

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS

Minutes of Board meeting- June 7, 2016

Host – Betty Rainville

Present: Hugh Armstrong (Chair), Betty Rainville (Secretary), Ian and Angela Turner, Eileen Cowtan, Gary Martin, Anne Bernhardt, John Slater (Guest); Absent: Dave McKenzie

1. Call to order: 6:35 pm.
2. Review and Adoption of GN Board Minutes from May 3, 2016. Motion Carried.
3. Additions to Agenda:
 - a. **Review and Approval of the 2016 GN Club and MHIP Budgets:** Moved to accept approval of the 2016 GN Club and MHIP Budgets. Carried. Budget Committee to meet November 13, 2016.
 - b. **New and revised P&P's:** Notice will appear in the June Chronicle. The documents will be on the website, and Eileen will be responsible for putting them into the Nature Centre Binder. The Board approval vote will be held at the September 2016 meeting.
 - c. **Action Plan for Multiple-Species at Risk in Southwestern Saskatchewan:** South of the Divide-2016: John reported GN has been asked to review the SoD plan and provide feedback on recovery programs for 9 species at risk, and management considerations for 4 species of Special Concern. GN Issues Committee met on June 6 to draft GN's response for the Board consideration and submission. Hugh is to contact Lorne Scott at Nature Saskatchewan.
 - 1) Rob Gardner has submitted a recommendation.
 - 2) Marty Drut recently talked to Lorne Scott. The deadline for comments and suggestions is July 23. Submissions are encouraged and will be sent to Environment and Climate Change Canada.
4. Action Items:
 - a. **Tree Planting Volunteers:** Hugh noted most volunteers have been notified by the City to attend either Wednesday evening, June 8, or Thursday evening, June 9 training session. This starts at 6 p.m. at Lions Park Kitchen.
5. Reports:
 - a. **Treasurer's Report:** Eileen noted a GST refund to GN of \$25.93. The GN balance for May 31 is \$25,251.78.
 - b. **Membership Report:** Eileen said there are 71 renewed memberships, with 12 members not renewed yet.
 - c. **Correspondence:** Eileen reported: 1) the GST cheque was received. 2) The statement from Alberta Gaming arrived for Hugh. Hugh will do the Financial Statement for them. 3) The Prairie Current Newsletter. 4) Spectra Energy, a pipeline company.
 - d. **MHIP Operations Committee:** John reported there will be a walk June 12, 2 pm at the Pocket Prairie Patch. Meet at the Leisure Centre. On June 19, 2 pm there will be a berm walk across Lions and Strathcona Islands Parks. Meet at the Minto Ave SE Parking Lot. On June 22, Brenda Powder will be leading a walk at 7:30 pm in Ranchlands. Meet at 11 Ave NE (North of Parkview N.E. new loop) Look for the MHIP sign.
 - e. **Issues Committee:** John reported that Marty will carry on with the Riparian Health Assessment in July and August. He will be calling for volunteers. A retraining is also planned for later this month.
 - Ranchlands Proposal. Dave Curtis of Land and Business Support department to meet with Hugh and John Wednesday about plans for the Ranchlands area. The Ranchlands Proposal would like to see this area as an extension of the Interpretive Program (including archeological sites).
 - Proposed Native Prairie Patch: Hugh sent a submission to the City regarding retaining the natural Prairie in the Brier Run Development Plan. We will wait for the City's reply. There will be a second open house in October 2016.
 - f. **Indoor Program Report:** Dave's email stated the September speaker would talk about Invasive Species, and the October presentation would be on Biological Control of Leafy Spurge. Suggestions to be sent to Dave about a speaker on Bees, and possibly a speaker from Fish and Wildlife on Fishing. Please note 6. (d) below. A suggested topic could be Hydrology- where is it safe to cross the River?
 - g. **Fundraising:** Hugh will apply for grants over the summer. Webcam funding?
 - h. **Field Trips:** Please email Eileen regarding upcoming trips, so she can put a notice out.
 - i. **Communications:** Angela said the preliminary work has been done on the rack cards. The samples look impressive. Eileen and Anne volunteered to sit at the GN Farmer's Market Table on June 25. Thank you for volunteering!
 - j. **Birding Trails:** Work is continuing, and Colton Prins and Mackenzie Fai are assisting. Next meeting is on June 27. Gary Martin will check on grants from Nature Alberta for funding for the Birding Trails project.
 - k. **Bird Tales:** Dee/Hugh: Meadow Ridge is under quarantine at present. The bird feeders and fountain are very popular with residents.

6. Other Business:
 - a. **Webcam Project:** Hugh has been in contact with Ellis Bird Farm. We would start a webcam at the Nature Centre feeders first. For the Huron nest viewing, Hugh is to meet with the City regarding the feasibility of installing a tower on the Sewage Treatment Building.
 - b. **Plaque for Life Members:** 1) John has submitted the three names to J&B to be put on a plaque for \$ 50.00 plus GST.
2) Gary has a plaque and certificate for Dennis Baresco from Nature Alberta. Some of the GN members will present it to Dennis shortly.
 - c. **Casino and Bingo Funds Disbursement:** Casino guidelines state 24 months are allowed to make use of Casino funds. Gary will attend a meeting June 13 to discuss use of proceeds. The MHIP to be given \$ 5000.00 now just for programs, not salaries. The next Casino will be held in 2017.
Hugh had a discussion with Ken Sauer recently regarding the idea of holding bingos as fundraisers. Eight volunteers would be needed for 4 hours each time. This could be something to consider.
 - d. **Speaker's Program:** Marty needs to know what visual aids each monthly speaker needs before they start speaking. This is important for a well-run presentation.
 - e. **Cheques from GN to MHIP:** All cheques for grants go to GN. Discussion held regarding Servus and TD accounts that are currently used by GN and IP. TD account belongs to IP.
 - f. **Letter from GN to City Parks:** The Accommodation Association funds would go to the City which would hopefully earmark them to fix the Interpretive Centre or expand it. Non-profit groups like GN may apply for grants.
MOVED: that GN will write a letter to City Parks stating that GN will apply for grants to assist with additions/upgrades to PPPark Interpretive Centre. This will be a commitment to try to find grants , not to come up with the money ourselves.
CARRIED.
 - g. **River Recreation Plan:** A City sign in PPP opposite the Sewage Treatment plant indicates development of a picnic area near the river. Hugh mentioned this at meeting with Randy Taves and Doug Knowles on May 26. The Park's goal appears to be not to disturb the natural area, in building this picnic site. Board members questioned garbage pick-up at the area.
7. Next Board Meeting September 6, 2016 at Gary's home.
8. Meeting Adjourned 8:30 pm. Refreshments served.