

Flathead Audubon BOD Meeting, Lone Pine Pavilion, September 8, 2020  
Prepared by: Pam Willison, Secretary

Board members present: Pam Willison, Rod Walette, Gael Bissell, Mike Fanning, Cindy Roberts, Mike Roberts, Kay Mitchell, Cory Davis, Margaret Parodi, Joe Batts, Jake Bramante, Dave Manuwal, Bob Lee, Jan Metzmaker, (Will Beyer, Carole Jorgensen – attempted to participate, but internet connection was inadequate)

Others in attendance: Denny Olson, Jill Fanning, Darcy Thomas

Meeting called to order by President Gael Bissell at 6:10 pm.

**Reminders and Misc:**

Linda Winnie would like photos of our events for the website and newsletter. These would be stored in the archives of our website for people to have access for any publicity, grant applications, etc.

Birds of Prey workshop by Amy Seaman of Montana Audubon will be September 15-17, via Zoom – register online with Montana Audubon.

Denny will be doing a workshop on Friday, 9/18 at 2 pm at Lone Pine, focusing on identifying raptors from below using a set of raptor silhouettes he created. Then on Saturday 9/19 at 10 am, there will be a review involving finding and identifying the silhouettes along the LP trails.

Gael introduced Darcy Thomas who will be taking over coordinating the Bird of the Month program. Contact her at: darcy424@gmail.com

Donated hours – send the total of your volunteer hours from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 to Gael.

Gael has the Zeiss scope that was donated to FAS and is available for use on a project. In order to share it, it needs to be sanitized between uses. Denny will make it available at the Sandhill Crane field trips later this fall, at West Valley Viewing. Cory has the other donated scope.

**Minutes:** Margaret motion to accept August minutes, Kay second, motion passed.

**Financial:** Rod reported about the formation of a financial plan. He has done lots of research and collected some examples. He received suggestions and examples from Kim (CPA), and gotten information from Whitefish Community Foundation. He has examples for most of the financial plan components that are fairly standard wording (boilerplate). The part that will be unique is the information about our investments. An important component is that Kay will monitor the work Rod does, which provides a check and balance system. Whitefish Community Foundation can provide information about endowment management. There will need to be

some decision about where we want to keep and manage our funds, and how these funds can be used. After Great Fish is over the staff at WCF will be more available. Gael feels that once the information gets put together and the finance committee provides input, then Rod should bring it to the Board for input and final decisions. Anyone with some expertise in financial planning or management is welcome to provide input, and otherwise Rod will continue to gather research and resources.

Rod gave a summary of our current financial situation and memberships. Jake has posted the financial statements (balance sheet and profit/loss) for last year on the website.

Our 20-21 budget currently has an expense overage of \$3700 because some expenses were not added correctly, or accounted for in the previous version. Also, the accountant (Kim) said we can't list the money from our investments as income because they had already been recorded as income, so they were moved to a different line item under Other Income.

Gael had been communicating with Rod about the budget situation, and suggested to Rod that we wait until we get the final results from Great Fish before we try to address the shortfall on the budget. That way, we can have a more accurate income number for Great Fish and be more accurate in any changes we make. Rod reminded that the budget is just a "guesstimate" for the time at which it is prepared. Rod also mentioned that we should be thankful that Gael completed the application and got the COVID grant for FAS, as it has served well to cover our expenses over the past few months. Gael mentioned to Denny that he should be keeping a detailed monthly record of what work he did while the COVID grant was being used to pay his expenses, because she will need that when filing the final report for the grant. Denny said that he already keeps that record and sends it to Rod, so it's readily available.

**Great Fish:** Jan reported that we've had 50 donors and have just under \$10,000. She mentioned that we have received many donations from people outside of FAS, but not from many members. She would like to see us make it to the \$20,000 cut-off, as we could receive an additional \$9000. She will keep track of this and send Board members a last minute email if we are close so we can consider doing an extra donation to get us over the critical \$20,000 mark. Gael suggested making some phone calls to friends and members we know to try to get people to make donations before the September 18 deadline. There was discussion about how to make a final contact to our members to encourage them to donate. It was decided to do a final fly-by to remind members and emphasize the urgency. Kay clarified that the match kicks in at \$5000 (we've met that), and past that, the match is a percentage based on total donations. Denny suggested we make it very clear that we cannot/will not be doing any additional fundraising campaigns this year because we are participating in Great Fish. Kay wondered about putting an ad in the InterLake, as she has seen some Great Fish participants do. Cory feels we should focus on our membership. September 18 at 5:00pm is the end of the Great Fish campaign, so we have to get all donations by then. Any calls or contacts need to be made by next week. Jan suggested to post it to your personal Facebook page.

Kay mentioned that the Great Fish celebration at Depot Park, scheduled for September 12, has been cancelled because it often draws 500+ people and the current limit for gatherings is 50 people. They have also cancelled their in-person awards ceremony and replaced it by a Zoom meeting, which will be later in the year.

**Appreciation:** Gael is seeking ideas for a gift to John Hughes (Bird of Month) and Susie Waldron (new display banners) to acknowledge their contributions. Tom has offered his artwork - a small print of a kestrel and he can add some calligraphy to personalize it. Denny will work with Tom on this.

**Apprentices:** Membership and Newsletter are both seeking someone to help and serve as an apprentice.

**September Meeting:** The September 14 membership meeting is being held via Zoom. In the newsletter, Jan referred people to the website for instructions for making those connections. Jan updated the calendar/events on the website and included information about the meeting. Cory has offered to do an evaluation about how the Zoom meeting worked and how many people participated. Cory is hosting it. Gael will coordinate with Cory about what to include and who should participate. The intro will be about 10 minutes, and the presentation should be about 30 minutes with 5 minutes more for questions. Our goal is to not go over an hour.

**Meeting space for live meetings:** Dave and Gael visited the space available at United Way and feel that we could use the larger room and safely have a socially-distanced, masks-required, meeting for 50 people. There was discussion about also doing a live stream of the meeting for people who choose not to attend. There was also discussion about recording portions of the meeting and making them available to view later on our website. Dave said the presenter for November (Beth Gardner) doesn't really want to present via Zoom, so that would be a good time to try a live meeting in the larger meeting room. The October meeting would still be done via Zoom, as that presenter is in Missoula, and is very interested in doing it virtually and has the skills to do it make that happen. We will look at recording it and making it available for later viewing.

**Elections:** Bob reported there are no new nominees. Bob has the mail-in ballot prepared and it's been reviewed by a lawyer. It will be included in the October newsletter and ballots must be mailed back by Saturday October 10. Then, there must be a meeting with a minimum of 3 board members to tally the results – proposed date is October 11. He would look at holding that indoors in a setting where people would have safe distancing. Bob said that when Rod receives the letters with ballots from the PO, he should not open them, but keep them together and get them to Bob. In the election explanation, Bob has offered a drawing for the two bluebird houses Pam made, and if people want to be included in the drawing, they would need to put their name on their ballot. Currently, the By-Laws state that family memberships get two votes, but that's a moot point because there are no family memberships. The By-Laws need to be updated May 2021 to clarify the memberships and votes per membership.

**CAR:** Flathead ReCon still needs to receive the business award, which we voted on last year, but were unable to complete because of cancelled meetings. For the coming year, we will need to vote on all 3 categories again: business award, volunteer award and lifetime achievement award.

**Field Trips:** Kathy and Barbara will be doing the raptor program at Wild Wings this coming Sunday (13<sup>th</sup>) and next Tuesday (15<sup>th</sup>). Denny and Laura (FLT) will be doing the Sandhill Crane viewing later this month. For next month, Kathy is suggesting raptor migration viewing in Glacier Park. It would need to be spontaneous, or a very flexible format where people sign up and when the timing/weather is right, Kathy would contact people.

In the future, Margaret said they are open for ideas of what can be done safely. Denny would still be willing to do the Trails Day field trip in February. Bob commented that carpooling is the big issue, so we would need to arrange to meet people at the location. The best ideas would be an open space where people can drive themselves and it's a walking trip where people can have plenty of space. Darcy wondered about a walk-through trip in OSNA. Will just weed-wacked the education trail, so we could arrange to use the Montessori parking area and walk in. There was also discussion of a using the new trail in Lawrence Park. There need to be more leaders than just Denny, so Margaret will try to contact some previous leaders and see if they would offer to do a smaller, safe, park and walk only trip.

**Newsletter:** Linda sent out a tentative list for the coming newsletter. We need to fill in any spots where she put a ?-mark.

BOM - Darcy will do Lesser Scaup for October and Linda deCort will do Mallards for November. Darcy is working with some younger people who aren't FAS members, but work for FWP and are birders, to see if they would contribute a BOM column.

Conservation - Dave doesn't have anything, and Carole will contact Linda if she has anything.

Feeder Watch article - Darcy has offered to work with Kathy Ross and update the article from last year.

October Big Day - Linda Winnie will include an article. It's an e-bird event.

Bird Notes – Dick Hutto and Sue Reel in Missoula are doing some short recording to help with ID. These are available on YouTube.

**Membership:** We are looking for an apprentice for Mike. There will be some issues that will need to be resolved with getting and using Access Microsoft software, but it's important to get a backup for Mike.

**Publicity:** There was a communication gap between Jake and Jan so items weren't getting posted to the calendar, but it's now all up to date.

**OSNA:**

**Work Day** – October 3, Saturday. Bob is working with Montessori for using their parking lot, but we will not request access to the building. Bob is looking to have Will take over coordinating this, and Pam will work with him to prepare a priority list for the work to be done.

**Negotiations with DNRC:** Cory reported that they met last week with all the partners. FLT had drafted a conservation easement and they identified the areas that need to be modified. The sticking point is going to be the management plan, and who will be responsible for each aspect of the actual management. Pam said that she had held conversations with Derrick about the possibility of using AmeriCorp to manage OSNA and Derrick is willing to help pursue this and has knowledge because of the AmeriCorp people at Lone Pine SP. Pam and Derrick decided to not put work into it because the future of OSNA was uncertain, but Cory will check in with Derrick about the AmeriCorp program as a possibility for helping manage OSNA.

**Wings in Nature (WIN) (bj worth):** WIN provided the materials for the Birds Rock! video, but bj would like to have a more formal agreement for any future videos that include their work. Gael included his draft of an agreement in the Board packet. There was general agreement that compensation would be appropriate. Denny mentioned that via an email, he proposed to bj that compensate for work used would be a different rate than for work requested and ultimately not used, but we would pay for both. The money that had been allocated for Josh Covill to help Denny didn't end up being used, and that \$3600 could be reallocated to cover some of the expenses for the work purchased through WIN. Bj mentioned a "full collaboration" on some of the videos, and Jake pointed out that it's important that be well defined because it could include dual ownership, which is probably not what we want. Denny will continue to work with bj on an agreement, but Gael would like to be sure it comes to the full board before anything gets signed.

**Education:** Cindy reported that the committee will be meeting this Thursday at 4:30. They are looking for volunteers to divide up the trunks to get material scanned and digitized for total online access. They will also be working to be sure people are informed of the resources available.

**Montana Audubon:** Bob reported that there is a new director at the Billings Center and it remains under control of MA.

**Jewel Basin Hawk Watch:** It's going well and the schedule is well covered. Jake imbedded the calendar on our website so the public can see who is working and what the counts are. Gael mentioned that in addition to dunkadoo, hawkcount.org also follows the count. Amy Seaman, and some others from Montana Audubon will be participating on some of the days this year.

Cory made a motion to adjourn, Jake seconded, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:51.