

Minutes - FAS Board Meeting, March 4, 2019

Prepared by: Pam Willison, Secretary

Board Members in attendance: Kay Mitchell, Bob Lee, Cory Davis, Kathy Ross, Darrick Rathe, Bob Lopp, Rod Walette, Pam Willison, Joe Batts, Mike Fanning, Carole Jorgensen, Gail Linne, Gael Bissell,

Meeting called to order by President Kay Mitchell at 6:05 pm.

A thank you card for Marylane Pannell was circulated.

Minutes for February: Kathy motion, Rod second, approved.

Treasurer's Report: Reviewed expenditures from past month. We have enough cash to cover through June, then expenditures drop off, other than Education Coordination salary. Next month Joe will be reporting on the Domini sale and we may want to consider pulling some out for cash to cover expenses. There will be some income from the silent auction and Birdathon. Gael asked about flagged items on last years spreadsheet for a donation from WFCU and Cottonwood and whether they have been resolved. Bruce would have made those notes so Joe will check with Bruce and be sure they are resolved.

Motion to receive and file by Bob Lopp, second Mike. Approved.

Presidents Report:

*We are out of the Great Fish Community Challenge for this year. We had about 100 hours of work in the application, but we were unable to prepare the balance sheet in the manner they required before the application deadline.

*Reminder: Diane Boyd will give her presentation on wolves on March 7 at 7pm in the large meeting room. There will not be a meeting, just the presentation. Jan had sent press releases, but there doesn't appear to be any publicity happening. The information was made available to our members and the membership of both the co-sponsors. Kay will conduct the gathering and do introductions. Cory asked about refreshments and it was decided to skip them for this presentation. Our Audubon packets will be available to new people, but not handed out. Kay will check with Denny to get the sound system.

*Weed clipping (hounds tongue) in OSNA, while on snowshoes, will be held March 9. Meet at Montessori school and enter by crossing the new bridge. Cory is bringing garbage bags.

Nominations: Bob Lee is looking for nominations for the Board. A couple people have been suggested and Bob will follow up on those. Kay said we need 2-3, or possibly 4. Kathy knows of a retiring teacher at Somers who might be interested. Gael knows of a person who is retiring in June and would be a potential for next year. Also, if your term is expiring, Bob will be talking to you about renewing.

Newsletter Preliminary Contents: Cory asked about the plastic recycling mentioned

on the list. Kathy said Target is recycling plastic, glass, plastic bags, clamshell containers, and other items. Valley recycling is taking only #1 and #2 plastic bottles that are clean and cap-less. It's an test run, so be sure to follow their rules so it can continue.

Montana Audubon Reps: Joe clarified the categories of organizations that can be registered with the State of Montana. FAS is a public benefit organization with members. Montana Audubon is different in that they don't have members, but have donors. Therefore they are a public benefit organization without members. They have been registered wrong for years and they have tried to change it, but several MA Board members have objected. Their next meeting will address trying to get it corrected in the by-laws. Currently, Joe feels we need to have a Delegate, who in turn will select/appoint the Chapter Rep to MA.

Bob Lee questioned whether the FAS Board could be considered the delegates and make the selection of MA Chapter Reps, which is what we have done. Joe feels that is stretching the definition.

Bob Lopp wondered how this relates to "at-large" members of the MA Board. Joe says that needs to be cleared up by addressing it in the by-laws of MA. At-large representatives have to apply and be interviewed and approved.

Joe said the issue is that the State of Montana laws require MA adhere to their definitions, even though they appear to be confusing and unclear.

Joe made a motion to appoint President, Kay Mitchell, as a Delegate for FAS with the authority to select a primary and alternate Board Member (Chapter Rep) to Montana Audubon Board of Directors. Mike seconded. Gael feels that the State definition says that we need to elect the delegate to the MA Board. Joe commented that we need to follow the structure set by the State and then see what happens at the MA Board meeting to try to resolve this.

Kay stated that if selected, she would ask for a vote by FAS Board of Directors to designate our Rep and Alternate Rep.

The vote on the motion: 5 for, 7 against. Motion failed.

Gael reiterated what Bob Lee said about how our FAS Board are the Delegates and we have selected our MA Board member. Joe reminded that the specific language of designating us as "delegates" has never been done, so we aren't authorized to make the selection. Gael and Bob feel we are in compliance when our Board Rep and Alternate Rep are elected by the FAS Board.

Logo: We discussed the proposed new logo presented by Jake at the last meeting. Bob Lopp feel this bird and tree are disconnected and it bothers him. Mike has a preference for the actual bird on the old logo. Pam mentioned that Elmer Sprungers art

is all in the possession of his son Jerry and maybe we could get the original artwork and digitize it in a different way so it could be more useful. Kathy has that artwork, which was borrowed from Jerry some time ago. Kay gave the details of how the artwork has been transitioned into our current logo through many steps and problems. Kay said that Jake feels we need to have a “vector file” in order for our logo to be more useful. We reviewed the variations of the two options Jake presented (left-justified or centered). Several people feel the bird is too stylized and loses the identity of the bird. Even though the original is more authentic, it is less efficient and more expensive to work with because of the many colors and details.

Carole would like us to agree on the text regardless of the bird. Bob Lopp feels the left-justified was better because we refer to ourselves as FAS and that’s clearer on left-justified. Gail suggests that we consider making the investment to pay to have a graphic artist actually do the design. Kay asked for a show of hands for using the wording “Flathead Audubon Society”. Everyone wants all three words and in that order. Kay asked for a show of hands on left-justified. Everyone wants left-justified. We would prefer that all three words be the same font. We might want to have “Flathead” in a different color, but also need to be sure it also works in black and white. Kay will take these details to Jake and see if something can be created that would satisfy us.

OSNA: Kay mentioned that we received a condensed and a comprehensive document from the OSNA committee about the License Renewal. Carole wonders if classifying it as “other” could be changed so there is no chance for it to be used for something other than a natural area. Gael explained how difficult the process is and how it needs to be approved by the Land Board. Originally there was an effort to designate it as a natural area, and the DNRC process was too difficult, so it wasn’t completed. Doing a license under the “other” category was the easier solution. DNRC rules have been very challenging to comply with. The fact that they allowed it to be used for public recreation indicates they are in support of the idea, and of us, but there isn’t a way to get permanent protection or to get around having to pay a fee. There is value in renewing the license so it doesn’t get released, which would risk losing it.

Montana Audubon is not wanting to be in the middle as much any more, but we need them for liability insurance. They are willing to help with the license cost and have FAS listed on the license and responsible for the management of the area. Kay has been associated with it for many years and says that Gael has been a key person in the entire process and her opinions have much merit.

Carole made a motion to accept the recommendations of the OSNA committee. Second, Bob Lopp. Bob Lee clarified the three parts of the recommendation: that we (FAS) would be added to the license before the expiration in 2020, that (contingent on the fee) we would renew the license for another 10 year term (under MA and FAS), and that we (FAS) would continue to manage OSNA. There was some discussion about concerns over not finding out what the fee is until fall. Kay said in the past we have dealt with DNRC seeking a very high fee and have been able to get it down to a reasonable

amount, so Kay feels we should be able to work with them. Gael feels there is potential to get some help with the weed control expenses. Bob Lopp spoke in strong support of this motion because we have such a strong and long-term connection to OSNA and have integrated it into our education programs. Motion to accept OSNA committee recommendations carried.

Darrick asked how serious the potential is for the ownership of OSNA to transfer to FWP. Gael feels there is a strong path to getting that transfer to happen, but there are many variables that could interfere with the transfer. If it is transferred, it is more likely that it would go into Fisheries rather than Wildlife.

Linda Winnie is resigning from the OSNA committee. She's been the head for 13-14 years and has guided it through many challenges. Kay will be looking for someone to co-chair the committee with Bob Lee. They will need to have good administrative skills, be able to work with powerpoint and excel and able to work with budgets. There is the potential to break the job into smaller segments and have more people.

Wylie Bird Blind - Kay recounted the history of this project. A member of FAS owns a farm that has been in his family for generations and is south of Kalispell sitting right on the slough off Wylie Dike Road. He approached FAS to give it to us and it was a very attractive prospect. There were many issues and we decided we weren't in the position to be land owners. He had a goal of it becoming a major educational location. We made the decision to build a blind and built a very expensive and nice bird blind through volunteer labor. At this point, the expensive foundation and unfinished blind are there. He is willing to allow us ongoing access to use the blind and is willing to allow some off-road parking (this would need a new MOU), should we decide to finish the blind. Kay asked for volunteers to work on it. Rod and Pam volunteered. Gael suggested that Flathead Electric Round-up for Safety money for an ADA compliant ramp. At this point, an access ramp needs to be installed and the windows need to be finished, as well as an overall assessment of how it's holding up. A committee was formed: Cory, Rod, Pam, and probably Dick W.. We could look into using MCC for some help. Kay and Gael will start by redoing the MOU. Carole expressed concern for getting spread too thin and says it sounds like a big project. She wonders if we can get some help somewhere. Pam will check with the Bigfork HS shop teacher and see if his class might be able to work on it since they have done outside projects before. Someone wondered if it might be considered abandoned it's an incomplete permitted project. Bob Lee said the permit for the structure was signed off and it is complete and the ramp was always considered a different phase of the project.

Education Committee: Gail announced that their meeting is 3/14 at 4pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm.