

(Revised) SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS BOARD MEETING – February 2, 2016

Present: Dave McKenzie, Hugh Armstrong, Ian and Angela Turner (Hosts), Anne Bernhardt, Gary Martin, Betty Rainville, Eileen Cowtan (through FaceTime). Absent: Corlaine Gardner. Guests: Dave Genio, John Slater

1. Call to Order: 6:39 pm. Dave McKenzie – Chair, Betty – Secretary
2. Review and Adoption of GN Board Minutes from January 5, 2016. Motion Carried.
3. Additions to Agenda:
 - a. Sean Allen's request to present a 6-8 hour Environmental Awareness Course to 12-15 GN members, separate from the monthly GN General meeting. The Board moved that we agree to Sean's request to review and participate in his presentation. Carried. It will be presented over two sessions likely 6:30-9:30 pm during the week, in early March. GN will supply refreshments and hopefully a room at MHIP. Hugh will see about the room. Will Sean or Hugh write an article on this for the Chronicle?
4. Action Items:
 - a. **City Contract amendment** with revised list of Equipment Schedule B. And Clauses 4 (c) and 6 (d) still outstanding. This item was referred to the Operations Committee on Jan.11, 2016. Corlaine is working on this. Hugh and John will meet Corlaine Thursday, Feb.4.
 - b. **GN/MHIP Insurance Coverage:** 4(a) above, needs to be completed first before a subcommittee can be formed to continue discussion of replacement costs of the City's equipment and GN/MHIP equipment.
 - c. **Bird Tales update:** Hugh said Masterpiece Retirement will run their own program now with some support from Dee and Paul as mentors. Unfortunately, John Acorn will not be able to give a presentation there during March, April or May.
Meadow Ridge facility now has window feeders up and sessions will hopefully start in March. Hugh said the window feeders are a great success with the residents. For now, only these two facilities are part of the Bird Tales program.
 - d. **Book "Caught in the Spin" update:** Nature Alberta said there were 800 of the books at their Edmonton office. There are ten more boxes in Medicine Hat. Copies will be given out at the GN AGM in March.
 - e. **MH Community Endowment Fund:** It was confirmed the Contract has been received back from the Foundation. Donations may be given now or bequeathed in a Will. The subject is closed.
 - f. **Changes to Signing Officers for MHIP Bank Account:** New signatures at the TD Canada Trust Downtown Bank will be changed after the GN AGM in March 2016.
5. Reports:
 - a. **Treasurer's Report:** Anne presented Eileen's written report. 1. Eileen reported that Louise Sjovald will be doing the MHIP books now. With Hugh's help, Eileen and Louise are getting the books set up on Quick Books which David Gue was able to obtain for a reasonable price.
 2. MHIP received the first payment from the City in the amount of \$72,278.
 3. From Eileen's end of January 2016 statements: total GN Club: \$29,773.33.
 4. Eileen ordered 12 cheques for the Casino Account.
 - 5.. A cheque will be sent to cover the Bird Tales expenses. Is there an invoice for this expenditure of \$95.93 Hugh?
 - b. **Membership Report:** 86 members were reported at the time of the January Board meeting.
 - c. **Correspondence:** 1. Letter from "Telus Cares" including a donation of \$200. As the letter states, Telus donated the money on behalf of Roger Jaeger, who had completed 50 volunteer hours and selected GN to receive the money. Dave will write a letter of thanks to Roger.
 2. Wild Lands Advocate Magazine was received.

- d. **Fund Raising Committee update:** Gary stated we have enough volunteers for the Casino Fund Raiser on Feb.18-19. He will contact volunteers to let them know their schedule and Casino duties before Feb.18.
 - 2. Hugh sent an application for \$250 to the Medicine Hat Co-op Donation Request which replaced the previous 1% Co-op fund raising program. All funds received will go to the Bird Tales project.
 - e. **Field Trip update:** 1. Dave and Martha Munz Gue will set up a weekly transect walk along McCutcheon Drive NW overlooking the city, to identify butterflies in that area. Members are encouraged to walk with them.
 - 2. Martha will set up a walk in Marlborough Coulee, also as part of "Exploring our Neighbourhood". A vehicle will be parked at one end of the trail for those members who prefer a shorter walk.
 - 3. A reminder about the Spring Field Trip invitation to a member's ranch was brought up and will be discussed at a later date.
 - f. **Indoor Program Speakers:** The February General Meeting presenter will be Shane Leuck speaking about Insects in Amber. In March, Colton Prins, will be speaking on Bird Banding. There is a possibility that the April speaker may be Mike Hudema, a climate and energy campaigner, who attended the COP21 Paris Conference. Contact Martha about how to get in touch with Mike. A suggestion was made that John, or one of the other members who will be attending Ecotrust Change the Climate conference or the PCES conference, could speak at an upcoming GN Meeting.
 - g. **Issues Committee:** 1. Marty and Rob will be attending the PCES Conference in Saskatoon from Feb.16-18. John and Martha will be attending the Alberta Ecotrust gathering Feb. 25-27 in Calgary.
 - 2. John Slater submitted the Report and Invoice for the Baby's Breath and Leafy Spurge Removal Project to the City. There is over 80% germination success rate on seeds being tested at the College now. John hopes to see the city fund the plant removal project in 2016. Anne would like a hard colour copy of Lisa's report. Hugh will contact Corlaine.
 - h. **MHIP Operations Committee Report:** 1.This committee met Jan.11, with Louise Sjovold attending as new bookkeeper. As well, Anne Bernhardt is now a voting member of this committee.
 - 2. Traffic congestion at Police Point Park was discussed with shuttle buses and other options being suggested. As another option, Corlaine, and Randy Taves of the City, decided Kiwanis Family Day Feb 15 could provide a trial for a parking system using volunteers with walkie talkies who would direct the public to park in selected spots. This method would be cheaper than shuttle buses and the Parks and Recreation Department has access to NO PARKING signs that could be used. Two volunteers each shift would be needed.
 - 3. Volunteers are also encouraged to sign up for approaching events such as the Cultural Day Feb.7, Family Day Feb.15, and especially Easter March 25-28.
 - i. **Birding Trails Project update:** When do Milt and Phil return? Waiting for them to discuss speaking at a GM about this project. A trial map and article are printed in each Chronicle.
6. New Business:
- a. **Tree Planting Project:** Dave Genio from City Parks Maintenance attended the GN Board meeting and gave a presentation encouraging GN members to assist with engaging the public in the upcoming tree planting project. Suggested that someone contact Cows and Fish to involve them. It was moved that the Board recommend to GN members to become involved in the berm tree planting project in June. Seconded and Carried. Lions Park, for one, would see a minimum of 2500 seedlings planted to increase the tree canopy. Dave McKenzie will contact Dave Genio to find out the actual planting date. GN members would receive instructions from the City, then assist and instruct public groups in planting seedlings.
 - b. **Selection of nominee for Life-Time Membership award:** A discussion was held with a concurrence that only one nominee, not two, should be selected for possible presentation at the GN AGM on March 22. Nominees, by a GN member, would have included with their name, a brief explaining why they should receive member votes for a Life-Time Membership award. Also, the

Board decided this process should be started earlier next year with the deadline for nomination submissions by the end of December. The procedure is in the process of development at present.

7. Other Business:
 - a. **Pamphlets on Wildflowers:** The neighbourhood walks with Martha will contribute to collecting pictures of local wildflowers. Milt and Phil will be invited to share their bird expertise on these walks.
 - b. **Pamphlets on Butterflies:** Dave spoke on this topic at the last GM, and is writing a summary for the Chronicle.
 - c. **Donations:** Governance Committee to discuss a policy about soliciting donations and how a contribution could be earmarked for GN projects or directed to the Community Endowment Fund. Donors may contact Dave with ideas on allocating the funds. Governance Committee to meet at a later date.
 - d. **Nomination of further Honorary Life-Time Members:** Governance Committee to put together a policy on how a member may nominate someone; then bring their ideas to the Board. Board members suggested there be good guidelines for this policy. Governance Committee to meet at a later date.
 - e. **Nature Alberta representative needed.** The Board proposes that we appoint Gary Martin as Nature Alberta Representative.
 - f. **GN AGM planning update:** Anne will know if the Honor Currie room is available in the next week. The cost there is \$15 per hour. Gary checked College room rentals and found them too expensive. Angela will check the cost of the Hockey Hounds and the Kin Room. Gary will check rental rooms at the Police Station and Anne will check the Unity Lutheran Church. Anne and Angela will email us. Will the speaker, Colton Prins, bring his own equipment?
 - g. **AGM Nominations:** Bill Knibbs and John Slater are looking for nominees as President and Vice-President, and request the re-nomination of Eileen and Betty as executive officers, Dave as Past President, and re-appointment of the 3 current Directors-at-Large, and chairpersons for committees (Budget, Governance, Fundraising, MHIP Operations, Issues, Indoor Program, Field Trips, Communications); and leaders for Projects (Bird Tales, Birding Trails, Butterflies Pamphlet, Wildflowers Pamphlet, Noxious Weeds Removal).
 - h. **Next GN Board Meeting:** Tuesday March 1, 6:30 pm at Eileen's house, 1519 11 Ave. N.E.
8. Meeting Adjourned: 9:00 pm. Refreshments followed.