

Flathead Audubon Board Meeting
April 6, 2009
Jane Lopp & Assoc. Conference Room

Present: Neal Brown, Lois Drobish, Jill Fanning, Mike Fanning (presiding), Richard Kuhl, Bob Lee, Bob Lopp, Brent Mitchell, Donna Pridmore, Melissa Sladek, Paula Smith, Bruce Tannehill, Linda Winnie, Lewis Young

Mike Fanning called the meeting to order at 5:35.

Minutes:

Mike asked if anyone had changes for the minutes of the last Board meeting. There were none. Brent moved the minutes be approved as submitted; Bob Lee seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Budget Report:

Bruce passed out the budget and finance report and discussed portions.

The board discussed why the dues collected from local members plus the yearly amount sent to FAS by National Audubon are not enough to cover the chapters operating expenses (newsletter, postage, office supplies, etc.), and what changes might be made to make them cover these expenses. Possibilities discussed: move more people to the Electronic Post, especially National members; raise local dues; try to get National to send us more money. Further discussion of this issue was postponed until a later time.

Funding the Education Coordinator position:

Bruce and Mike explained what will be needed to continue our Education Coordinator position next year, including the possibility of lowering the salary and hours of the Coordinator.

More aggressive fund raising will be required; Mike said he was committed to being involved in that.

The formation of a Finance Committee to address issues of budget and funding, with Bob Lopp as Chair, was discussed. Bob will need to check with Prudential to see if he can do it.

Several people pointed out the need to formulate a clear statement of the mission and goals of the Education Coordinator Project. Mike agreed to get such a statement written (with the help of Nancy Zapotocki), and will distribute it to the Board members before the May Board meeting.

Mike distributed a draft of an MOU between Flathead Audubon and the Sustainability Fund which outlines the responsibilities of the two organizations in carrying out the Education Coordinator Program – called the Conservation Education Program in the MOU – next year. The Board will discuss the MOU at the May Board meeting, and decide whether to approve it.

Bruce suggested that Board members should come to the May Board meeting with their ideas on how to raise funds for the Education Coordinator Program next year, and be prepared to discuss these ideas at the meeting. The Board agreed that we will do this.

Report from Owen Sowerwine Committee:

The Committee Co-Chairs are working with Nancy Zapotocki to include activities at OSNA in her application for a Together Green Grant.

Several more volunteers are needed to complete the schedule for the Volunteer Monitoring Program. The sign-up sheet was passed around.

Brent will apply for a Flathead Electric Coop Round-up-for-Safety Grant to buy blaze-orange vests that can be loaned to any group of students when they take an Audubon sponsored field trip to OSNA during hunting season.

We need to refurbish the kiosk at OSNA and put up new signs with the rules of use on them both on the kiosk and at all the entrances. People are using OSNA to walk their dogs, and there are currently no signs up that tell them this is not allowed.

Hospitality: Lois asked if anyone could bring treats for the April meeting. Donna volunteered.

Guest presentation:

Tim Salt of the Glacier Institute talked to the Board about the possibility that FAS would partner with Glacier Institute on an application for a Together Green Grant. He presented outlines of several different projects that might serve as the basis for such an application. Mike noted that all of these are basically education projects, and that nature education projects are not the type of project this Grant program is interested in. Mike will ask Nancy Zapotocki and Linda de Kort, who have worked on Together Green proposals, to look at the project outlines and give us their recommendation on whether FAS should partner on one of them. Mike will distribute Nancy and Linda's opinion to the Board members by email, and ask the Board members to respond by email on whether they think we should partner with Glacier Institute on any of the projects.

Publicity: Paula reported that she has already developed the publicity for the May meeting.

Website:

Paula gave a report on the 3rd annual review of the website by the Web Committee. The possibility of adding a wiki was raised at the review meeting. Some concern was expressed that this might take a good deal of time to oversee. Paula will check with Hillary Smith on what this would take.

Conservation:

Lewis reported that the next step on the Quartz Lake issue will be to look over the EA when it comes out, and make comments on it.

Newsletter:

Linda read the list of proposed contents for the May issue. The Board said it was fine had nothing to add.

Wetlands:

Donna asked the Board for guidance on what they would like to see her do as the new Wetlands Chair. She outlined what she has already been doing on wetlands issues as a private citizen. Board members expressed appreciation for what she has been doing, and asked her to keep doing them as Wetlands Chair. They also suggested that she keep the Board and the FAS members informed of wetlands issues as they come up, and let us know how we can help. Donna volunteered to write articles on wetlands issues for the May and September newsletters.

Forestry Expo:

We need a person to help with the FAS station on Saturday afternoon, noon to 4 PM. Mike will ask for a volunteer at the general meeting.

Items in Desperate Need of Discussion:

Bob Lopp will write an account of our new special gifts program for the website.

Melissa asked if the Board would be willing to write a letter of support for the Rivers Edge Trails Project in their application to FWP for a grant. The Board thought this would be a good idea. Melissa will draft such a letter for FAS and email it to the Board. Once approved, Mike will sign it.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM

Notes submitted by Linda Winnie, standing in for our excellent Secretary, Gail Sullivan.