

Flathead Audubon Society Board Meeting Minutes 2/18/2019

Submitted by: Pam Willison, Secretary

Members in attendance: Kay Mitchell, Cory Davis, Jan Metzmaker, Jake Bramante, Bob Lee, Pam Willison, Rod Walette, Gail Linne, Joe Batts, Kathy Ross, Bob Lopp,

Others in attendance: Denny Olson

Meeting was called to order by President Kay Mitchell at 6:00 pm

Minutes: Jan motion to approve, Kathy second, approved.

Treasurers report: Expense report and bank balance reviewed. Jan motion, Rod second, approved.

Joe reported that our insurance to cover the board and accidents was renewed. He isn't totally pleased with the services we are getting and it costs about \$1400 per year. There was another company he approached for a bid, but they didn't have time to complete a bid, so in a few months, Joe will revisit the possibility of changing companies. The insurance company needs to have valid information about the number of people are attending field trips. Kathy wondered if the participants of the Christmas Bird Counts should be included. It was decided they should. Kay also feels we should also do a head count on attendance at our general meetings. Bob Lee has already does attendance estimates and will continue.

Presidents Report:

Kay asked that the minutes reflect an action which was taken by the Board via email as a result of the meeting scheduled for 2/4/19 being cancelled and a need for a timely decision. A motion was made by Mike F. to "allow Montana Audubon to use our mailing list". Seconded by Jan M. Discussion was held and on 2/7/2019, the motion passed 9 to 3 in an email vote.

Marylane Pannell has submitted a resignation from the board. She needs to focus her energy on her personal life. A replacement is needed to be appointed to complete her term through May 2020. Pam was willing to be appointed. Bob Lee made a motion, Bob Lopp seconded, passed.

Kay explained the proposal made by Bruce Joe, and Kay after meeting and reviewing our investments. It was suggested that we move our funds from the Domini fund which is losing money, into another of our funds that is generating a profit. It was pointed out that the Domini fund does very socially responsible investing and we originally invested to support that concept. The money could be moved into another fund that also does socially responsible investing. Bob Lee made a motion to sell the Domini Fund stock for the purpose of reinvestment. Jake seconded. Bob Lopp pointed out that the need for this action was identified several years ago and it was postponed to support their socially responsible platform, however, their yield has never improved. Kathy supports the socially responsible investing and suggested Vanguard as a place to reinvest the funds. She will send information about Vanguard to Kay and so they can investigate that avenue. Motion to sell stock and reinvest was passed.

Bob Lopp is willing to serve as an Alternate Rep for the Board of Montana Audubon. Jan motion, Joe seconded, motion carried. Joe explained the history of how the relationship between the chapters and the representation on the Board has changed and says the definition of "member" is very unclear. Bob Lopp mentioned that he served on the MA Board in the past, including serving as Treasurer through some challenging times.

Questions about Hawk Watch for 2019 have been tabled. The final report for 2018 needs to be completed by the end of March before the work and funding issues are addressed for the coming season. There have been commitments from EWP for some funding and some

overnight accommodations, and for \$500 from WIN. There is some uncertainty about how much money is needed to hire someone to cover the schedule in October, but at this point we are going to assume we will be doing it in 2019.

Conservation Education Report: Committee Chair Gail has scheduled an Education Committee meeting for March for work on the annual review of their work. An April meeting will then be held to make the plans for the coming year.

Denny reported that he is making progress on working on the Bird Education Proposal and we received a set of Goals and Objectives prior to our meeting. He is partnering with Flathead Land Trust and FWP with the possibility of the 3 seeking private funding together for the education trunks and field trips. FLT is focusing on the education aspects related to the Sandhill Cranes and the West Valley viewing area. Audubon would be interested in focusing on education aspects related to Osprey and OSNA. Kathy inquired about the amount of usage of the current trunks before creating more trunks. Denny said usage is increasing, partly due to the Ambassador program and increased awareness. Gail said the new trunks would be directed specifically to the field trip program.

Denny meets with the principals tomorrow morning. The school system has very limited money to support increased field trips. That is why its attractive to offer them the funding to support the field trips we are asking the students to participate in related to birds. He will also be promoting the existing trunks through the administrators to be sure they know about them. Kathy took a group of home school students on a field trip today and she said they weren't even aware of Audubon, but their science specialist is currently teaching owls. She feels that she has a real connection with them now since they saw the 2 Snowy Owls on their field trip.

Denny intends for the various parts of the curriculum to be useable "stand-alone", or completed entirely. Matching the grade-level standards is pointing to using the program at the 7th grade level. He doesn't intend for it to be exclusive to Kalispell schools and so it can be used with some of the rural school districts, which often have more flexibility in scheduling and participating in field trips and outside resources. If used in Kalispell schools, every school in the district has to be included and it's more challenging to schedule. Kathy mentioned that home schools have the most flexibility in scheduling and they can drive to locations themselves. Denny replied that all groups can be included, but one group won't be included to the exclusion of the other.

Kay feels that the Board needs to give an indication as to whether they are in support of the program, but doesn't feel there needs to be a motion. A show of thumbs was all "two thumbs up".

Kay asked Denny about work on the video, and it's still a viable project, but he hasn't gotten back to working on it.

Newsletter: the deadline is today so there is no need to review the content list.

Diane will make her presentation on wolf research after all! Audubon is pairing with Flathead Wildlife and North Fork Preservation Organization to reschedule the wolf program Diane Boyd had intended to present at our 2/11 meeting which was cancelled due to weather. It will be at Gateway Mall Room 26, on March 7, at 7 pm. Jan mentioned that it would be wise to do an introduction that focuses on the expectation to be courteous. There is no reason to expect problems, but there have been some recent meetings that have had a negative atmosphere. For promotion, Jan will do a press release and Jake will put it on facebook and our website.

Denny mentioned that the Beauty of Birds class at Flathead High will not be held. The class at FVCC will pretty much fill the need.

Kathy reported that a meeting was held with FWP about the native planting at the West Valley

contact the landowners about before decisions can be made, as the landowners have some say in what is planted and how.

Linda Winnie is looking for feedback about the options for our involvement with the license on OSNA. Bob Lee commented that the cost would be an important factor. The OSNA committee will be meeting next Friday and will work through the details. Some good news about OSNA is that the control might be transferred from DNRC to FWP, which matches better with the use, and which we have been requesting for some time. Flathead Land Trust has talked to the Nature Conservancy and they are working on a big package of land trades with DNRC, and OSNA is one that might be transferred. Then Nature Conservancy would either transfer or sell it to FWP, making it easier for us manage and they would pay the expenses for us to manage it.

Jake reported on the activities related to our promotional activities.

*Welcome packets were created and used at the last meeting.

*They discussed the use of stickers by various target markets - for kids, and at the various events we participate in. They haven't been priced or ordered but are identified as a good item to use.

*The FAS logo has some issues related to the ability to use it at different sizes/surfaces because it's a drawing that has been scanned. Jake did some preliminary work on redesigning a new logo. His goal was to not abandon our logo completely, but to modernize it. He provided printed examples of many variations of a pileated woodpecker and stick/or no stick, as well as changes in text. The logo changes would need to be made before looking into any stickers or embroidered items. Denny wants to be sure it can be increased large enough for a banner, and Jake confirmed that it will work. Kay would like the Board be ready to decide at the last meeting.

Committee New Reports:

Conservation Roundtable: Denny attended the meeting in January which was about the trails plan and it has been tabled by the county because of a concern for the cost to the county. The February meeting was about agriculture and how the role of the farmer is dependent on many factors, including political actions, tariffs, and market cycles. The decisions of farmers affects open land and thereby wildlife and habitat.

Kay reported from Lewis Young that FWP might begin a sharp-tail grouse recovery project in western Montana for fall 2019. Comments are needed by March 17. Wild birds captured in eastern Montana would be transplanted to western Montana to start new populations. Lewis had composed a letter of support on our behalf. Jan made a motion to authorize him to send the letter, Kathy second. Motion passed.

Memberships: Joe reported that we have 184 members (compares to 170 last year). He feels that Mike has done a great job of following up and reminding people to renew.

Field Trips: Kathy reported that most everyone who did field trips last year are signing up to do one again. Those that are scheduled will be in the newsletter.

Cory reported that they received lots of feedback about their idea of doing a donation-generating field trip to Bowdoin and many points in between. They feel they are behind schedule to get it together this year, so will work to get it set for 2020. There are some conflicting dates with other birding events at that time of year, but they feel their audience is a different group of people. Joe reported that MT Audubon is willing to do advertising for the trip through their publications and sources. They might be looking for a split on the donations. Also, Joe said the UM Alumni Association might be interested. Denny mentioned that he could promote it through the birding group he does through Road Scholar. Cory said in Sept or Oct they will be ready to revisit it.

MT Audubon Public Policy and Legislative Bill Table: Joe reported that the President of the Board of MT Audubon has appointed him to be the head of a task force on public policy to try to

national, and we should have received a couple mailings from Amy. Unlike neighboring states, none of our 3 national elected officials sit on any of the conservation committees in Wash DC.

Other Business:

Bob Lopp reported that in the Winter issue of Flathead Living there is an excellent article about the glacial floods of western Montana.

Kathy brought donation application information for Park Side Credit Union and Soroptimists. She also said that next year Soroptimists will have a different process. She gave both to Rod for the grants committee.

Jake and Gael have talked to the managers of REI and can reconnect with them once we have a better idea of financial need for Hawk Watch. Bob Lee mentioned that they also do local outings and Hawk Watch might be included in that as a way to recruit some younger volunteers.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17pm.