

Flathead Audubon BOD Minutes - December 2, 2019

Prepared by: Pam Willison, Secretary

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

Others in attendance: Denny Olson, Jill Fanning

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 by President Gael Bissell.

**Administrative:**

Gael offered special appreciation: Jan Metzmaker for doing Thank-You's for end-of-year donations, and Jim Rychwalski for processing, labeling, and mailing the printed Pileated Post each month.

We may experience some issues scheduling conference rooms because the Director of United Way has retired. We will send Sherry a thank-you for her years of helping. Gael will talk to Sherry before she's done and ask for her advice about how we could best schedule rooms.

**Added to agenda:** Solstice celebration, transport costs for June Ash (Birds of Prey), the scope

**Minutes** of November BOD meeting: Mike motion to approve, Bob Lee second, motion passed. There was discussion about whether interim email votes should be added to the upcoming BOD meeting as old business, which is what we will do in the future.

**Financials:** Joe reported that there is \$825 from members and \$1150 from the Board for end-of-year donations. Joe will forward the monthly financial activity to us because it didn't get in the packet for the meeting. He said there was nothing noteworthy. Jan is doing the thank-you's for EOY donations and is sending an acknowledgement for every donation. Mike said in the past we haven't done any thank-you's for these, so this is new, and feels it's a good thing to do. Jan wonders if there should be a policy that sets thresholds.

**Changes to directory:** Cory and Margaret have new emails. Carole wondered if there is a way to make our Audubon e-mails go out under an Audubon heading so she can easily find them. Jake said there are ways to do it, but it would involve some changes. We put it on the back burner for the future.

**Committees and Volunteer Needs:** Cory said there is nothing new on the structure of committees. There are no new volunteer needs, but let him know if you have one or want them announced again. Gael mentioned that we need a few Education Committee members/volunteers and a chairperson. There was some talk about grants and finance working together, and also combining website and publicity as communication.

**Conservation Achievement Recognition:** Cory distributed ballots to go with the CAR list sent out in the packet. We discussed additions to the nomination list and will investigate some of the ideas and pass them to Cory to add for the future. Cory will tally the votes for the business and individual categories by the end of the meeting.

**Committee/Program Reports:**

**Education:** Denny sent a written report and doesn't have anything to add. Kay would like to see the contents of the Sandhill Crane and Osprey education trunks at a BOD meeting. He continues to work on improvements to some of the older trunks too. Gael asked Denny to explain a possible grant – it's from the Montana Department of Agriculture and Kimma would be the contact person. Denny reminded us to provide some feedback to answer some of the questions he posed in his written report via individual emails. He will report back in January about what he heard. Kathy asked that the current Strategic Plan be distributed to everyone so they can use it while preparing their answers. Jake suggested Denny set a deadline so we have an end point, and Rod reminded the Education Committee meets January 16 so we should plan to cover it in the meeting. Denny agreed to do the short presentation at the Solstice presentation. Jake and Denny are going to put up a Barred Owl nest house in OSNA.

**Conservation:** Carole didn't have anything new to mention. Gael pointed out that the last newsletter covered several conservation issues. She would like to see some focus on **what you can do** in your own yard to have a more positive feeling. Denny reminded that Linda Winnie is still looking for someone to write an article about the impact on Montana birds. Denny said the Birds of the Flathead trunk could include content dealing with "what can you do to help". Kathy is going to write an article about planting native plants (not pollinator gardens). Gael would like to see FAS take the lead on getting a presentation in the valley about what we can each do to help support survival of our local birds. Cory will send a link to a presentation that contained many of these topics (Survival By Degrees). Dave commented that with all the development in the valley, that covering topics with a local focus would be the best. Carole suggested a brochure for realtors or developers about things that can be done so new developments aren't so sanitized. Kathy covers that in a presentation she does and would be glad to present to any group that is willing to schedule (30-45 minutes). Rod mentioned there was an inquiry from a Realtors group to sponsor Birds of Prey and we opted out and he could follow up. Jill suggested we consider a panel presentation at FVCC focused on birds. We recognize that we need help to organize something of this scope. Carole will contact the people who organized the recycle workshop a few weeks ago. Kathy said Native Plant Society is interested in coordinating with us on some efforts. Dave wondered whether the local landscapers have any sort of organization so they could be contacted as a group. Gael would like to see us build on this theme and get organized enough to do something to present information to the valley.

**Field Trips:** Cory, Kathy, and Margaret met and are working on field trips for next year. They are also working with Jake to involve our website for better tracking of them. Carole wondered about using "Meetup" to coordinate the field trips. Kathy said they would look into it. Kathy will work on coordinating with the Native Plant Society to share resources for some field trips. Bob mentioned that Choteau has started a wild bird weekend the same weekend Bob usually

takes a group to Freezeout Lake. Bob suggests switching away from the weekend and going on Thursday/Friday. Everyone agreed, so he will work on that change. Cory said they discussed a bird feeder watching field trip, which would be good for kids.

Finance/Score: Kay mentioned that she contacted the SCORE organization of volunteers seeking a mentorship for FAS for financial reports, based on a suggestion from Rod. We are now paired with Richard Dillon, a local tax accountant, and Rod, Gael, Joe, and Kay met with him last week. He felt we were doing OK, but need to switch to a non-profit version of QuickBooks. After we get converted to the correct software they will meet again. Rod reminded that he said we need to make a by-law change about fund transfers.

Grants: There has been some work done on changing the bridges in the southern part of OSNA and seeking a grant to pay for these. Kay reminded that in order to make changes of the bridges in OSNA that we need to get permission from DNRC and that we are in the middle of negotiating the lease renewal so should wait until that is resolved. Gael has been wanting to attend a meeting of Women Who Wine and is looking for someone to join her. Kathy's presentation would be good for this group. Pam had mentioned Town Pump giving grants and Rod will look into it.

Hospitality: Gael wants to acknowledge Frank Schroder's donation last fall. She will include a sticker with a letter Kay is preparing about charitable giving from IRA accounts.

Programs: Dave reviewed the programs for January – May. Bob Lee reminded that the CBC is the topic for next week and will include the signups for Bigfork and Kalispell. Bob and Dave will resolve a possible conflict in the schedule so Laura from Flathead Land Trust is included.

OSNA: Pam reported that the "Weed Log" is done and will be submitted, and mentioned the number of volunteer hours this past year. As Kay had mentioned, we need to get approval of DNRC for new bridges.

Publicity: Jan is keeping items current on the website.

Website: Jake is still working on renewing the website certification and it's taking some time, so people might be getting a security alert. It could get resolved any day.

Newsletter content: The list was reviewed. Kathy suggested it include the "7 Things you can do" from the Cornell website and she will submit it. Carole asked that her ESA article be removed.

Membership: Joe reported we have 181 members, compared to 141 last year. 33% basic and 67% supporting (36% give more than the \$40). 30% pay by PayPal.

**New Business:**

Bob Lee has friends who had water damage and are cleaning out items and they gave a Pentax spotting scope to Bob and Leslie, who don't feel they need it, so wonder about auctioning it. Bob also considered keeping it and using it for Field Trips and CBC, which we will do. Joe mentioned that we would need to add it as an asset and Bob said it's worth \$1000. Jake will talk to Derrick about it being stored with the Education Trunks at Lone Pine.

Jill reminded us that the Flathead Valley Winter Solstice Celebration will be December 21 in Lawrence Park. Audubon has presented in the past on a nature topic. Denny had volunteered, and Jill wonders if anyone else would be interested in helping present. Jill would like FAS to be a sponsor, and after some discussion about the appropriateness, Mike made a motion to be a sponsor, Jan seconded, and motion passed. It will also go on our website.

Cory reported CAR vote winners: Linda DeKort and Flathead Recon.

Margaret made a motion to adjourn, Rod second. Adjourned at 8:39 pm.