

Flathead Audubon Society Board of Directors, 1/2/24, FWP Conference Room
Prepared by: Pam Willison, Secretary

Directors Present: Darcy Thomas, Pam Willison, Tom Roberts, Cindy Roberts, Linda Du Lac, Kay Mitchell, Rod Walette, Jake Bramante, Ronda Howell, Margaret Parodi, Bridger Donaldson, Shannon Donaldson, Gael Bissell

Others in Attendance: Dee Baginski, Denny Olson, Geri Meireis, Michele Tohtz

The meeting was called to order by President Darcy Thomas at 5:39 pm.

Minutes: No corrections or additions. Kay made a motion to approve; Cindy seconded; unanimous approval.

Finances: Rod reviewed the financial report that was included in the Board packet. Rod noted there had been a significant increase in memberships, thanks to the efforts of Linda Du Lac. He also noted that earnings on investments have gone up recently. Rod commented that although there were a fair number of expenses in December, but there was good income from memberships so we are still doing well. Jake made a motion to file the financial report; Linda seconded; unanimous approval.

Operations Coordinator: Dee said she's been working on the CBC's and also said the merchandise information is coming in. She noted the merchandise project is at the point where decisions about the brand(s) and items need to be made, and then make arrangements for the embroidery/printing. She continues to work with Linda W. on the newsletter. Darcy asked the Board to know let her know if there are other items for Dee to work on. Darcy mentioned a desire to participate in the bailing twine cleanup conducted by the ORI and wondered what our role can be. Dee will be at ORI tomorrow and will ask how it works and report back.

Committee Reports:

Education: Cindy reported that Glacier Institute is using the cavity nester kit in Russell school. Denny reported that he has had some issues with continuity of contacts at schools because of lots of shuffled and new staff. He has made good connections with a small private school in Whitefish. Denny also noted that he's studying to become a certified chemical applicator. Denny is coordinating our participation in Earth Day activities in April and he will need volunteers to help. Also, his field trip in Owen Sowerwine is more than full and he would like to offer a second group if someone could help.

Newsletter and PP contents: Geri reviewed the PP list. She needs the contact information for each CBC coordinator, and Dee can provide that for her. A CAR award article will also be included – Gael will help with that. Great Backyard Bird Count, Darcy will check with Dan about doing that article. Regarding publishing all 2023 donations, there was discussion about whether to only publish it on the website in order to keep the newsletter size down, and it was

concluded that we should also put it in the newsletter. Jake said he can provide the full list. The Directory was reviewed and updated.

Outreach: Jake plans another fly-by on Friday. Also, during the Bias Trivia night Jake participated in some conversations with a group of younger people who knew Dee. Several expressed interesting in helping do something for us – work days, twine cleanup, etc. Jake can set up a volunteer entry (as opposed to membership) in LGL, so we can track people like them. He also suggests creating some business cards with a QR code people could scan. Jake will put together a proposal of how these contacts should be handled.

Programs: Ronda still needs a speaker for February, and is following up with some leads. Also, some efforts are being made to organize the May meeting as our celebration of the Owen Sowerwine Conservation Easement. There won't be a program, but various people will make small presentations related to Owen Sowerwine.

Field Trips: Margaret noted the change of date for the Tally Lake Warbler Weekend, which is now May 17-19 (Friday – Sunday). In February there will be a joint field trip with FLT in the Mission valley spotting raptors and looking at some conservation areas. There will be another raptor field trip to the Mission (leader is Michel D.). We need a new leader for the Freezout trip because Bob and Leslie are unavailable (ordinarily held the last weekend in March). There was discussion about holding it on weekdays instead and shifting it later (possibly March 27-28).

Conservation: Gael said there is nothing new since their meeting in September where they got a start on clarifying their goals.

Membership: Linda continues to send reminders about lapsed memberships. She noted that they are continuing to code donations designated toward Owen Sowerwine. Rod confirmed that there is a separate fund to track these donations for Owen Sowerwine. There was discussion about how to do cleanup on LGL entries that seem to be inactive indicated by newsletters never being opened and/or contact information no longer functional. Linda also noted that we need to get some extra newsletters, which the printer hasn't provided.

Owen Sowerwine: Pam mentioned that our meetings continue in order to wrap up details and finish the MOA, and including reviewing the group use information. She noted that we need to start working on a plan for new signs at the entrances. Upon consultation with Jake, it was decided that there should be an OS@flatheadaudubon.org email address.

Junior Bird Club: Shannon scheduled a meeting on January 29, from 4-6, and February 26, from 4-6 in the FWP Conference room, and will involve planning and setting up the details.

CBC: Shannon has most the results compiled. Darcy asked how the organizing went, and Shannon said there was lots of shuffling at the start to cover the 12 sections, and noted that it was helpful that Bridger redid the species count list. Shannon noted there was one new species this year with the Redhead added to the list.

Whitefish Community Foundation: Darcy noted that the application for the Whitefish Community Grant opens January 8 and closes February 15. Kay confirmed that it's a pretty extensive application. It was decided that we not submit an application this year, especially in light of the generous grant we received last year.

Kay made a motion that Flathead Audubon apply for and, if accepted, participate in the 2024 Great Fish Community Challenge. Jake seconded. Unanimous approval.

Kay made a motion that the Board designate the Flathead Audubon Conservation Education Program as our Primary Use of Funds in the 2024 Great Fish Community Challenge. Jake seconded. Unanimous approval.

Kay nominated Linda Du Lac and Jan Metzmaker as Fund Advisers for FAS in the 2024 Great Fish Community Challenge. Margaret seconded. Unanimous approval.

Kay also noted the WFCF is holding an online training for Board members on January 18, 2024 titled Guarding the Mission: Duties Every Board Must Uphold. Also Thursday, January 18 (8:30-10am) or Tuesday, January 23 (5:30-7 pm) is the mandatory Great Fish meeting. Kay will attend and others can register to attend and let Kay know. The 2024 application will open April 8, and close May 23 at 5pm.

Lewis Young Memorial Fund: Kay reported that she hasn't yet made a good contact with The Wildlife Society, who are the fund holders, but the fund is open and accepting donations. She would like the notice repeated in the upcoming PP. Darcy wondered if FAS should consider making a donation to this endowment fund, which will generate funds for scholarships. Gael made a motion that Flathead Audubon donate \$5000 to the Lewis Young Memorial Fund; Linda seconded; unanimous approval.

FAS History: Through conversations with Linda Winnie, Darcy is asking for the formation of a historian position. This person would be given the job of going out to interview some of the long-term members and document the history of Flathead Audubon. Linda Winnie said she would be available to help. Kay offered some help and noted that she has all the old newsletters. Dee and Linda are working on a timeline in order to produce a publication for the 50th anniversary in three years. It was suggested that if we develop a list of members who should be interviewed, then various individuals would step forward to conduct the interviews. Jake also suggested a set of standard questions.

Shannon inquired about whether there is a current list of contact information for the Board of Directors. There are various versions of it out there. Jake noted that LGL would be a good source for contact information.

Bridger made a motion to adjourn; Gael seconded; unanimous approval. The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 pm.