

Flathead Audubon Society BOD meeting, 10/3/22, FWP Conference Room

Directors in Attendance: Cory Davis, Pam Willison, Rod Walette, Gael Bissell, Shannon Donaldson, Bridger Donaldson, Kay Mitchell, Jason Garver, Tom Roberts, Cindy Roberts, Jake Bramante, Darcy Thomas, Dan Casey

Others in Attendance: Denny Olson

The meeting was called to order by President Cory Davis at 5:36pm. No changes were made to the agenda.

Minutes: The minutes of the September BOD meeting were reviewed. A couple typos were corrected. Gael made a motion to approve; Kay seconded; no discussion; unanimous vote to approve.

Finances: Rod reviewed the Financial Report, including available funds, and Revenue/Expenses which show a negative current income YTD. Investments have gone up and down with the markets, but are currently down. The checking activity was reviewed showing all the expenses related to the Birds of Prey Festival and other expenses paid. There was discussion about the status of the t-shirts that were purchased, and it was decided to offer them at the public meeting next Monday at \$15 each and see what's left after that. Tom made a motion to accept and file the financial reports, Gael seconded; no further discussion; unanimous vote in favor.

Rod also mentioned that he talked with Dan Short (our investment advisor) about our equity percentage. He recommends that we move it up slowly based on the market conditions, and moved it from 38% to 40% last Friday. He noted that the bond market is also down significantly, and he will be looking to move some of our money into some short-term investments such as CD's to try to keep our earnings up.

There was discussion about how to handle the money resulting from fund-raising for the Conservation Easement for Owen Sowerwine. Rod said he could either open a new account or he could account for it in our existing accounts as restricted funds, which would be the easiest option. Gael will follow up with FLT and see what they recommend.

Great Fish Challenge: The Great Fish Challenge fundraiser through WFCF generated \$27,308 for Flathead Audubon. Cory will attend the final meeting on October 17, at which time we receive the final match of the first \$20,000 raised. Kay mentioned that the 20-21 report is due in November, and the report for 21-22 will be due next fall. Gael did the 19-20 report and will send a copy of that report to Kay to use to help prepare the report for 20-21. Jake reported that our total donation amount was about \$2800 higher this year, and that the number of our donations increased from 137 to 177, with 100 people donating last year and 125 people donating this year. Kay said it would be good to debrief and analyze our donors to understand who is giving and how we can best communicate with them. Gael suggested finding more effective ways to mention the Great Fish Challenge over the summer because we aren't holding

meetings and programs during the summer. Jake suggested that the first newsletter of the year be sent to everyone as a paper version to bring attention to the Great Fish Challenge. There would be some expense related to it, but it might be more visible than an email, which can easily be overlooked or left unopened. Because we had a few issues with the rules, Kay said that next year she could make a summary of the rules so that everyone who is communicating about it has a better idea of what they can and can't do or say.

Birds of Prey Festival: Cory thanked everyone who volunteered and helped during the festival.

Suggestions, Comments, and Observations: Denny mentioned that we might want to specify a time frame on the face painting because it was very popular and it was unclear that she wasn't there the entire time. It was also suggested that she be contracted and paid to stay the entire time because it's so popular. Darcy mentioned either reserving some parking spots or clarifying that drivers can come to the upper lot to drop off passengers who can't walk up. Gael suggests that since June and Rod Ash originally started the festival, that we include something in the narrative (and/or poster) to dedicate it to them. Denny also mentioned cutting back to three programs (at 10, 11, 12) because few people are there early for the first program at 9. He also noted that using the sound system was very helpful and should continue. Pam mentioned that there was discussion among workers that we hold the festival every other year. Cory felt that we had already discussed that prior to Covid, and the ensuing discussion resulted in agreement that it be biennial (every other year). Gael suggested that we still hold some Raptor events on the non-festival years. Cindy commented that the Owl Research Institute table was very popular and recommends it be included again. Cory asked how our booth did, and Bridger reported that we didn't have very good engagement. Shannon said there were some people who used the activities, and she suggests having something to give the kids (related to the chickadee activity) other than the woodpecker sticker. Darcy suggested a painted photo-op board where the kids put their head up to the hole for photos as a bird. It was decided that we need to have more engaging activities. Denny mentioned that our Education Kit use went up after the festival. Bridger mentioned fielding inquiries from people about window strikes and he used the Lone Pine windows as a model, so suggested having a display of glass with examples of prevention techniques and good information to hand out. This suggestion was well received and could be used at booth locations. Darcy suggested the information about the baling twine/osprey issue would be a good focus. Dan mentioned how important it is to make people aware of Flathead Audubon being the sponsor of the festival. There was discussion about getting better logo-gear to have FAS people wear, in addition to the 4 existing vests, which were used. Several people wore their t-shirts but had to cover them with coats, so they weren't visible. Cory suggested considering knit hat, caps, and fleece vests. Jason volunteered to look into the local options for these three. Jake will check the inventory of our Pileated stickers to be sure we are not running low. There was discussion about creating an attractive Flathead Audubon sticker that doesn't say "member" across the bottom. Shannon will check with someone she knows about getting our stickers or other items. Bridger and Gael will work on the window strike display. In response to festival inquiries Darcy also suggested providing information about which birds eat which feeder seeds.

Hawk Watch: Dan reported that surveys started August 25 and have only been missed on 5 days (for various reasons), so 34 survey have been done. The bird numbers are below average, but there are steady numbers and the eagles are starting to fly. Surveys will continue as long as the weather allows. Dan noted there are a few open days on the calendar and would like people to fill those spots if they can. Pam wondered if Montana Audubon plans to do any primary duty, Gael feels they don't have the funding, but Dan will check with them. Dan suggested that we look into doing some mileage and per diem for the volunteers serving as the primary. It would be about \$50-60 per day, for a total of \$1300-1400/season. Rod reported there are sufficient funds to do this. No board action is needed. Dan distributed forms, and noted that submitting for reimbursement for mileage and/or per diem is voluntary.

OSNA Work Day: Cory offered thanks to the people who volunteered. Pam reported that 18 people volunteered for a total of 54 hours. All the jobs on the list got done and it was a productive day. Bridger and Shannon cleaned the nest boxes and Bridger reported finding a failed egg in one and Denny noted that we are authorized to keep it for use in the Education program. One nest box got washed away in spring flooding and we will consider whether to replace it.

Owen Sowerwine Conservation Easement: The scoping notice was released today, so the proposed Conservation Easement is now public knowledge. Gael will write an article for the next Pileated Post. Scoping comments to DNRC are due by October 31, 2022. A set of Talking Points for Owen Sowerwine was written by FAS, FLT, and DNRC in order to make sure everyone who is dealing with it has the same information in response to questions. These were sent to Directors, and it would be a good idea to read them. Gael noted that item #4, about how State Land functions, is very important to understand. Gael mentioned that DNRC cannot sell conservation easements on their land, and were it not for the legislation passed in 2002 (written by Janet Ellis) which specified that a conservation easement can be issued for Owen Sowerwine, this could not have happened.

Monthly Presentations: We still need a speaker for the May general meeting. Gael mentioned that the new newsletter volunteers, Kent and Geri Meireis, are going on a 3-week trip to Africa and could do a presentation about the trip. Rod mentioned having spoken with Lisa Bate about her presenting on Harlequin Duck research, but it was noted that Holly Holmes is scheduled to cover that subject in March. It was suggested that we have Lisa Bate do a presentation in next years' schedule about the overall picture of research in Glacier. Darcy had contacted Sneed Collard, who is writing the upcoming Bird of the Month about black-backed woodpeckers, and he is available in May. It was decided to have Sneed Collard do May and consider Lisa and the Meireis for the coming year. Also, Denny said he can present about birds of Norway in next year's schedule.

November minutes: Pam will be gone for the next BOD meeting so someone else needs to take the minutes and prepare the highlights for the PP. Kay volunteered.

Education Committee: Cindy reported there has been a big uptick in use of the education kits, possibly due to publicity at the BOP Festival. The promotion sheet for teachers has not gone out yet. The Sandhill Crane and OSNA programs and field trips are in full swing for the schools that signed up last spring. Tom and Cindy worked the FAS booth at the Flathead Trails event yesterday and spoke to about 350 people.

Field Trips: Darcy mentioned there aren't any field trips in November and they would like to have something to offer. Bridger is willing to do one and will contact Darcy.

Membership: Jake reported we have 293 current FAS only members. There will be an article in the upcoming PP. Jake feels like the Great Fish Challenge has helped reconnect us with some past supporters who have fallen out of touch with Flathead Audubon. He also reported that Linda DuLac has expressed an interest in becoming the Membership Chairperson.

Newsletter: Kent and Geri Meireis have stepped forward to help with the newsletter, and will take over the content coordination that Darcy is currently doing. They are also considering taking over the layout job that Lewis does. Lewis has offered to continue until the end of the year and the Meireis' will make a decision before then.

PP Contents:

- *Add Gael with information about the Conservation Easement
- *Add Jake – membership information (from last newsletter)
- *Program – November is Denny – Education extravaganza
- *New board members – were encouraged to do a profile for anytime
- *Remove Dave Manuwal from list of BOD and committees
- *Financial – Rod will be reporting on the endowment fund through WFCF and how to make donations.

Bridger made a motion to adjourn, Cindy seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 7:38 pm.