

Flathead Audubon Society, Board Meeting, 1/2/23, FWP Conference Room
Prepared by: Pam Willison, Secretary

Directors participating: Rod Walette, Cory Davis, Pam Willison, Gael Bissell, Dan Casey, Bob Lee, Will Beyer, Linda Du Lac, Cindy Roberts, Tom Roberts, Bridger Donaldson, Shannon Donaldson, Kay Mitchell, Darcy Thomas, Jake Bramante

Others in attendance: Denny Olson, Geri Meireis

The meeting was called to order by President Cory Davis, at 5:35 pm.

Minutes: Bob motion to approve, Gael seconded; unanimous approval.

Financial: Rod reviewed the Board Financial Report showing Banking, Revenue/Expenses, and Investments. He noted our membership balance is still below last year, but Linda Du Lac has been doing a great job of contacting people to renew. Also, investments were only slightly below the balance last month. Rod is tracking the Owen Sowerwine funds separately and counting the checks just received, the balance is somewhere around \$11,000 in donations. Rod also reviewed the bank activity and noted there were no unusual entries. Pam highlighted that the \$1012 deposit represents reimbursement from Flathead Conservation District for the matching grant for Owen Sowerwine. Darcy made a motion to file the financial report, Linda seconded; unanimous approval.

In order to update checking and savings, Rod made the following 3 motions: "I move we remove Gael Bissell as a signer from our Glacier Bank Checking account, and add Darcy Thomas as a third signer to the account." Dan seconded. No discussion; unanimous approval.

"I move we remove Gael Bissell as a signer for the Whitefish Credit Union account, and add Darcy Thomas to the account." Gael seconded. No discussion; unanimous approval.

"I move that we change our transaction process at the Whitefish Credit Union from a two-signature requirement process to an on-line banking process." Bob seconded. Minor discussion to clarify the change; unanimous approval.

Newsletter: Geri Meireis was introduced. Lewis Young has a medical situation that will not allow him to prepare the upcoming newsletter, so Darcy will ask Linda Winnie if she could fill in for the upcoming newsletter. In the long-term we need to find a replacement to fill this role, and a few names were mentioned, and various people volunteered to make contact with them.

Committees: It was noted that other chair positions are still open: programs, conservation, and publicity. Bob also mentioned that he has been elected to an office at Montana Audubon, so can no longer serve as our representative. Shannon asked for some clarification about the responsibilities for conservation chair. Denny suggested using some conservation articles from Montana Audubon in our newsletter, and Bob confirmed that would be possible and to contact

Larry Berrin. Cory will follow up with Larry, and we will use that source to fill in when needed. Cory will also mention the openings at the meeting next week. Pam suggested the program chair and field trip chair do their own press releases, and in response, Bob said that it used to be done that way, but was found to work better when centralized with one person. It was noted that it would be helpful to get a list of duties from Jan Metzmaker. Denny will contact Nancy Gresham about filling the position of publicity. Darcy noted that the programs are all scheduled through next September, so it isn't as urgent of a need.

Linda volunteered to coordinate an effort to have each chairperson prepare a list of what they do and get the information recorded. Each committee chair should prepare a list of activities performed and when/how often those are done. In addition, they should prepare a set of instructions for completing tasks, including sign-on procedure, etc. Cory will contact Jan, Dave Manuwal, and Carole about documenting for the committees they used to chair. These documents should be uploaded to our drive and then let Linda know they are there. She will work to format them and ask for further information where needed. This should be done as soon as possible, especially for the open positions where new people could benefit from the documentation.

Bob mentioned that the representative to Montana Audubon has the responsibility to report what is going on with our chapter. Their Board meets 4 times per year, and most are by zoom, with an in-person meeting at the state festival (Great Falls next June). He noted that you receive information and documents and have to be ready to vote during the meetings, and need to serve on a committee. Our representative should be a member of our Board. Gael volunteered to fill the role until someone else wants the role. Cory volunteered to be the alternate (able to participate in the meetings, but can vote only if the representative is not there).

Owen Sowerwine: Gael explained that the MOU between Flathead Lakers, Flathead Land Trust, and Flathead Audubon was prepared by these three organizations in order to coordinate our publicity and fund-raising efforts related to the Conservation Easement, including coordinate the recording of donations. Consequently, the Owen Sowerwine scheduling calendar was created, and it sounds like most of the field trip activity will be during July and August. The MOU also clarifies advertising and publications, to cooperate and support all efforts. The latest draft of the MOU was included in Board information, and discussion was held to clarify a few points. Rod made a motion to sign the MOU with Flathead Lakers, Flathead Land Trust, and Flathead Audubon. Kay seconded. No additional discussion; unanimous approval.

Fundraising Strategies for Conservation Easement: A zoom meeting was held to discuss and prepare a list of possible fund-raising efforts. The resulting ideas include: 1) identifying large donors who have not made a donation to the CE yet, and making personal contact with targeted calls, 2) Spring Match Campaign whereby a match uses the money raised so far and seeks donations from the public (probably done by FLT), 3) poster with QR code for entrances and other locations, 4) handout/flyer (already done), 5) inquire whether Montessori will

contact people about donating, 6) Birdathon with entrance fee rather than sponsors (Bridger and Shannon volunteered to work on this), 7) Coordinated Public Events (with Lakers and/or FLT) – yet to be fleshed out, 8) May Silent Auction proceeds to the CE, and, 9) Auction item at State Bird Festival where proceeds to go CE rather than Montana Audubon (need to inquire with Larry Berrin). Also, Cory mentioned that if we come up short of our \$100,000 goal after all fund-raising activities, we will look to use some of our investment money to meet the goal.

Budget/Expenses related to CE: Gael inquired whether we needed to adjust our budget to reflect the expenses incurred when we did the mailing for the End of Year Campaign. Rod clarified that we didn't need to adjust the budget and the costs were paid from our general fund, not from any of the funds raised for the CE. It was agreed that no fundraising expenses would come from the donations – all donated funds go toward the Conservation Easement. This resulted in a discussion about the fees incurred by using Stripe for our on-line donations. It was felt we should pay those fees from FAS funds, not from the donations received. Jake will look into whether we can offer people the option to pay the Stripe fee when they make a donation. Rod confirmed that he can only move the net amount of the donations, resulting in FAS paying the Stripe fee.

General meeting agenda: Cory will mention: CBC tallies, openings for chair positions, OS CE and thank-you, new members present, bird-sightings, and dates of field trips and warbler weekend. Denny (and possibly Bridger) will do the "Quicky Tricky Bird ID" segment. Dan will be giving the presentation about using e-bird, because our scheduled presenter couldn't make it. Bridger mentioned that lots of people use the Montana Birding website and we should put our meeting information there (Bridger and Shannon will work on this). Jake is doing a fly-by reminder.

Committee Reports:

Membership: Linda reported that we had 38 memberships this past month and she's having good success in renewals when she contacts people. Shannon wondered if the membership cards and discounts on seeds can be reestablished. Jake will be holding some conversations about this and we will address it later.

Education: Cindy report that a meeting is scheduled for tomorrow and will be talking about storage for education kits, and recommendations for strategic planning.

Field Trips: February: Darcy will be doing one, Shannon and Bridger will do one.

Finance: will meeting in March/April.

Pileated Post Content:

*February program: Stephanie Gillian – Bison Range

*Conservation Niche: Denny wants to focus on experiences in Owen Sowerwine for the next several article he does

- *Conservation Corner: Geri will look into getting something from Montana Audubon
- *Donors list: Jake will talk to Linda Winnie and see what time of year it was published.
- *Directory: no changes at this point, except adding Geri under newsletter
- *CBC results: Geri will contact Craig and Pete to get their summary.
- *Board meetings: change time to 5:30
- *Great Backyard Bird Count: use information published in past years
- *Montana Audubon Bird Festival – information not ready
- *Montana Audubon Legislative Alerts – Bob will talk to Amy and get information to Geri

Tom made a motion to adjourn, Bridger seconded. Unanimous approval. Meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.