

Flathead Audubon Society, Board Meeting, 4/3/23, FWP Conference Room  
Prepared by: Pam Willison, Secretary

**Directors** attending: Rod Walette, Pam Willison, Linda Du Lac, Cindy Roberts, Tom Roberts, Kay Mitchell, Darcy Thomas, Margaret Parodi, Bridger Donaldson, Shannon Donaldson, Jake Bramante

**Others** in attendance: Denny Olson

The meeting was called to order at 5:35pm by Vice-President Darcy Thomas. No changes were made to the agenda.

**Minutes:** Minor changes in word choice were made in a sentence in the Birdathon section. Jake made a motion to approve to approve the March minutes; Bridger seconded; no discussion; unanimous approval.

**Financials:** The Board Financial Report was reviewed, showing account balances, expenses, and investments. Rod mentioned that our financial advisor Dan Short told him that he has been involved with Trout Unlimited for a quite some time, and during their last meeting Laura Katzman (FLT) gave a presentation. After the presentation the Trout Unlimited organization voted to make a donation to the Owen Sowerwine project. Rod has been working with Dan Short on some short-term investments to keep them fairly liquid, while generating income.

The checkbook activity was reviewed. Jake explained that we have switched over to using Insty-Prints for the newsletter and they will complete the entire process from printing to folding, sealing, labeling, and mailing using their permit. It's a much more efficient process and less labor-intensive for FAS volunteers. Although the printing cost is a little higher, we no longer have to pay for a Postal Service permit. Margaret made a motion to accept and file the financials; Kay seconded; no discussion; unanimous approval. Rod reminded that the Finance Committee will meet next Tuesday, 4/11, and if any Chairperson anticipates any major changes from the past budget, they should let him know.

**Great Fish:** Kay reported that the application for the WFCF Community Grant has been completed and turned in, but she hasn't heard if we will receive any funds. On May 18 WFCF will hold a celebration and give out the money. Each organization that is awarded a grant will know ahead of time, and needs to have a representative attend to receive the check. Should we receive an award, Cory and Darcy will coordinate and one or both will attend.

Great Fish applications are accepted from April 17 to June 1 this year. If chosen to participate, we need to have a representative at the kick-off meeting. At the next Board meeting, Kay will bring in the rules and review them so everyone is well informed. Kay will also have a list of the volunteer opportunities related to the various Great Fish events.

**Newsletter:** Geri wasn't able to attend, but Darcy relayed her message saying that if you send a photo, be sure to clearly indicate what is in the photo, who took the photo, and which story it ties to. Also, do not embed your photos in your article – send them separately. The PP contents list was reviewed. Pam changed her article from the fall work day to a report on the spring

buckthorn work days. Jake noted that because of the transitions with the newsletter, he ended up in the middle of some newsletter related business. He is planning to transition out of that and move the responsibilities to Geri, who is the Chair. Shannon volunteered to provide a brief phenology entry for each newsletter, and Denny provided copies of the past phenology calendars. Jake reminded people to get articles in on time so that we get the newsletter out on time in order to fulfill our obligation to notify members about the elections prior to the meeting.

Regarding programs: Geri is not able to present in May. Ronda Howell, new program Chair, was able to arrange a new presenter. He is from the Raptor View Research Institute and will cover research on Osprey. Darcy and Margaret are looking for ideas for a speaker to do a campfire presentation on Warbler Weekend. Jake will contact Mike Fanning for input.

**Storage Update:** Denny reported that a good crew moved the learning kits and supplies from Lone Pine to Gateway Center in one trip and everything fit in our space. Denny and Cindy worked last Friday to change labels and organize. More work needs to be done, but it's falling together. Rod inquired about how the payments were supposed to be done, and Denny was uncertain. Rod will check with United Way.

**Bad Rock Tour:** Darcy has organized a special tour for Board members, Chairs, and families. The area opens on May 15, and Darcy chose Monday, May 22, from 3-7pm. If wanted, bring your dinner and after birding, we can eat together. This event won't be opened to the public. We will coordinate carpooling by meeting at the Park and Ride, and then park at the entrance off the highway.

**Walkie Talkies:** Darcy did some research and found a set of 3 with a recharging station with nice features, including muting, for \$99 on Amazon (Midland brand). At Cabela's she found a set that lacked recharging and muting. Jake mentioned that some require having a license (if marked GMRS), and recommended getting those marked FRS so a license isn't required.

**Elections:** We still are in need of a candidate for Vice-President. Darcy will contact Ronda Howell about being on the Board. No one offered any other suggestions. Denny reported that Nancy Gresham has decided to not accept the position of publicity chair. Jake will get the instructional information from Jan Metzmaker and work with Linda Du Lac to create a clear job description, and we will look for a new candidate.

**Birdathon:** The Creston pavilion has been reserved for us from 6:30-10:00pm on June 17. Bridger plans to put together a poster or flyer. Jake will work with them to create an event page and sign-up. Shannon is hoping to get 20 prizes donated. It was decided that the teams would be 2-4 adults (entrance fee) and kids can be included for free. Shannon will help coordinate experienced people who are willing to include rookie birders, and rookie birders who are looking for teams to join.

**Sportsman Bridge Land Exchange Proposal:** Carole Jorgensen wondered if we are interested in submitting a comment about this bridge replacement. It was decided that we will not comment as an organization, and individuals can submit personal comments if they want.

**OS Tours:** The schedule for early birding and walking tours in May and July was displayed. Gael is coordinating leaders for the trips so please sign up through her.

**OS Challenge Match:** No one had information about the status, and will rely on Gael to provide an update.

**Owen Sowerwine Update:** Pam reported that Buckthorn work was done 4/2, and is scheduled for 4/4, 4/8, and 4/9. There is room for more workers if anyone wants to show up. She is working on a grant for Flathead Conservation District for weed spraying, release of biological controls, and some protection for cottonwood saplings. Also, MCC has been scheduled for the week of 4/10-14 to work on Greenridge entrance, and with any residual time spent cutting buckthorn.

#### **Committee Updates:**

**Membership:** Linda inquired about whether there was a backup plan for when Michele Tohtz can't get the mail. Pam noted that she has a key and has served as backup. Kay also has a key and could serve as backup. Keys can also be transferred to someone else for mail duties.

**Education:** Cindy reported that a number of the Education Committee forms are posted to our Google Docs, including the Chair job description, strategic plan, etc. Denny said that he had a very busy month, and if anyone is curious about what he is working on, that he provides that information in his monthly invoice. He also reported that he will start teaching an evening continuing education class and he will get paid by FVCC, and inquired whether he can include it in his monthly hours for FAS, and then donate the money back to FAS. Rod suggested that the idea should be discussed at the Finance Meeting next week because it's unclear to him whether it is something we should agree to. Jake expressed concern about the confusion of such an arrangement and suggested that the situation be avoided.

**Field Trips:** Margaret reported that there is an extensive list of offerings, and we are coordinating with some other organizations (MNPS, Friends of Wild Swan).

**Publicity:** Jan sent out everything for this month, and Jake will work with her and get her information and schedule.

**Programs:** Darcy noted that Ronda Howell is on board, and enthusiastic about setting up monthly programs.

**General Meeting:** Activities to include: Greet new members; remind that the May meeting starts earlier, is a potluck, explain program that night; mention elections in May and encourage people to join; and mention need for silent auction items. Darcy will give the Volunteer of the Year award. Publicity and Conservation Chair openings. Jake will do Tricky bird ID. Show list of field trips. Give dates of Birdathon, Warbler Weekend, Wings across the Big Sky.

Tom made a motion to adjourn; Linda seconded; unanimous approval. Meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.