

Flathead Audubon Society Board of Directors, 5/6/24, FWP Conference Room
Prepared by: Pam Willison, Secretary

Directors in Attendance: Darcy Thomas, Rod Walette, Pam Willison, Kay Mitchell, Gael Bissell, Cindy Roberts, Linda Du Lac, Dan Casey, Bob Lee, Ronda Howell, Bridger Donaldson, Shannon Donaldson, Margaret Parodi, Jake Bramante, Carole Jorgenson

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

The meeting was called to order by President Darcy Thomas at 5:35 pm

Minutes: There were not corrections. Jake made a motion to accept; Margaret seconded; unanimous approval.

Financial Report: Rod reviewed the 5/1/24 Financial Report covering revenue and expenses, and investments. Linda said she needs more cards to acknowledge donations, and Jake will order them. Bob made a motion to file the financial report; Linda seconded; unanimous.

Budget: Rod reviewed the proposed 24-25 Budget, which was recently prepared by the Finance Committee. He noted a few items: an increase in newsletter expenses attributable to color printing, a similar income expected from Great Fish, and new expenses for payroll anticipated with the hiring of an employee in place of the two contracted positions. He noted that the Committee tried to estimate income conservatively, and expenses at the top end. Denny inquired costs for Birds of Prey and Rod noted that funds were included in this budget for the upcoming BOP in September. Gael inquired about a donation to Montana Audubon, and Rod pointed out that the budget contains a \$1000 donation, as we have in the past. Jake made a motion to approve the 24-25 budget; Bob seconded; unanimous approval.

Graham memorial: Rod mentioned that donations from the Glen Graham memorial currently total \$1,140. These donations were designated to FAS in support of the Owen Sowerwine area by the Graham family, who reside on Greenridge Drive.

Operation Coordinator: Dee reported that the vests are in and will be distributed. The brochure for the May meeting is printed and ready. The Earth Day event went well, and they included the information about baling twine in osprey nests (brochures and posters). It was noted that the canopy got blown away and bent beyond repair. Denny said that a good quality one is about \$140 and the slip-on weights for the legs are about \$70. Darcy asked Denny to go ahead and order the replacements right away. She also noted there has been a request to start Instagram messaging to communicate about the youth birding trips and the baling twine group. It was decided to postpone participating in another social media platform, and to keep our Facebook current instead.

Education Report: Denny noted that it's been a busy two months. He has been working with various grade levels at Montessori and presenting different programs. He noted some new

groups that have interest in presentations: Trout Creek school and Western Montana Conservation Commission. He received authorization to visit Trout Creek and accept the travel reimbursement the school offered.

24-25 Contracts: Denny and Dee were asked to step outside for discussion of their contracts. The details of the Conservation Educator position were reviewed and no major changes were noted. There was discussion of the contract amount and the request Denny made to have a contract for the full year. It was noted that there are many uncertainties associated with the transition to the employee position and we will need to make some decisions related to this transition as the details and timing arise so can't guarantee a contract for the full year. Dan made a motion to amend the budget to include a 3% increase to the Conservation Educator position; Gael seconded; unanimous approval.

The contract for the 24-25 Operations Coordinator position was reviewed and no major changes were made. It was noted that the October 1 start date Dee requested in order to complete her job at Glacier Park would make it necessary for someone else to distribute the September newsletter and send out summer and fall publicity information (including Great Fish). Jake made a motion to amend the budget to include a 3% increase to the Operations Coordinator position; Rod seconded; unanimous approval.

Linda made a motion to approve the Conservation Educator contract as amended; Carole seconded; unanimous approval. Margaret made a motion to approve the 24-25 Operations Coordinator contract as amended; Dan seconded; unanimous approval.

Newsletter: Geri presented quotes she got from Insty-Prints for the color printing in two different qualities of paper (one with some recycled content; both the same price), and for 250 newsletters at ten pages (\$792.50) and fourteen pages (\$1005.90). Our last several newsletters have been 14 pages. Dan commented that we should use the paper with recycled content and state the recycle content on the newsletter. Rod commented that as far as the budget is concerned, he's comfortable with the larger newsletter and higher cost. There was discussion about being environmentally conscious with our decisions, and also about the importance of having a high-quality newsletter

Outreach: Jake mentioning that he will do Fly-by emails associated with our main events over the summer.

Membership: Linda reported 310 paid members. Michele and Linda are processing the memorial donations and have established a good process for future use.

Programs: Ronda needs a generator for the Warbler Weekend program – Gael will bring one with extension cords. Ronda will check on the need for a screen and projector. She also asked for feedback about the mixture of programs over the past year and people felt it was a good selection. She could also use ideas for presentations next year.

Field Trips: Margaret reminded people that the list of field trips is in the newsletter and on the website. One trip was missed in the last newsletter so will be noted with the website and annual meeting. Darcy commended Margaret for arranging so many field trips over year.

Conservation: Gael has recruited Beth Gardner for the Conservation Committee. They will continue the work they started with Grant Pegram to have a better website presence and decide their priorities.

Owen Sowerwine: Pam reported the wording of the MOA with DNRC and Flathead Land Trust has been finalized, and once the formatting is finished, the signatures will be gathered by Anne Moran of DNRC. Pam has revised and updated the MOU with Montessori and Terry and Sally Welder and once all parties can review a final draft, she will gather the 5 signatures. She also circulated a draft of the new brochure she designed for the Owen Sowerwine area, and asked for any input or suggestions. And, she circulated samples of buckthorn branches from OS – one that had been injected with glyphosate capsules last December, and one that hadn't been treated. The treated branch is not leafing, and the untreated branch has leafed. Pam also is working on redesigning the entrance signs for OS, and said that the side of the kiosk facing the Treasure entrance will have similar content to the brochure (conservation protection, history, group use, contact info, general rules), and the back will focus on birding and she will retain the large aerial photo. Pam suggested the cost for redoing the signs might be an appropriate use for the Graham memorial donations. Although we can't include an acknowledgement on the signs because of the land management rules, we will be sure to do an article in the September newsletter and try to include a photo of Shelley at the sign.

Pam made a motion that Flathead Audubon Society renew their 5-year Memorandum of Understanding with Kalispell Montessori, and Terry and Sally Welder, and that we authorize Darcy Thomas to sign the MOU once it's finalized. Kay seconded; unanimous approval.

Junior Bird Club: Shannon will send out an email to remind people of the dates of their commitments to help. Shannon will also work to keep the Facebook information up to date while Dee is off this summer.

Great Fish: Kay distributed the Great Fish Challenge rules. We are applying and will find out if we are accepted on June 15. She reminded that we need prior approval for the wording of any print material, press releases, fly-by's, etc., so it's a good idea to have those ready. Pop-ups will be held again. Kay read the Resolution related to participation in the 2024 Great Fish Challenge and made a motion to approve the statement; Bob seconded, unanimous approval.

Global Wellness Day: The Wave in Whitefish asked if we want to participate. Michell de Leon Tyler has agreed to represent us there and Darcy will make sure she gets the resources and displays she needs.

Osprey Project: Darcy said the work group is creating a radio spot and is keeping the brochures stocked in the locations. They also plan to visit the livestock barns at the fair in late summer and distribute some brochures.

Tally Lake Bench: Darcy reported that the bench has been purchased and is on location, although installing the anchoring system is still awaiting approval. While attending Warbler Weekend, she encouraged people to consider the need for a second bench location.

Good of the Order:

Dan reported that Rod McIver is in Immanuel Lutheran Home and would enjoy visitors. Dan has received some graphs about the Jewel Basin Hawk Watch data from Hawk Migration Association of America.

Bob mentioned that Bob Lopp isn't doing well and would enjoy visitors at his home.

Bridger made a motion to adjourn. Pam seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.