

Flathead Audubon Society BOD Meeting 2/3/2020
Prepared By: Pam Willison, Secretary

Board Members: Kathy Ross, Margaret Parodi, Rod Walette, Bob Lee, Dave Manuwal, Gael Bissell, Cory Davis, Carole Jorgenson, Jan Metzmaker, Jake Bramante, Will Beyer, Pam Willison, Joe Batts

Others in Attendance: Denny Olson, Tom Roberts, Cindy Roberts

Meeting was called to order by President Gael Bissell at 6:06 pm.

Administrative – Old Business

There was a request for new agenda items.

Recognition was given to Rod for taking on the role of Treasurer; Will for his nice story in the PP; Kay for her work on arranging meeting space, negotiation with DNRC for OSNA, etc.; and Cory for all the work on field trips, the committee/volunteer list, etc.

Minutes were reviewed. Margaret asked for clarification about the purpose of the Directors and Officers liability insurance. Cory made a motion to approve; Jan seconded. Motion passed.

PP archives: they have been scanned by various members - return them to Gael or Cory.

PayPal: Jake reported on a problem with PayPal. We were notified that a new administrator had been added, then Jake noticed there was some unusual activity. He contacted Joe and they discovered that someone had used our account to transfer money from another account through our account. Jake feels that there was an issue with a password that allowed hacking into our account. The password has been changed. In addition, Jake also mentioned that we will be switching to a service called Stripe and will not use PayPal anymore.

Donor Policy: Jan reported that thank-you notices are being sent, and it's working. Gael feels there is no need to officially approve a policy yet.

Administrative – New Business:

Education: Gael introduced Tom and Cindy Roberts and they each gave a brief summary of their background. Jake made a motion to add Tom and Cindy Roberts to the Board for a one-year appointment. Bob seconded the motion. Motion passed. Gael appointed Tom and Cindy Roberts to be the co-chairs of the Education Committee. Bob will review the process needed for appointments of committee chair people and will report back at a future meeting.

Next BOD meeting: Gael will be gone for the next BOD meeting and Cory will conduct the meeting. Send information about the agenda and PP content to Cory.

Google for non-profits: Cory had mentioned this resource to Jake as an alternative communication system for sharing messages and documents, and Jake presented various aspects and considerations. The collaboration issues we have been experiencing are: no central repository for files, distribution of materials for board meetings involves countless emails, and issues with email addresses, such as trying to send out a group email and not getting the correct email, not including all the members, or including former members.

Characteristics of Google for nonprofits: it's free; it uses Google Drive which allows the storage of many types of files; files that are word documents, spreadsheets and presentation are editable; we can create drives that have permissions so that we can have board materials and committee based ones as well; everyone gets an email address; we can create emails addressed to a role such as treasurer or president; shared calendars; Google Hangouts, Sites, etc.

We can share a site for a project or event, including lists of needed volunteers. You need to be sure you are logged in under your Audubon account, especially if you have several google accounts. There will be a calendar so we can add events without conflicting with other items on the schedule. This would also replace the public use of personal contact information for Board members, which has been a concern of several BOD members. It will also help centralize the correspondence avenues between Board members, rather than using various email addresses.

Issues related to this system are: there is a learning curve (Jake and Cory offered individual help), people need internet access, we all need to be in approval and participate through this system or it will actually be more complex. It won't work if we don't all give it a fair try. We each need to sign in (through the information Jake distributed to each of us via an email), go to Google.com, check on the upper right corner to be sure you are logged in, and look at apps available to you. Kathy expressed concern for spending her time learning new computer skills, rather than applying her time on research, articles, presentations, etc., so would give it a try, with support from Cory and/or Jake.

Action Plan: Gael has worked with other organizations that use a format similar to the chart she distributed in the BOD packet. It gives you a chance to see the overall annual picture of what is done, by whom, and when. She explained that it's just a tool to help Board members be aware of the timing of important projects and events throughout the year and stay organized. Gael will keep working to update and complete it and may try to share it through the Google setup Jake just described.

Treasurer Report:

- Joe reported we have 201 members; about 10 ahead of last year.
- Joe and Lana are donating a good printer that prints double sided to FAS, and it will be located with Rod. Joe will send a letter to Gael to acknowledge the donation. According to our Accountant it isn't valuable enough to be material, so won't be listed on assets.
- Joe announced that he is resigning as the Treasurer of FAS, but will remain on the Board.

- Cory made a motion to appoint Rod Walette as the Treasurer for FAS for the remainder of the Treasurer's term, which will expire in May 2020. Jan seconded the motion. Motion carried. Bob noted that the position will be filled by election at the May 2020 General Meeting.
- Rod is stepping down from the committees for Birds of Prey, Hawk Watch, and OSNA.
- Pam made a motion to approve the following FAS members for access to the following accounts: Banking – Rod Walette, Gael Bissell, Kay Mitchell – Glacier Bank checking account and Whitefish Credit Union savings account; Investment – Rod Walette – Edward Jones, Domini, Vanguard; Registration and Taxes – Rod Walette – US Treasury, Internal Revenue Service, State of Montana; and Insurance – Rod Walette. Carole seconded. Motion passed.
- Jake made a motion to approve the removal of the following FAS member from the respective accounts: Remove Joseph R. Batts from access to the following accounts: Glacier Bank checking account, Whitefish Credit Union savings account, Edward Jones, Domini, Vanguard, US Treasury, Internal Revenue Service, and State of Montana. Bob seconded. Motion passed.

Newsletter: reviewed the preliminary list of contents and resolved some minor details.

Committee Reports:

Events/Field Trips:

- Birdathon – this is usually mid-June. There are some issues with logistics of tracking the pledges. Rod pointed out that if we are accepted in Great Fish, we can't do fundraising in that time frame. Cory didn't interpret the Great Fish rules the same way, so they will get clarification. We could still have the Birdathon as a fun event. This will be addressed in the future.
- Field Trips – Kathy mentioned that there were often conflicts in June with Beverly Skinner's field trip at Lost Trail and some of the spring events, such as Birdathon. She and Margaret will go ahead and schedule their field trips when their trip leaders are available.

FAS Guided Field Trip to Eastern Montana – Cory reported that he and Bob are proceeding with the plans and they are looking at Memorial Day weekend (leave Friday and get back Monday). They feel it wouldn't conflict with our normal field trips. Cory did not feel this event would conflict with Great Fish (should we be in that) as it is not a general fundraising effort. The fee would include a \$250 donation to FAS (tax-deductible). They are looking at advertising it locally first and it would be available for 6-9 participants, with a total trip cost of \$800-900. They are reviewing the cancellation policy. Through discussion, it was decided that it's great birding territory and we should give it a trial run and see how it goes, and perhaps give FAS members a \$50 discount.

Education Committee:

- Birds of Prey – Denny and Derrick will co-chair the event. Denny has a checklist of items that need to be done. The date would be September 19 in order to avoid a conflict with Great Fish on September 12.
- Road Scholar – there will possibly be 5 events this summer, and they need to start lining up volunteers. Denny, Tom, and Cindy feel comfortable with being able to recruit the needed number of FAS volunteers.
- Ambassadors – Gail would like to see an article in the PP to explain the ambassador program. There is a work /training day at Lone Pine on February 10 starting at 10 am.
- Denny will prepare and send a list of his current activities/projects.

Grants: For Great Fish there needs to be a primary and secondary statement about how the money would be used. Kay is estimating the Great Fish income at \$15,000. Education would be the primary and Hawk Watch or other projects would be the secondary. A motion is necessary. Bob made a motion that the primary funding will be for the Education program, and secondary would be other programs and events, such as Jewel Basin Hawk Watch, Birds of Prey Festival, OSNA, monthly programs, and newsletter publishing expenses. Kathy seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Cory mentioned that we need to provide a budget and there are a couple workshops where you can bring your documents and get feedback about whether they are adequate. They will use the 2018-2019 budget, as our most recently completed fiscal year.

JB Hawk Watch: Gael is working with the FS to renew our 5-year cost-share agreement which likely ends in June. We have \$720 in the FS cost-share account so we will bill them for the expenses we incurred last summer, in order to clear the cost-share account. Rod will invoice the FS to clear the account before the agreement ends in June.

OSNA: DNRC is not willing to license this to FAS without both DNRC and FAS working on a long-term solution to permanently compensate the school trust fund for that use. Options include purchase of a permanent easement, conservation easement, or land exchange. In the short-term, DNRC needs to adjust FAS/MA's annual license cost per their regulations. Our current license expires the end of February, and it covers all 442 acres. They are proposing a license for just the mainland acres where we have access, trails, kiosk, bench, etc., or about 49-50 acres. In the interim, they are looking to license the mainland area to FAS/MA for \$2000-\$2200 per year for 2-3 years while we figure out a long-term solution. If it isn't resolved in the next 2-3 years, then both parties will probably be done working on it and we will probably give up the license. Kay is in discussion with Montana Audubon to find out if they are willing to help with the costs of the higher fee. Board members suggested splitting it with MA. Gael mentioned that there are several viable money sources that we and/or FWP could try to tap into for long-term protection that would compensate DNRC for the value of the parcel. DNRC, FWP, and FAS will continue to explore options over the next several months. Denny asked about the clearing of invasive Common Buckthorn, and Gael said there is also some restoration money available through their private lands forestry program which might be used to fund that work. There is another meeting with DNRC this week to negotiate the license; because the license expires, we

will need Board approval to expend funds for a 1-3 year license. Bob Lee made a motion to approve spending up to \$2200 per year for up to three years for a license agreement with DNRC for the mainland area of OSNA. Jan seconded. Motion carried. Carole asked what happens if the license isn't issued, and Gael said DNRC would be able to do what they want with the area. Margaret asked the question about how we got involved in being land managers and whether this is what we should be doing.

Website: Jake did a "fly-by" message last month to 415 email addresses, and only 1 person asked to unsubscribe (they don't live here anymore). Also, 10 people subscribed as a result.

Programs – Dave said they are set up through May. He will get information to Jan for publicity.

CAR – The award will be presented to Linda deKort next month.

Wylie: Bob got an email about issues on Wylie Dyke Road where the caretaker/tenant is trying to kick people off the road and is saying negative things about FAS. Kathy said the owner of the property is working to remove him and doesn't support his actions. If people ask about it, we should do damage control by letting people know that what the caretaker is saying isn't true. People who have been confronted by him are choosing to leave to avoid problems.

Conservation: Carole pointed out that there are major issues related to conservation, especially with the undoing of the Migratory Bird Act, and NEPA, which provide important protections. The damage to environmental/wildlife protections is unprecedented and long reaching. She would welcome any help dealing with conservation issues.

Upcoming meeting/program – publicize field trips (Freezeout, Eastern Montana, Backyard Bird Count). Dave suggested to drop some meeting items so the live birds don't have to wait.

Jan made a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm