

Flathead Audubon BOD Minutes – November 4, 2019

Prepared by: Pam Willison, Secretary

Board Members in Attendance: Will Beyer, Jan Metzmaker, David Manuwal, Margaret Parodi, Kathy Ross, Joe Batts, Rod Walette, Mike Fanning, Kay Mitchell, Bob Lopp, Bob Lee, Gael Bissell, Pam Willison, Carole Jorgenson, Jake Bramante

Others in Attendance: Jill Fanning, Bruce Tannehill, Denny Olson

Meeting was called to order by President Gael Bissell at 6:05 pm.

Administrative:

Gael acknowledged the special efforts of Joe and Bruce for the work updating the format of the financials, and to Mike for doing the application to the Whitefish Community Foundation.

Minutes: no changes, motion by Margaret, Mike second, approved.

Finance: Bruce Tannehill explained that the application to the Whitefish Community Foundation grant caused him to need to change the format of the financials in order to meet their requirements. He reviewed the profit and loss year-to-date (budget compared to current). This report will be presented to the Board quarterly. The Asset report will be presented quarterly also. Monthly the Board will receive a financial activity report for the previous month. Some posting errors have occurred because there are a number of accounts that exist that sound similar to current accounts, but are no longer used. Bruce said that although they can't be removed because of historic data using them, they can be closed so entries can't be made into them. Kay expressed appreciation for the amount of work Joe and Bruce have expended to create the new financials, which opens the door for applying for more grants that require these financials. The newly formatted financial will be distributed to the Board by Gael after one minor correction.

Joe presented the monthly financial activity. He mentioned that we are about \$6600 short to cover expenses, and we may need to draw some from an investment account. There was discussion that the year-end fund raiser and spring birdathon may provide enough income to cover, but if needed, Joe will draw some from investments. Motion to accept and file the financials made by Carole, Kathy second, passed.

Joe provided information about current membership activity. There have been some issues with reconciling names if they are unusual. Joe and Mike are doing a good job of responding on the same day when members have questions. We have 147 members to date (112 last year). Mike clarified that this doesn't mean a 30% increase in membership, because some people are just renewing earlier than last year. Mike estimates about 10 memberships are new. Joe gave some interesting details about the memberships and 1/3 are Basic members. 31% pay with PayPal (this is increasing), more people are giving extra.

Directory Changes: Gail Linne has resigned from the Board so will be removed.

Acknowledgments and thank-you Plan: In the past Jill has been handling the job, but we didn't really have an established plan for doing acknowledgments for donations. Jan did some research on what other groups do and has some thoughts about where we might go to improve. She diagramed the flow of events for donations: Joe gets mail, website/PayPal and prepares the deposits, Mike then gets membership information to enter in his data base (Access), information about memberships get forwarded to Linda Winnie for the newsletter (emails) and for paper newsletters Mike generates mailing labels. For thank you cards, Jill sends a preprinted note if it's \$65 or more + their membership, and if it's a large donation, she uses a nicer card and handwrites the message. Now we have membership cards that need to be distributed (Jake is currently doing at meeting using a spreadsheet). The newsletter lists people who give at certain levels (eagle, osprey, etc.).

Jan feels that we are missing an opportunity for fundraising because we don't capture the information from people who are attending meetings. This would require another layer of activity for someone to handle this data base. She would like to see us improve our efforts to contact people, and to decide if we would like to add some reward gifts at certain levels of giving. Gael wants to put together a committee with Jan and Jake to streamline this process and improve our data base management and standardize what we do in response to donations. Rod asked about how donations from organizations, such as Parkside Credit Union, are handled. They are deposited by Joe, but there isn't a consistent system for sending an acknowledgment. This needs to be included in any policy. Committee is: Jake, Jan, Mike, Joe, Jill. Jill would like to have someone else do the acknowledgments from the year-end challenge - Gail Cleveland had offered to help write cards, so might be able to do this.

Committee Structure and Volunteer Needs: Cory will update us next month.

Conservation Achievement Recognition: postponed until next month.

Committee/Program Reports:

Hawk Watch: We didn't get back up because of snow and closure for road grading so it ended early on Oct 16. Switchback trail wasn't accessible because of severe blow down.

Conservation: Gael wrote a letter (copy emailed) of support for Lost Trail dark skies designation.

Education: Gail Linne has resigned from the board and the chairmanship. We need a new chairman, and Amy Jacobs can't do it. Pam will contact Kim Mitchell, a recently retired teacher who had an interest in becoming involved. Next committee meeting is November 14. Denny mentioned that there needs to be some coordination between Education actions in OSNA and the OSNA committee and invasive control/research. Renee Cordis suggested getting involved in eDNA work and to contact Dr. Ruth Wrightsman from FVCC. Denny and Gael have a meeting scheduled with her. She's very interested in the work we would like to do in OSNA and in

collecting eDNA data at the start, following the restoration, and then tracking the biodiversity. This would involve student groups to do the data collection and interpretation.

Denny is about 2/3 done with a multi-page trail guide. He has spent numerous days cutting up and stacking buckthorn (education trail and test plot), with help from a few faithful volunteers.

Field Trips: Cory will be leaving the field trip committee and Margaret will be joining. Margaret has computer experience, which will be valuable.

Christmas Bird Counts: Bob Lee reported that Craig will do the Bigfork count and Pete will coordinate the Kalispell count but can't do the program in December. Josh has volunteered to do the program.

Grants: Gael sent a rough draft of the end-of-the-year giving challenge for review. Kathy would like to see field trips mentioned, and a few other modifications were suggested. Final feedback needed by Tuesday at noon, and submitted for printing Wednesday. We will include renewed, not-yet renewed, and national members. Mike will print labels. Joe will confirm having enough money in the PO account. Gael will also get envelopes printed. Work committee will be held at 3:30 Monday (11/11) before the program. Gael will confirm the room.

Charitable Giving: Gael feels this might need a committee to address this in the future.

Hospitality: Cory got a volunteer to help (Connie Cohen).

Programs: All are set up except March. David and Bob both have ideas, so it will get filled. Gael would like to see the list on the website. Jan would be glad to include it.

OSNA: Kay reported she has made contact with DNRC asking for the fee they would propose for the coming lease. She will follow up next week if she doesn't hear from them. Good news is that we received \$2000 from the Flathead Conservation District for weed control in OSNA.

Publicity: Jan would like to front-end load the information about the Christmas Bird Counts if she can get the information.

Website – Jake reports there are no new updates.

Conservation: Carole encourages people to get some information about the proposed bill and funding of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. She will send a fact sheet. Also, there has been a road proposed in the Tongass National Forest. It's one of the last intact rainforests in North America. She will send the information so people can comment if they would like.

Newsletter (December):

CBC information – John Hughes (Josh doing program)

Membership cards – there are some details to clarify

Financial Report – do profit and loss for year-end by publishing a link rather than the actual.
Conservation article – David: Bird Life International report (will include link to actual report)
Hawk Watch – Kat will write and Kathy and Dan edit/review
Education – include a thank you for Gail Linne

New Business:

Jeff Marks has a matching grant to put copies of Birds of Montana in 110 public libraries. He has \$3000 and needs an additional \$2000. He would like us to consider making a donation. The books are about \$60. There was discussion about whether libraries actually want them. Gael will contact him back and we will defer a motion to donate. Bob Lopp will contact someone at the Imaginelf library and David will ask the college.

Kathy offered thanks to Jake for trying something new by doing the Waterfowl Wednesday field trips.

Jan motion to adjourn, Jake second, passed. Adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Addendum:

On 11/15/19, Joe Batts made a motion via email that Flathead Audubon donate \$100 to the Birds of Montana to libraries project. This donation would be made in response to an appeal by Jeff Marks, who is organizing the project and the fundraising to place a copy of the reference book Birds of Montana in each public library in Montana that wants a copy. The motion was seconded by Jan Metzmaker.

11/17/19 - Motion passed with a majority vote (11 of 17 members voted); 11 for the motion, and none against. Gael Bissell will provide Joe Batts with the necessary information so he can disburse the funds.