John Slater. See Online report.

Copies of Reports may be seen on the GN Website listed above www.grasslands-naturalists.org

Phil requested a motion. **David Gue moved to accept all previous reports as presented. Ian seconded the motion. CARRIED**

6. Elections:

Executive Officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Elections led by John Slater. Call for Nominations from the floor for the following positions.

Secretary: Martha Maudsley. Absent. (Indicated verbally and in writing her wish to stand as Secretary again).

Treasurer: Angela Turner

Interim Vice President: Martha Munz Gue

President: Phil Horch

Phil asked for nominations from the floor.

John noted 4 executives are needed plus 1 Past President (Hugh Armstrong), as well as 3 Directors at Large.

The four executives, listed above, are willing to carry on in their positions. John reported that no voting is needed if the executive are accepted by acclamation.

Robert Townsend moved to accept the slate of candidates as it stands. Seconded by Simone Flynn. CARRIED

Congratulations to the returning executive. Thank you to John for leading the elections.

7. Other Business:

a. **Directors' Appointments** (Past President and Directors at Large), to be confirmed at a short Board meeting immediately after the AGM today

b. **Committee Volunteers Selection** (Confirmed at a later Board Meeting): Committees to meet to select a Chairperson and confirm Budget

- Communications Committee
- Budget Committee
- Governance Committee
- Issues Committee
- MHIP Operations Committee
- Indoor Program Committee
- Field Trips Committee
- Fund Raising
- Scenic Views Committee

c. Projects: (Contacts names)

- Birding Trails: Phil Horch, Milt Spitzer, Bob Frew, Rob Gardner...(Project not active in 2021)
- Bird Tales: Dee Armstrong and Paul Thibault (Not active due to COVID restrictions)
- Butterflies, Dragonflies and more: (Dave McKenzie)
- Wildflowers: Martha Munz Gue
- Adopt a pond: Martha Munz Gue

d. External Organization Reps (Volunteers confirmed at an upcoming Board meeting)

1. Nature Alberta: No rep presently
2. SEAWA: Martha Munz Gue, Tina
3. Carol Porter Bluebird Trail: Milt Spitzer (Not considered a GN project)
4. Methanex CAPS- Ian Turner
5. Palliser Air Shed- David Gue
6. Future Ground Network- Ian Turner, Martha Munz Gue
7. Alberta Prairie Conservation Forum

8. Announcements:

- a. Budgets from committee heads are due to Paul by _____
- b. Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, September 6, 2022, at 4 pm at Phil and Annalora's house.
- c. Next General Meeting: Tuesday, September 27 at 7 pm at the Nature Centre. Phil hopes this may be a hybrid meeting, with in-person or online availability.

9. Attendance at AGM today- 42 to 44 people

10. Motion to Adjourn Meeting at 5:30 pm by David Gue.

11. Brief Board Meeting following AGM to appoint a Past President and Members at Large

12. Retirement Reception for Corlaine and Marty with presentations, cake and pizza.