

**Society of Grasslands Naturalists
Board Meeting June 3, 2014**

Present: Anne Bernhardt, Dave McKenzie, Eileen Cowtan, Gary Martin, John Slater, Bill Knibbs, Hugh Armstrong, Monica Bartha. Guest: Mel Snyder – Robertson Hall Insurance.

Hosted by: John Slater at his home and provided the food and beverages.

Call to Order: 7:12 pm.

Minutes: the May 6, 2014 Board minutes were reviewed & adopted. **Motion carried.**

Guest Introduction: Mel Snyder joined us and introduced himself to the Board of Directors. Mel has been working with church, charity and non-profit organizations for over 15 years in providing them with insurance. He described and went over the insurance policy that Grasslands Naturalists and Interpretive Program have for coverage.

Discussion/meeting is needed with all people within the MHIP about “Guidelines for abuse”. Define abuse and give guidelines about one on one with children and vulnerable adults, and how to respond. Big issue is “How to respond?” Absolutely no disclosure of names involved and one person is to be appointed to discuss the abuse issue.

For GN Field Trips and activities, with the use of personal vehicle, the driver is liable. Their insurance would be used as coverage. The Society Insurance will not cover if something happens in their personal vehicle. Use of Rental Vehicle is recommended so the GN/IP policy will cover.

Action Items:

- a. Welcome Dave McKenzie as our new Vice President. He received the GN binder.
- b. G.N. Insurance Policy.
 - i. Mel added sewer backup coverage to the policy.
 - ii. Revised Waiver form approved concerning Informed Consent for children. NOTICE to be in the Chronicle stating all field trip participants need to sign waivers.
- c. Selecting Life Time Honorary Member.
 - i. Dennis Baresco has been with GN and Nature Alberta for many years in various capacities. He will be asked to attend the potluck.
 - ii. Request to ask Corlaine to complete a half page summary about Dennis and if she is not available then perhaps ask Martha or Phil – Action John.
 - iii. Eileen will create a certificate. Eventually, his name will be on the bench.
 - iv. Motion: Consider 3 Life Time Honorary Members during Fall, June, and Annual meetings.

Second. Motion carried.

Treasurer’s report:

1. Eileen presented IP & GN Balance Sheets and GN Income Statement as of May 31, 2014.
2. Membership report. Eileen shared the updated membership list.
3. Letter address to Anne stating thank you for GN hard work with the Baby Breath Removal Program from MLA Cypress-Medicine Hat - Drew Barnes.

Issues Committee Report:

1. Sage Grouse Judicial Review June 30th in Calgary.
2. Baby’s Breath Removal Project was completed in Ranchlands and reported at the last General Meeting. Emerald Award will be held on June 5th in Calgary.
3. Flood Mitigation – no meeting has occurred yet with the City regarding concerns of infrastructure within the riparian areas of the river and creeks.

4. Wednesday Morning meeting with Petra and Martha, John. Discussed the **Living-by- Water program** – SEAWA to assess creeks, ponds, etc. **Young Naturalist Club** – family oriented club done through monthly Explorer Days. Opportunity to get new families involved learning about nature. Perhaps have a joined membership of Nature Alberta and Grasslands Naturalists. Nature Alberta has a leadership manual and other resources available. John (and Martha Munz Gue) offered to draft an Explorer Day program proposal. Go through school, scouts/guides, junior forest wardens, NCC, Ducks Unlimited, SEAWA, etc to bring in other resource people. Plan to start this September. Motion: draft proposal. **Motion carried.**
5. Dave discussed reducing or eliminating plastic bags in the City of Medicine Hat. Clerk at City Hall will set up a date with the Mayor to discuss this topic. Dave will be our liaison for this as well for updates about the elimination of plastic bottles.

Indoor Program Committee:

1. New Committee Chair needed due to Rob resigning. Perhaps 3 people needed on a committee. Gary, Monica and Dave offered and possibly others will be asked to join.
2. This committee would be involved in planning and arranging guest speakers, etc.
3. Also responsible for announcement in Chronicle and contacting the media.
4. Eileen offered to write a note to be placed in the Chronicle to thank Rob for working so hard with GN.

Fund Raising Committee Report:

1. Corlaine has suggested that if GN does not get the extra funding then the outdoor classroom project could be scaled down. Project Manager needed.

Budget Committee Report:

1. New budget for fiscal year April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015 presented. Motion to adopt. Second. **Motion Carried.**

Other Business:

1. Staff benefits of Medical, Dental and Vision discussed. John will approach Mel Snyder about possible benefits. Hugh will check with Blue cross.
2. Introductory GN/NA/YNC membership proposed. Motion: propose a shared GN/NA/YNC membership pending the approval with Nature Alberta. Second. **Motion carried.**
3. Bike rentals in Police Point Park. Discussion. Rentals not at this time.
4. Next General Meeting – June 24, 2014 “Potluck”. Call for volunteers. Start at 6:00pm. Bring food, utensils, lawn chair, etc.

Adjournment at 9:50pm. Next Board Meeting Sept 9, 2014 at the MH Public Library at 7pm.

Upcoming meeting dates:

a. October 7th Bill’s place ?

b. November 4th Hugh’s house TENTATIVELY (If not Hugh’s... Monica’s house)

December 2 (If no one else, Monica’s)