

## **Flathead Audubon Board of Directors meeting, 9/7/21, Wayfarer's State Park**

Prepared by: Pam Willison, Secretary

PREFACE as a result of action during summer 2021:

On July 22, 2021, FAS President Gael Bissell contacted the members of the FAS Board of Directors via email, with the following message:

“Our approved funds for Bad Rock Canyon are not needed due to FLT's outstanding success in fund-raising. However, as we are working well with DNRC, MT Audubon, and FLT over these last 6 months drafting a potential CE on OSNA with FLT, we now have a hurdle to get the CE appraised. Laura has already gone through the process of finding an appraiser and working with DNRC and she estimates preliminary appraisal costs of around \$5,000. FLT can get funds for baseline report, mineral report, surveys, and other due diligence from other partners, but FLT needs help with the preliminary appraisal cost. This is a needed step to ensure we can agree on the value and then write the NAWCA grant application this winter.”

Gael asked for a motion to use \$5000 of the \$7500 that had been pledged to the Bad Rock Conservation Easement at the May 3, 2021 BOD meeting, for the preliminary appraisal for the OSNA Conservation Easement. On July 22, 2021, Carol Jorgensen made a motion to rededicate \$5000 of the Bad Rock funds to fund Flathead Land Trusts preliminary appraisal for the OSNA Conservation Easement. Jake Bramante seconded the motion. Kay Mitchell engaged discussion and asked if the remaining \$2500 would go back into the FAS checking account. Gael replied that the remaining \$2500 would remain in our budget. Board members submitted their vote via email.

On July 31, 2021, Gael reported that all current board members had voted, and the motion passed unanimously. She will contact Laura at Flathead Land Trust, so she can proceed with making arrangements for an appraisal at OSNA.

### **9/7/21 Board Meeting**

Directors in Attendance: Gael Bissell, Cory Davis, Rod Walette, Pam Willison, Tom Roberts, Cindy Roberts, Derrick Rathe, Margaret Parodi, Darcy Thomas, Kay Mitchell, Jake Bramante, Dave Manuwal,

Others in attendance: Denny Olson, Dan Casey

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 pm by Vice-President Cory Davis. A quorum is in attendance.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the May 2021 BOD meeting, and the summer 2021 Board action were reviewed and minor typo changes offered and made. Jake made a motion to approve both sets; Derrick seconded; and unanimous vote.

**Financials:** Rod Walette, Treasurer, presented the status of the bank account and noted that we are in good status. We currently have consolidated to having one investment account and some of those monies are awaiting transfer to Whitefish Community Foundation (WFCF). We originally were seeking to set up an investment account with WFCF, however, Linda from WFCF suggested we would be a good candidate for using a permanent endowment fund instead. She will attend the October board meeting and present her information about both options, and then the BOD will decide and Rod will transfer the funds.

Rod reported there are ten new memberships, and 9 were paid using Stripe, which we have switched to instead of PayPal. Jake clarified that if you haven't used Stripe yet, you will need set up a user name and password the first time. When assessing the change to Stripe, Jake and Rod found that their rates are more beneficial, and they are more convenient to use.

Our checking account reports are generated by Quickbooks, and when Rod looked into changing to a different system, he found it incompatible, so will continue using Quickbooks. Kay is currently functioning as the Financial Reviewer, and it's working well.

The fiscal year-end financial statements are on the website. At the next board meeting, Rod will call for a motion to accept those financial statements, as per Financial Policy. Rod asked that Board members review them via the FAS website prior to the October meeting. Rod explained the need for a change in the Financial Policy because it's not possible for the Board to review the tax returns before they are electronically submitted. This will need to be removed from the policy.

Also, per policy, a treasurer's report needs to be written to summarize the past year of fiscal activity, and this recap needs to be published in the newsletter and put on the website. This will be done for the October PP.

Darcy made a motion to receive and file the financial reports; Margaret seconded; no discussion; and unanimous vote.

**Meetings:** The September general meeting will be held using Zoom. The information was included in the September Pileated Post. Cory would like someone else to do the technical set-up for the meetings because his internet service has some inconsistencies. We will continue to set up through Montana Audubon account. Darcy offered to do this job, and Cory will train her.

In-person vs. virtual general meetings: Dave has a couple speakers who need to present via a zoom meeting because they aren't local and will not be traveling here. Darcy suggested that we review it month-by-month based on the status of the coronavirus in the valley. It was decided that October would be held virtually, and we will decide about November at the October BOD meeting.

Regarding Board meetings, Gael reported that the rate for the larger room went to \$100, and the board room they had originally scheduled is fairly small, which wouldn't allow safe spacing.

The room where we used to hold general meetings, might be available, but she was uncertain of the fee. She reported that United Way is improving internet service, but it's one room at a time, so some have better service and some don't. Cory mentioned that if we do use the larger room at \$100, the expense would only be an additional \$50 per month, or \$300 per year, so it's still a possibility for November through April. Gael will check into this, and we will plan for the October meeting to be outside again, if weather cooperates (location to be determined). Other BOD meeting room options included: FWP for free, but it can't be on Monday because they have a prior booking, and it's an adequately large room. We wouldn't have internet, but there is a good conference phone that could be used for those who don't attend in person. Also, the bridge club building would be an option. Gael asked about the classroom of the historical museum, and Rod reported that someone would have to come and open it, and he's unsure of the cost, but he will check.

Jake reported that using a hybrid (virtual and in-person) method for meetings (either board or general) is currently problematic. There is one piece of equipment we would need to purchase, and Jake strongly suggests a test run prior to trying this method for an actual meeting.

Dave provided a list of the speakers for the coming year, and is open to suggestions to fill the schedule. Denny offered to fill one of the openings with an in-character presentation, and Dave will consider it. Cory wondered about a presentation about Harlequin Ducks, and Lisa Bate was suggested for a spring date.

Denny mentioned that he would like a secured area to store the FAS equipment, currently at his home. The closet we have at Gateway Center is inadequately secured. Dave suggested buying a secure cabinet of adequate size, and finding an appropriate location within the Gateway Center. Rod brought up that he and Kay need a secured location to transfer mail, and they could also use such a cabinet. It would need to be secured with a combination lock because various people need access. Denny will determine the dimensions and get them to Cory.

**Elections:** Elections need to be held during the September general meeting next Monday. Collectively, we recall that Bob Lee said a voice vote would be adequate, and an on-line vote was authorized by the by-law change passed last year. During the voice vote, if there are any issues by a member, a discussion can be held to resolve it. Gael reviewed the slate of candidates who will be included in the vote next week. She reported that Jan Metzmaker declined to run again. In October, Cory will go through the updated BOD list Pam is compiling, and will clarify who is chairing each committee. Cory will reach out to Bob Lee about his status, and whether he plans to coordinate the vote on the elections. Gael will be the MC for the elections if Bob isn't planning to do it. Gael will confirm with Dan Cotter that he wants to be considered for the BOD because he didn't submit the bio information for the newsletter.

**Cat Adoption Fact Sheet:** Cory reminded us that this comes from Linda Hunt, who got some funding from her uncle who passed away, and she wants to start this program as a legacy to him. The idea is to clean it up and format it, then provide it to the public, especially new cat owners, via animal shelters, vets, pet stores, etc. Gael is looking for ideas to edit or improve it.

Dan mentioned a national program with similar information which might be a helpful reference, and other people will send suggestions to Gael. We will look at a final version, and seek to approve at the October BOD meeting. Dan cautioned that this is a very emotion-based topic, and there will be blow-back. He was supportive of the idea of getting information to new cat owners. Jake feels like it's an appropriate topic to discuss, but needs to be done correctly. Gael will go forward with finalizing the document, and will also contact the Humane Society.

**Birds of Prey week:** Because the festival was cancelled, the following replacement events will be offered: Amy Seaman, Montana Audubon, will do some virtual classes on raptor ID; Dan will lead a Hawk Watch field trip on 9/19; on Friday evening (9/17), Denny is doing a program at Lone Pine using his raptor silhouettes; Kathy Ross is doing Wild Wings the 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. Jake will assemble everything on the website to clarify what is and isn't being held.

**OSNA:** Cory reported that the wording for the Conservation Easement is being crafted, and it's a slow process. Pam has been added to the committee. Also, there was a site visit with FAS, FLT, and DNRC to try to identify a "building envelope" just inside Treasure Lane entrance, where all parking and structures would be. Next week, Denny, Pat J., Pam, and Will are planning to scout a connector trail from the Main Trail to the Education Trail because this would become the predominant access. The visit by the appraiser will be this coming Thursday at 10 am (Pam plans to attend). Gael mentioned that Laura Katzman is planning to put in for a small NAWCA grant for \$100,000 to get the wheels going, but there is too much competition on the larger grants. Dan clarified that unless these are very large joint-ventures, which OSNA isn't, it's difficult to compete with other projects for the NAWCA funds in this region.

OSNA work day will be held October 9<sup>th</sup>. Pam will prepare an article for the October PP. She reported there will be many options for work that day, including: redoing the kiosk, trail work on the Greenridge entrance, working on the fencing for deer exclosures (also to be scouted by Denny et al), cleaning nesting boxes, adding to the viewing blinds on the Education Trail, and fixing the securing cable on the bench. Denny will contact Montessori about using their parking area because Pam hasn't heard back from Bob Lee about whether this has been done.

Pam expressed appreciation to Will Beyer for putting in 45 hours this summer cutting and bagging hounds tongue seed heads. She also mentioned that most areas of OSNA that have Canada thistle have galls as a result of some biological controls released years ago. The bugs in the galls interfere with the ability of the plant to bloom, generate viable seeds, and spread. We are making efforts to use some non-chemical methods to control weeds in support of birds.

**Field Trips:** Margaret reported that Darcy is doing two in the near future, and Darcy is now on the committee. The committee will be talking about what else could be offered. Dan offered to do another Jewel Basin Hawk Watch field trip when the Golden Eagles are flying. Margaret mentioned that we need to develop some new field trip leaders. Denny suggested that Bridger Donaldson would lead some.

**Education:** Cindy reported that the education trunks will be back in circulation, Cindy will be contacting Ambassadors, and also they will be promoting Denny's 7<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum in early October (Denny is having knee surgery 9/20 so will be unavailable for a few weeks). The Education committee needs some new members because several have resigned.

**Great Fish:** We are currently at just over \$16,000 in donations, and there are several days left. The reminder post cards went out this week. Jake also mentioned that we could do a "soft" fly-by, but is fearful about using the fly-by's too much for fund-raising. At the general meeting Cory will remind people that it's the last chance to give. Jake will send a fly-by and will include a mention of the last chance to donate. The last date to give is September 17. Kay mentioned that we really need a leader for Great Fish. Cory said he feels it needs to be a formal committee, and he is willing to Chair it initially, and he will get the information from Kay in order to document the process we've used. Gael mentioned that having Board members donate is important in other ways, including grant applications, etc. where this is noted.

**PP Content:** Items needing attention:

Great Fish: Kay will send the total as of 9/18. Recording of meetings – Darcy will do that when she takes over the hosting operation. OSNA work day details – Pam will do. BOM – Margaret wrote about Sandhill Cranes. Education – information about education trunks. Cat adoption fact sheet - has been postponed. Window tape – Denny will use it with education presentations; Derrick suggested a couple windows at Lone Pine, which would also serve as a promotion site; Gael will write something. Conservation – Carole. October Big Day – Dan.

**Membership:** Jake reported that Little Green Light was being reviewed for data base management. He's working on it again, and will try to compile some historical data from Joe and Mike.

**Code Girls:** Kay reported this has come back to life, and that 3 girls who aged out of the program were seeking a project to continue with, and they chose our bird identification program. They need some help on one aspect, so Kay asked for someone to use the bird call CD by Bruce Tannehill, and look for photos by our members to accompany each of those. Some are already in the FAS media library. Dan said he would compile these.

**Brochure:** Jake has the digital version, so Gael will update it and get the information to Jake. Jake will send the final version to the Board for feedback, and we will get 500 printed.

**Misc:** Darcy will be representing FAS at the Forestry expo at Libby on September 24. She made a nice poster and created a children's activity with coloring pages.

Motion to adjourn by Jake; Rod seconded; unanimous vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:45.