

FAS Board of Directors On-line Meeting April 6, 2020

Prepared by: Pam Willison, Secretary

Board Members Participating: Pam Willison, Gael Bissell, Bob Lee, Carole Jorgensen, Tom Roberts, Cindy Roberts, Derrick Rathe, Jake Bramante, Joe Batts, Kay Mitchell, Margaret Parodi, Rod Walette, Will Beyer, Cory Davis, Dave Manuwal, Kathy Ross, Mike Fanning  
Others Participating: Denny Olson

Meeting was called to order by President Gael Bissell at 6:03 pm. The meeting is being held on-line because of the limitations in place due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

**Administrative:**

Bob made a motion to appoint Carole Jorgenson, as Co-Chair of Conservation Committee, and Joe Batts, as Chair of the Hospitality Committee, and both to the Board of Directors for a term ending in May 2021. Cory seconded the motion. Motion passed.

March meeting minutes. Dave motion to accept. Joe seconded. No discussion. Motion passed.

Financial Report: Check register report was provided in the packet. Rod provided the accurate balance. There was no discussion. Profit and Loss report was provided in the packet. No questions or discussion. Rod mentioned the losses on the list of investments, as presented in the packet. For perspective, Rod mentioned that the Vanguard account is at the level it was in 2018, so we have basically lost the gains we had made. Rod mentioned that a Finance Committee meeting will be held in the near future. Rod also mentioned that he has been researching whether there were any endowments that have restrictions on their use. In the Finance Committee meeting, there will be discussion about what to do with the investment accounts. Gael mentioned that after the budget is prepared, the Finance Committee will be presenting information to the full Board for input – they will not be making the final decisions. Gael mentioned that Larry from MA has provided some information about new tax credits people can claim for donations to non-profits. Gael feels this is a good incentive for people to make donations. Joe suggested this information be included in the PP and Gael asked that he write the article. Motion to accept and file the financial report made by Kay and seconded by Jake. Motion passed.

Gael asked for input about holding the May general annual meeting. Margaret and Dave said they think we should not hold it. Bob Lee said he just received some information through a medical director in the valley, and the coronavirus is predicted to peak here around April 25, so it will still be around in early May. He suggests we not hold the meeting in May and consider it for the fall. Joe asked if the source of that information is local and Bob said it is and is based on the current conditions in Western Montana. Jake questioned whether there needs to be communication to the membership in order to continue the board members, etc. Gael mentioned that is covered later in the agenda. Bob said this situation isn't necessarily addressed in the laws because this has never happened before, but feels it's a good policy to

have a motion to move the meeting to fall. Joe made a motion that due to pandemic limitations on public gatherings, we will not hold our general meeting in May 2020, and will hold it at the earliest, feasible opportunity, and according to our by-laws this change will be publicized to our members. Bob seconded. Joe amended the motion to include cancelling field trips until it is feasible to schedule them. Bob seconded the amendment. Amended motion passed.

Bob made a motion that due to current state regulations that limit public gatherings that are expected to continue through May 2020 and concerns for spread of coronavirus, we vote to extend the expiring terms of all Officers and Directors whose terms are due to expire in May 2020, to our next scheduled general meeting that is allowed by Montana/county rule or law. Joe seconded. Motion passed.

Discussion about events and cancellations as a result by public limitations, and what to do instead in order to stay connected with members.

Derrick mentioned that Lone Pine State Park is planning to do some virtual hikes. He would be willing to transfer the knowledge he has gained to do some virtual birding trips for FAS. He mentioned there are a variety of lengths and ways to post, including some edited formats. Jake mentioned that the time commitment would be greater if the postings have to be edited. Jake also suggested an increase in email contacts to keep better touch and keep people informed of the resources we are making available. Bob agreed to these ideas. Rod mentioned the MA is starting the curlew survey next week and suggested that people could sign up and do a survey. Jake suggested that ideas come to him and he will do a Flathead Audubon Fly-by email to contain all suggestions. He would like to do it next Monday, April 13, in place of the meeting. Kathy would like to do some of the cancelled field trips virtually, as Derrick was suggesting. Gael mentioned that the Hawk Watch tablet could be used. Kathy has that tablet. Derrick mentioned that the LP posts start tomorrow and are all nature based and will vary in length and topic. The Facebook one is actually going to be question and answer in live time – he wondered if we could do that and have Denny do the Q&A. Derrick told Kathy to get ahold of them for assistance. Derrick is willing to go help produce these and then could share them on the Lone Pine account too.

Denny also suggested he do some brief daily bird tidbit based on the birds of the Flathead. He could also do the topics he does for meetings, in a game format and interactive. Denny would like to do some prizes. Gael said Rick would offer a couple watercolor paintings. Denny feels OSNA would also work for a virtual field trip. Also, he is almost done with the Why Birds Rock! video he has produced and it could be used. Gael asked if Tom and Cindy would be available to help – and they said they could. Tom also offered a couple paintings as prizes.

Kathy, Jake, Rod, Pam, Denny, Derrick, Tom and Cindy will work on the ideas that have been presented. Jake and Denny will do a couple short ones to work out the details. Derrick, Jake, and Denny will work to coordinate the efforts and timing. Denny

volunteered to be the focal point for collecting the ideas. Derrick mentioned that there are still challenges for kids having consistent resources, so they are also working on getting resources to teachers to include in the materials they are providing through their classroom. Denny mentioned that there are a number of geo-caching sites in OSNA and wondered if we could connect to that. Derrick cautioned against it because of touching objects in the cache and it was agreed that wasn't a good idea.

Fundraising activities will be dealt with by the Finance Committee at their meeting. Cory will send out an email about this meeting. It will be held on-line.

### **Committee Reports:**

OSNA – Kay reported that the MOU for OSNA has been updated and modified to reflect the current situation with the recreational use permit. The OSNA committee provided feedback about the content and agreement. The most controversial item was a desire to ask MA to do a 60/40 split on the management expenses because we invest so much more time and energy to the management. Suggestions from the committee will become the basis for Gael to negotiate a final MOU with MA. The full OSNA budget would include \$2000 per year for the permit, plus \$1400-1500 for weed management, cost of printing brochures, rental fees for mowers, etc. We would invoice them once a year for 60% of the total. Gael wondered if the license fee would be 50/50 because we already gave Larry at MA that amount to give to his Board, and Kay said that would stay at 50/50. The 60/40 would be in effect in the coming fiscal year of July 2020 – June 2021. Gael will finalize the MOU with MA and get back to us, especially if it's significantly different. This agreement would be in place over the next two years when we will be under a recreational use permit. Gael asked for any input to come to her as she will be negotiating with MA.

PP – need to add an article about our virtual activities.

Program - none. Bob and Dave are working to move missed presenters to next year.

How to help birds – Kathy will have a Native Plant article

Field trips – put June and July in PP but with caution they might be cancelled. Kathy suggested mentioning the virtual field trips.

Birdathon – Kay feels we won't need it as a fund-raiser. Denny feels we probably couldn't plan the logistics doing it as a fundraiser with short notice, but can keep it on the radar as a fun event. Gael said if we lose the Great Fish, we need to keep it as a possible and just do phone calls to get sponsors. Cory suggested all donations be on-line. The date is still June 20. Finance Committee will find a coordinator. Derrick suggested links to donate on our virtual posts.

Great Fish – Kay said they are planning to proceed and we will find out May 15 if chosen

OSNA work day – Bob will schedule it and get it in the PP

Nominees – Bob said those can be postponed to fall to match the meeting

Forest Expo – has been cancelled

Science Fair – Denny needs to get the photo

Birds of Prey festival – September 18, Gael will get the notes of the last meeting to Denny

May meeting – eliminate all contents from PP

Migratory Bird Day - Kathy said to use the same one as last year.

State Bird Festival – Joe reports that MA is still mulling it over and may modify the format. He will let them know if he hears before the newsletter deadline.

Fundraiser field trip – Cory and Bob feel they need to cancel it.

Conservation Educator Niche – Denny will make suggestions for birding activities

Conservation – Carole plans to write a status report about on-going conservation issues and she wonders if they want it to the PP. Kay said that would be good. She also mentioned the letter Gael wrote about the Sliters property. She said we should probably write a comment about the area near Lost Trail. Denny mentioned that while the focus is on the pandemic, this administration is doing many things to undercut environmental protections. Gael will mention it in her message in the PP.

Gael mentioned she received good comments from the Sliter family in response to her letter about the potential donated land for a State Park at Somers.

Kari at Montana Bird Lady is seeking ideas and support for improvements in her bird structures. Denny is encouraging her to register as a non-profit so she could seek donations.

Gael is coordinating an effort to help Barbara Summer clear some downed trees, and she's overwhelmed by the amount.

Jake made a motion to adjourn. Cory seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm.