

Flathead Audubon BOD Meeting 3/2/2020  
Minutes prepared by: Pam Willison, Secretary

Board members present: Jan Metzmaker, Jake Bramante, Will Beyer, Derrick Rathe, Mike Fanning, David Manuwal, Kathy Ross, Rod Walette, Tom Roberts, Cindy Roberts, Kay Mitchell, Bob Lee, Cory Davis, Pam Willison, Margaret Parodi, Carole Jorgenson,

Others present: Denny Olson, Jill Fanning

The meeting was called to order by Vice-President Cory Davis at 6:00 pm.

**Administrative Regular Business:**

Additions were made to the agenda.

Minutes: Two changes were made. Jan made a motion to approve with corrections, Jake seconded. Motion approved.

Archive PP: return them to Cory as soon as you can, after they have been scanned.

Financials: Cory mentioned that Rod had suggested recognizing Joe Batts for his years of service as the Treasurer. Cory will mention it at the meeting next Monday.

Rod reported 4 new memberships for a total of 204. Mike mentioned the actual number would be a bit higher due to some complimentary memberships we have given.

Checkbook activity report was distributed with the Board packet. Some adjustments are needed because of the transition to the new software system. There are some issues with the numbers, but the correct current checking balance is \$13,926.77. There are some details that need to be resolved related to the documentation of existing endowments we have received. Future meetings will be held to resolve these by the end of the fiscal year in June.

Rod has been working to resolve the fraud problem with PayPal. With some assistance from Jake, Rod was able to get in contact with the correct people at PayPal. They discovered that in addition to the first fraudulent transaction, there were 2 others pending so he was referred to a higher-level person who assured Rod that FAS is not liable for these and they will be resolved by PayPal.

Rod has also been working on the renewal of our insurance policies. The rate they quoted us was significantly higher than last year (over \$1400). The rate is based on the number of members and nonmembers who participate in our events and programs. The finance committee worked with the guidelines from the insurance company to establish some more accurate numbers. As a result, our insurance rate came down to \$791 and the policy was renewed. Rod said one thing that became apparent is that we need to keep records of the

number of people participating in all our events and activities, and whether they are members. A waiver form will be used to do this, and the form will be returned to Rod.

A while earlier, Rod had talked to Wendy Ostrom-Price at Flathead Electric for a donation to fund our new display. We have received \$500 from FEC to cover the expenses for redoing the display. Denny gave us a summary of what the display reworking will include.

Jan made a motion to accept and file the checkbook report, with the correct balance provided. Bob seconded. Motion passed.

### **Administrative New Business:**

OSNA: Kay referred to the document in the Board packet related to the license which expired 2/29/20. In working with the local DNRC staff, they explored different ways for us to still have management and activities. DNRC in Helena was not interested in renewing our 10-year license, but they decided to offer us a special recreation permit that is renewable on a 1-year basis. An advantage to this is that it is controlled by the local DNRC office, rather than in Helena. Kay and Cory took what they offered and reworked it to include terms we want, and they seemed to be willing to accept it. Tomorrow, Cory will go and sign for a 2-year special recreation permit. In the long term, DNRC wants us to arrange for permanent protection for OSNA, such as a land trade or permanent easement with DNRC. Kay and Gael have been working with Alan Wood and Kris Tempel of FWP and they are willing to help us find money sources and assist us through the process. The DNRC mission is dictated by the legislature which requires them to generate income for the school trust fund, so it causes the situation to be very complicated. Kay has also been talking with Amy Seaman from Montana Audubon about taking care of all the financial requirements on the recreation permit, if we do the volunteer work and management. Kathy asked for clarification about the area to be covered by the permit, because it was mentioned that it would just be the mainland trail area. Kay said that the permit will actually cover the entire original area. Kathy also asked for clarification about whether we need to have a DNRC permit to go there. Kay said that our members and participants do not have to have a permit because of our organizational permit, but other people should. At the end of two years, if we are not showing progress in making a permanent protection, we can ask DNRC for one more year, or we can walk away from it and give them notice saying we aren't willing to renew and they will require us to remove all improvements we installed. Margaret asked for clarification about what they expect at the end of two years. Kay said we would need to be making progress toward permanent protection. Denny asked about legislative protection, and Kay said that yes, we do have some resources along that avenue to try to get some changes at the State level and that the woman who is a strong advocate for us, is very interested in getting it protected in perpetuity. Carole asked about involving FVCC, and Bob said they have used it somewhat, but we haven't asked them to help with any funding. Kay also mentioned that Linda Winnie has stepped back, and is ending her involvement in management of OSNA (a process she started last summer when replacement Chairpersons were put in place).

Kay made a motion that Flathead Audubon Board authorizes Gael Bissell, President, and/or Vice-President Cory Davis to execute the special recreational use permit for Owen Sowerwine on behalf of Flathead Audubon Society. Mike seconded. Mike asked for clarification about whether we still have some maintenance responsibilities, and Kay said that we will still do the maintenance, including weed management. Motion passed.

Great Fish Challenge: Kay reported that our application made it through the initial vetting process. That means our application is adequate to go further in the process, after we made one minor change they requested. Kay produced a timeline of tasks that need to be completed as the application proceeds (included in Board packet). May 14 they will announce the organizations that have been accepted for participation in the fund-raising phase. Last year the average amount raised was \$43,000, so this has some nice potential. From July 30 – September 18, the Whitefish Community Foundation sends out solicitations for donations to the Great Fish participants. During this time, we have to be hands-off in this process – money cannot come through us and we can't hold any fundraising. This would mean that we should not do the Birdathon as a fund-raiser, but only as a fun activity. Bob asked if we could redirect people to the Whitefish Community Foundation, and Kay said we could. We can provide forms for the Foundation, but we cannot receive the forms or any checks. It's important that people write on the check and/or the donation form that it's for Flathead Audubon. A significant benefit of participating comes when they receive \$5000 – 25,000 in our name. That amount will be eligible for a percentage match from the WFCF Match Fund.

Volunteers: (Kay will be working to fill the volunteer spots)

- Thank-you notes must be sent within 48 hours of a donation being made in our honor. Great Fish will send the tax deduction acknowledgement. We cannot give anything, including a membership, in return. Assuming we will be accepted to participate, thank you notes will be prepared by: Jan Metzmaker, Gail Cleveland, and Carole Jorgenson (will do 1 month).
- We need a marketing committee to attend a meeting on June 18 at 8:30 – Jake, Jan, Bruce Tannehill and Gail Cleveland will participate for us.
- On their community celebration on 9/12 we need a booth and have 3 people at the booth at all times. Denny will work with the Education committee and ambassadors to try to cover this.
- Cory will attend the Launch party on July 30 at 5 pm.

Google Docs: Cory is working on a manual and Jake and Cory would like everyone to try to use this for their FAS email.

Educator Report: Denny explained the display earlier. The Sandhill Crane Trunk is done except the costume activity. Common Birds of the Flathead has been redone and is ready for use. He will be working with FLT on field trips. The Science Fair went well and Denny would like to invite the winner of our award to a meeting to present her project – she examined insect diversity in 7 different habitats locations. He also judged the county spelling bee.

Denny has been talking to Kari Gabrielle for Wild Wings about a way for her to do a fundraiser through us in order to raise money to improve her enclosures for her birds. We could also volunteer time to help do the construction. She estimates \$5000 for materials. It was agreed that we will think options and consider it at the BOD meeting next month.

Denny has a conflict with the time of the Arbor Day project for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders and will not be in town. Pam will inquire whether Pat Jaquith would be willing to help her do the presentations for FAS. The event will be May 1 (not Arbor Day on April 24).

Related to public education, Carole would like see us compile some facts about the impact of climate change on birds in Montana. Denny is doing a presentation on this in a couple weeks through Senior Institute and can make his information available. Along that line, Jake received an inquiry from Kianna Gardner from the InterLake about that same topic. Jake feels these are opportunities to raise these issues and that FAS should be stepping forward on these topics.

Education Committee: Cindy reported the committee met on February 19, and the primary issue continues to be finding ways to market the trunks and get them in use. They will be putting together a page to recap the resources for teachers, and get it into teacher mailboxes. Derrick mentioned that FWP and State Parks are using trunks for field trips and will be sure to check them out on-line to provide better tracking for data on usage.

Birds of Prey: Denny mentioned that he hasn't gotten any volunteers yet. He will announce it at the meeting next week and work on getting people signed up.

Road Scholar: This is in Glacier in July and August – Denny has a few volunteers so far. There may be 5 sections this year with the potential for \$2500 income.

Birdathon: Cory wondered if we should go ahead and plan it as a backup fundraiser in case we don't get into Great Fish. Otherwise, we would do as a fun day. Because of a field trip on June 13, it will likely be June 20.

Soroptimists: Mike mentioned the application is due March 15 and feels it's a futile effort because unless it's for a program specifically for girls then we won't be successful. He feels that until their application policy changes, that we should save our effort.

Girls Who Code: Their birding app is moving forward with a connection to FVCC. Kay suggested giving recognition to the team of girls, especially after they won the congressional award. Jan made a motion to give them a CAR award, Derrick seconded. Motion passed. Cory will make the certificates. Kay will do a notice in the PP, and contact them to attend our April meeting.

Oil Safe Flathead: Gael was contacted by Dave Hadden about joining other organizations to support a movement to seek a rail safety and spill prevention plan for the Flathead. Carole and Lewis, Conservation Committee, both were in support of it. Mike made a motion to sign on, Carole seconded. Motion passed.

## **Committee Reports:**

Conservation Committee: Carole would like to see some more people on the conservation committee. Dave has offered to help, and they are seeking some additional members to help with conservation issues. Cory will announce it at the next meeting. Denny would be interested in participating in order to be aware of issues for education activities.

Programs: Dave suggested that we consider a donation of \$100 for Wild Wings for their February program. There is money in the budget for this, so Dave will get an invoice to Rod.

Pileated Post: The list was reviewed. There was discussion of it being the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day. Denny might use his article to cover the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He will also check with Mayre Flowers about whether the school program is being done and what organization is coordinating it.

Warbler Weekend: Jill announced that May 29-31 is Warbler Weekend (provided the space is available).

Field Trips – They will provide the list to people at the meeting next Monday. Bob said the Freeze-out field trip is filling up.

Fund-raising field trip – Cory said there are 5 signed up so far, and the minimum is 6.

Website – Everything is working. If the issue with PayPal has been resolved, there may not be a change to Stripe for on-line payments.

Nominations: Bob wants suggestions so he can have nominees for the May meeting.

## **Announcements:**

Carole mentioned the International Bear Conference will be in Kalispell September 21-25.

Derrick mentioned that this Saturday, noon – 2, they are starting training for a citizen owl project with Chris Hammond from FWP. You have to survey three nights in three months.

Because of schedule problems, the Going Batty Field trip will be July 18. Kathy will include that in the field trips.

Jan made a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.