

Minutes: 2 Online votes occurring between 5/1/23 and 9/5/23 BOD meetings.

1) Vice-President Darcy Thomas sent the following email to the Flathead Audubon Society Board of Directors on May 2, 2023:

“Most of you know that we are interested in finding an independent contractor to work as an Operations Coordinator for 1/4 time. We have grown to be a busy chapter with multiple responsibilities and currently have several committees that are unfilled and have no nominee for assuming the Vice President duties. We can use the extra help and will have plenty for a coordinator to do even when these positions are filled. Everyone present at the last board meeting expressed interest in pursuing this and assigned Cory, Darcy, Rod, and Linda as a selection committee. Our first task was to develop a job description. You will find this attached to the bottom of this email. Rod says it complies with ADA requirements.

Because we have no more board meetings until September and we would like to find a contractor this summer we need to vote by email.

IMPORTANT NOTE: For a valid vote by email every single board member must vote. You must respond via email and must RESPOND TO ALL.

If even one board member fails to vote then the voting becomes invalid.

So, please take a moment to read the job description and then vote. Remember to respond to all rather than to an individual.”

Each Director provided a vote, and all votes were in support. The Committee will proceed with finalizing the document, advertising for applicants, preparing interview questions, and conducting interviews.

2) On Wednesday, 8/2/23, Vice-President Darcy Thomas notified the Board via email that Gail Cleveland will not be able to serve the function of Great Fish Fund Advisor for Flathead Audubon. Linda Du Lac has offered to replace Gail.

Jake Bramante made the following motion: “I move that we replace Gail Cleveland as our fund advisor and replace her with Linda Du Lac.” Gael Bissell seconded the motion. After Kay Mitchell provided some clarification about the role this advisor plays, the Board submitted their votes via email. Each Director provided a vote, and all votes were affirmative.

Flathead Audubon Society Board of Directors, 9/5/23, Creston Hatchery Pavilion

Prepared by: Pam Willison, Secretary

Directors present: Darcy Thomas, Rod Walette, Pam Willison, Margaret Parodi, Linda Du Lac, Bob Lee, Carole Jorgensen, Dan Casey, Tom Roberts, Cindy Roberts, Bridger Donaldson, Shannon Donaldson, Jake Bramante

Others in attendance: Ronda Howell, Geri Meireis

The meeting was called to order by President-Elect Darcy Thomas at 5:32 pm.

Minutes: There were no changes. Bob made a motion to approve; Linda seconded; no discussion; unanimous approval.

Financial report: Treasurer Rod Walette summarized the financial reports. He noted that the fundraising money for Flathead Land Trust is being held in our credit union account and is showing as a financial obligation on our financials. Memberships are slow, and currently we show a loss for the year because the Great Fish fundraiser is our major source of funding, and what we rely on to balance with our expenses, and that hasn't been received yet. Rod noted that some annual expenses have been paid – PO Box and room rental for programs. Jake made a motion to file the treasurer's report; Bob seconded; no discussion; unanimous approval.

Board Membership: Gael Bissell has chosen to be elected back onto the Board for a three-year term, after serving as an officer. This vote needs to happen at the membership meeting next week, in addition to voting for the candidates presented last spring (see elections below). As a Committee Chair (Programs) Ronda Howell has chosen to be appointed to the Board for one year. Bob clarified that this can be accomplished at a BOD meeting. Jake made a motion to appoint Ronda Howell to the BOD; Bob seconded; no discussion; unanimous approval.

Education Report: Cindy reported from the summary Denny provided that he is scheduled to do the Evergreen 8th grade field trip in Owen Sowerwine, he is working on the Jewel Basin Hawk Watch video, he made a presentation that included the new Natives Rule video and it was well received, and he will do the raptor ID class at Lone Pine. Darcy noted that we are still looking for a chair for the Education Committee. Dan reported that some video shots were taken up at the ridge for the Jewel Basin video, but unfortunately the conditions weren't the best, so none of the shots was usable and another shoot needs to be scheduled. Dan noted that we do have permission from the Forest Service.

Elections: Bob, Carole, Cindy, Tom are up for reelection for 3-year terms, Linda has agreed to a three-year term after fulfilling a one-year appointment, and Gael will be included for a three-year term, as noted above. In addition, Darcy will be a candidate for President, and there is no candidate for Vice-President. Bob will conduct the elections at the 9/11/23 meeting using voice voting.

Operations Coordinator: Darcy reported that she, Kay, Linda, and Pam interviewed Dee Baginski, and it went very well, and she has the necessary experience and skills. Darcy noted that discussion was held about her availability in spring and fall when it overlaps with her summer positions and she feels she can fulfill the responsibilities during her days off or evenings since much of it occurs remotely. Darcy recommended to the Board that she be offered the contract. Dan made a motion to offer Dee Baginski the contract as Operations Coordinator; Carole second; no discussion; unanimous approval. Darcy noted that we planned for her to initially train as a backup for Jake for setting up on-line viewing of programs, completing and following-up on press releases, and processing group use applications and maintaining the Owen Sowerwine calendar. Darcy will serve as her main contact person, in addition to her contacting people she's working with on various assignments. Darcy will contact Dee, and will prepare the contract with an October 1 start date. Linda noted that Dee is interested in getting involved in a young birders club, should we decide to set up one. The contract would be set up as a 8-month contract, with payment of \$1000/month (we had budgeted \$9000 for 9-months and a start date of September).

Grant-writing: Darcy also mentioned Linda brought to her attention that there is an on-line class at FVCC for grant writing for \$135, 6 weeks/24 hours. Darcy suggested that we offer to pay for the training for Dee, and also for Shannon, who has expressed an interest in learning more about grant-writing. Jake made a motion stating that if a Board member or the Operations Contractor wants to take the grant-writing class FAS will pay the enrollment fee. Linda seconded; no discussion; unanimous approval. Rod stated that he can either reimburse for the enrollment fee after someone pays it, or with a little lead time can write a check for them to send with their enrollment.

Donation to Whitefish Lake Institute: Darcy brought up the idea of making a donation to Whitefish Lake Institute, whose Executive Director Mike Koopal spoke for Warbler Weekend. Bob mentioned that during a Montana Audubon Board meeting, that some issue was mentioned relating to non-profits donating to non-profits. Bob will get clarification and report back before we move forward on this.

FWP Conference Room: Tom has reserved the room for the Monday BOD meetings for the year. The only issue is New Year's Day, which is the first Monday. It was suggested we move it to 1/2/24, and Tom will check availability.

Hawk Watch: Dan reported that the season is off to a strong start and running a little above average. Only two species haven't been spotted yet (Rough-Legged Hawk and Gyrfalcon). The calendar is working well. BJ is filling in as a second contract primary, and is trying to fill in the times when Josh isn't available.

Owen Sowerwine: Pam mentioned we received a Conservation District Grant for \$2000 for Owen Sowerwine, she is working with Denny on a new injection method for killing buckthorn we might look for the funding for equipment to get started (about \$1000). Pam is working

through the details of redoing the Owen Sowerwine website information and establishing the procedures for group use and guidelines about the calendar with maximum visits that can occur, especially during sensitive breeding/nesting season. The fall work day is Saturday 10/7/23 from 9 to noon. Regarding the proposed Conservation Easement, it and the management plan are undergoing final review, and the MOU is being written. Pam also reported that an additional grant application was done by FLT and they will know in early November, that FLT has dedicated the first \$40,000 of their Great Fish funds to the CE, and that the proposed CE is scheduled to go before the Land Board in December.

Great Fish: Jake mentioned that we are currently at \$10,980, so we have qualified for the match. He will be sending out a fly-by reminder tomorrow. Linda reported there have been 70 contributors, and 49 thank-you cards have been sent.

Publicity for WFCF Grant: We have been doing a good job of being visible during Great Fish activities. WFCF would like a field trip in Owen Sowerwine for the Circle of Giving members, so Darcy will contact Gael and Denny.

Sliter's Grant: Darcy noted that Sliter's is offering grants for non-profits, and the application is fairly simple. Shannon will work with Pam to see if there is something needed for Owen Sowerwine that could be the purpose of this grant.

Schmidt-faced Hot Sauce: The owner of Sacred Eats (Chris Boyce) contacted Darcy some time ago, about establishing the Hot Sauce in memory of Maxx Schmidt who was employed by them and really fond of birds. He wanted to donate the profits to FAS and put our logo on the label. The hot sauce is done and being sold and he has some money for us. Rod suggested he forward the funds quarterly. Chris Boyce will attend the October meeting and tell people about it and bring some bottles of hot sauce.

Field trips: The list is in the Pileated Post. Margaret mentioned the Northern Saw-whet Owl research at Flathead Biological Station, and she signed us up for a couple nights. Margaret suggests that we go back to our simpler version of the field trip liability statement, rather than the longer version provided by Montana Audubon and everyone agreed. On July 1, the State Lands recreation use permit was combined with the conservation license, and now you need to have a conservation license for any activity on state owned land or facility. This should be included in information about field trips. Ronda suggested an article in the PP and Geri added it to the list.

Programs: Ronda reported the schedule includes Sneed Collard in September, Gary Swant in October, Denny and Native Plant group and video in December, and she's working on November. Several people made suggestions.

Membership: Linda noted that although memberships are slow now, that they will pick up in the fall when programs start again, which is normal. She continues to contact people with expired memberships about renewal. Carole inquired whether Great Fish donations qualified

people for a membership, and Jake confirmed that any donation of \$25 or more does qualify for a membership.

Pileated Post: Geri reported that the newsletter committee is meeting Thursday to address a couple issues, and provide some suggestions for people who submit articles so they are easier for Susie and Geri to work with. Geri will send everyone the list for September deadline.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 pm.