

Grasslands Naturalists Society
General Meeting minutes
Tuesday, May 23, 2023

1. **Call to order – Phil Horch 7pm**
2. **Member’s Exciting Sightings – Phil Horch** - Alicia has spotted more than 12 prairie rattlesnakes including one climbing to get a starlings nest! A GN member visited Point Pelee and saw summer tanager/warbblers. Phil saw cardinals in Aurora ON
3. **Land Acknowledgment – Phil Horch**
4. **Indigenous Action – Paul Thibault**- Worthy actions: Land acknowledgment. Actions long and short term; educate yourself. Participate in Indigenous activities by going to communities and events and listening. Longer term we need to figure out longer term projects. Not just Indigenous involvement but a 2-way street. Metis cultural event in Cypress Hills in June. National Indigenous Peoples Day celebration: stories at the library. School programs at Nature centre with tepee. Let’s educate ourselves. GN has books to borrow.
5. **Approval of Minutes from April 25, 2023 – Phil Horch - No corrections. All in favour, passed.**
6. **President’s Report – Phil Horch** - Sobering time with wildfires. Feel free to express your views today as we go through bylaws.
7. **Bylaws Vote - John Slater. Special Resolution: The motion is to ‘Rescind the existing bylaws and accept the proposed amended bylaws distributed in writing at the General Meeting held on 25 April 2023 and emailed to Members on 1 May 2023.’ All members attending the meeting are in favour of accepting the new bylaws. Motion is carried.**
8. **Grasslands Naturalists Vision, Mission and Mandate – Paul Thibault** - Need to sometimes go back and say who are we? We always want to see where we want to be. Where do we see ourselves in the future? Also, a need for organizational structures. Need to satisfy the needs of members but also the general public. Interpretive programs are more than 90% of our revenues. They serve the public. A strategic plan is not written in stone but meant to serve the society. The mission is what we’d like to be. The Mandate is required. Should we be called an organization or society? We are more than a club. What are our (members) and (public) minimum expectations? **GN members discussion and feedback** Discussion. Question to consider: why did you join (GN) and why do you stay? Consider also in terms of scope.
9. **Casino - Bruce McLeod** needs volunteers to assist Saturday August 5 and/or Sunday 6 various shifts need filled. Location is Copper Coulee Casino. Need to finish a volunteer worker application. Previous experience not required. Contact Bruce for more details.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1. Treasurer's Report – Angela Turner- GN Chequing is \$6,365.57, GN Savings is \$6,830.72, GN 15-month GIC maturing in May, 2024 for \$10,000.00 and another GN 1-year GIC maturing in May, 2024 for \$5,000.00. Casino account is \$8,109.82**

- 2. Membership – Angela Turner 24 memberships still to renew this year. 58 individuals, 51 families 9 lifetime**
- 3. Medicine Hat Interpretive Program – Hugh Armstrong and Alicia Lew** Update on staffing and volunteers 2 new students make for 8 staff. Mosaic display a success, with more than 1800 visitors. Now Sprague's pipit display back. Spring bird count coming up, contact Ian. Finances has secured 86% of grant revenue they wanted for the year. and has revenue of 34% of the projected budget for the year, 29% of expenses. City is looking for outdoor-related organizations to have a presence. 3 to 7 at Town Square event May 31, June 28 coverage needed. Hugh Operations committee next meeting June 12.
- 4. Communications Committee – Corlaine Gardner n/a**
- 5. Field Trips – Milt Spitzer, John Slater, Martha Gue walks tomorrow from McCoy HS next week from Ajax coulee pond. Then Connaught pond June 24 Cypress Hills birding**
- 6. Indoor Program – Linda Fisher**
- 7. Issues Report – Phil Horch, Gerry Ehlert**
- 8. Adopt a Pond or Path - Martha MG** sent out invitations to Saturday May 27 activity to learn about riparian health but only a few responses. So, instead there's an event at Connaught Pond June 10th 9 to 12pm.
- 9. Other Announcements**

GUEST SPEAKER introduction by Linda Fisher

Brent Smith, Instructor at Medicine Hat College

Topic: Ecology, Human Footprint and Tree Cover of Medicine Hat

Conclusion and guest speaker appreciation – Linda Fisher