

Flathead Audubon BOD Meeting, Cherry Hill Yacht Club (Lakeside), October 5,2020  
Prepared by: Pam Willison, Secretary

Board Members participating: Gael Bissell, Cory Davis, Pam Willison, Dave Manuwal, Tom Roberts, Cindy Roberts, Margaret Parodi, Joe Batts, Kay Mitchell, Rod Walette, Carole Jorgensen, Will Beyer (online), Jan Metzmaker (online), Jake Bramante (online),

Others present: Denny Olson

Meeting was called to order at 6:09 pm by President Gael Bissell.

**Minutes:** No changes. Dave motion to adopt as written. Kay seconded. Motion passed.

**Finances:** Treasurer Rod Walette reminded us that a status report of our financial situation was in the packet distributed to the BOD. Margaret asked for clarification on the number of members. At the time of the report, there were 43.

Rod proposes that the members of the Executive Committee meet with the advisors from Whitefish Community Foundation. We would be seeking information about setting up the mechanics for receiving endowment gifts and for setting up an endowment for FAS with some existing funds. After receiving information from them, Rod and Kay can proceed with creating a Financial Plan. Rod wondered if we plan to continue to participate in the Great Fish event, because that would be part of the conversation with WFCF and part of the Financial Plan. Kay said WFCF is very busy until October 26, but she would like to go ahead and set up a time to meet with them that. In the meantime, Kay would like to hold a meeting with the Executive Committee and the other members who helped with Great Fish to assess our performance this year, and make plans for improvement for the future. Once we hear the Great Fish final results the end of October, the FAS Finance Committee will need to meet in early November. Kay will contact WFCF and let Cory know about their availability and Cory will do a survey of what works for our people.

Rod said the proceeds of the Great Fish fundraiser donations have been disbursed and is in the checking account and is considered restricted for the Conservation Education program. When we receive the matching funds, they will be restricted for the Jewel Basin Hawk Watch, Owen Sowerwine Natural Area, and Birds of Prey Festival programs.

The checkbook activity was also included by Rod in the Board packet and there were no questions. Carole made a motion to accept and file the financial reports as provided by the Treasurer. Margaret seconded. Motion passed.

**Membership:** Gael reported that member Michele Tohtz has expressed interest in helping with membership. Gael would like to see a committee form to review the membership process and make recommendations to the Board for changes or updates in managing and using the

membership data base, and processing memberships. Committee members: Rod Walette, Jan Metzmaker, Michele Tohtz, Jake Bramante, and Mike Fanning.

**FAS Election**: Rod reported that 10 ballots have been received so far. Counting will be Oct 11.

**Great Fish**: Kay reported that although it was a trial run for us, we did pretty well. We received over \$15,000 in donations. She feels it was a fairly easy fundraiser because we didn't have to initiate all the contacts and coordinate numerous events, as we have in the past. Plus, she said it brought in some new members. If we choose, we can go back to all the individual fundraisers, such as the end of year letter, the Birdathon, etc. We can still do some of our fundraisers, as long as they don't conflict with the rules for Great Fish. Kay feels there was lots of confusion about who was in charge and she clarified that she is willing to do all the work on the grant application, but doesn't want to be in charge. Kay complimented and thanked Jan for all the tracking and thank-you's she did on a daily basis. Jake was also instrumental in doing the website and fly-by notices. Kay feels like we really need to have one person who is officially in charge. Unfortunately, the majority of the work needs to be done in the summer, which is normally when we are not meeting and working. She noted that we also need to become more aware of some of their rules, so we are sure we adhere to them. October 26 is when we will hear what matching funds we will receive, so at this point, we don't know our total amount. The Executive Committee needs to review our performance, and decide what changes and improvements we could make, and whether we want to participate again in the future. We could even consider inviting one of the people from WFCF to attend a Board meeting and present to the full Board.

Jan agreed that this year it was problematic that there wasn't one person in charge. She suggests that we create a plan and a calendar to follow. She thinks there won't be pop-ups next year because they were created in response to COVID-19.

The executive committee will meet and consider Great Fish as part of their meeting about financial planning.

**Meetings/Presentations**: Cory report that the last meeting, held on-line, went fairly well. Dave felt it went well, and he saw a maximum of 29 people participating. Some participants were outside our membership. Cory suggested we continue to keep the sessions short, with a half-hour presentation. The October meeting will be virtual, and the presenter is all set up.

Cory and Dave went and looked at the large room at United Way, and Dave signed a lease for November thru April at a cost of \$50 per month. Gael mentioned that at the time we made a decision to have a live presentation in November, the COVID cases in our area were significantly lower, and wondered if we should rethink our plan. Margaret asked if we don't hold the public live meetings, are we obligated to pay for the space each month. It was felt that we would pay for the November date, but cancel the other dates.

Denny said he feels some members are waiting and wishing for a live meeting, so he suggests that we give it a try. Carole expressed concern for people who don't adhere to the safety/mask

rules, and what we could do to enforce it. Rod agreed with Carole, that we shouldn't plan for a life meeting in November. If it's a virtual meeting, Beth Gardner might need some help from Cory in order to adapt to a virtual presentation. Dave and Cory will work together on the programs. Carole wondered if there was a way to ask our members what their opinion is about having an in-person meeting. Denny wondered if there is some way we can help members who are intimidated by doing the virtual meeting. Cory said we could offer help in the newsletter and they could contact him. Jake has had a few people contact him about the Hummingbird presentation next week, some of whom were not members, and wondered if they could participate. He feels there is interest out there for people wanting to connect. Denny said it might be a good outreach opportunity.

Dave and Cory will write an article for the PP. Dave will look into options for presentations. In November the Board will talk about December based on the safety in Flathead County.

**Board Meetings:** There was discussion about possible locations and it was decided that the Bridge Club is the most central location. Kay contacted them, and they would welcome us and they provided some common sense rules for using the area safely. Dave said it would be nice to have a consistent location. Gael said that virtual meetings are always a backup option. Gael asked people for their feedback about the options. Margaret suggested meeting in person at the Bridge Club in November, and then see how to handle it in the future. Gael said the WIFI access was an issue at the Bridge Club, and Joe said he could bring his "jet pack" to provide WIFI access. Kay suggested, and it was agreed, that we would make a \$100 donation to the Bridge Club because we never gave a donation last year, as we had intended to do.

**CAR awards:** Cory suggested the postponed Business award to ReCon be in December to allow him time to interview the owner. This award is from last year.

For this year, we would need to select a recipient in each of the three categories: Life-time achievement, Business/Innovation, and Volunteer of the year. Cory reviewed the list of nominations from last year, because we never had a chance to vote on, or give all of the awards. If you think of other nominations, get them to Cory right away. Cory will make an online survey to send out to vote on the three categories.

**Pileated Post:** There are a few items to decide.

\*CAR – not this month, but in December

\*Great Fish – Kay will do a short write-up and send it to Jan to add the list of donors (no amounts)

\*OSNA work day – Pam will do it.

\*Birds of Prey week – Denny, in conjunction with Kathy

\*Hawk Watch – Dan Casey

\*Conservation – Carole wonders if the PP should contain the items she posts on the website. Gael said that Linda Winnie comments on them in the PP and refers people to the website. Carole wondered about explaining the birds falling from the sky, and what was discovered about the cause. It's also a good opportunity to pass along connections for getting more

information. Cory reminded that we had a conversation about trying to keep our articles on local issues. Kay suggested an article about the science reasons for the ban on feeding the birds in Woodland Park. Gael feels an article on the bird die-off is a good topic for Carole to write about.

**Field Trips:** Margaret is working on some ideas. Kay suggested Laura Katzman (Flathead Land Trust) and the Bad Rock Canyon project because she is doing tours. Kay went on the tour and found it to be very good. You drive part and walk part. Gael suggested Margaret pursue a joint field trip with FLT to raise awareness. Denny reported that he had 13 participants in his raptor training at Lone Pine and the silhouettes are on display in the visitors center at Lone Pine State Park, as are our new display banners. Margaret reported that Kathy and Barbara had good attendance at their sessions at Wild Wings.

**Wings in Nature contract:** Denny reported that he hasn't heard from bj worth about the rates he would charge, so there are no dollar amounts or changes to the version of the contract he distributed last month. Denny suggests we retroactively pay bj for some of the material used in the Birds Rock! video. Then, for the upcoming video, settle with bj on a price. Gael feels we need a video completed by January to show a product funded by the COVID grant. Denny will tally how many photos were used in the first video and we will decide how much to give bj. Rod said there is still money set aside from the grant for expenses on the videos.

**Education:** Cindy reported that the committee met. They discussed trying to scan and digitalize the contents some of the trunks and how to get information to teachers. Denny reported that Jennifer Doolan has expressed a willingness to help scan and digitalize trunk contents.

**Publicity/Website:** Jan had nothing to report. Jake mentioned he recently sent a fly-by email and it generated several memberships.

Joe made a motion to adjourn. Cory seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:44 pm.