

SAS Board Minutes

May 24, 2016

2110 State St.

Present: Ray Temple, Tim Johnson, Judy Brunkal, Michael Babbitt, , Maureen Leong-Kee, Tom Robertson, Carolyn Homan, Laurie Buswell, administrator **Absent:** Lowell Spring, Doug Spencer

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS: Guests Corbin Murphy and Scott (??sorry, didn't get his name and can't find it on web) wildlife biologists with Bureau of Land Management

Guests: Ray welcomed Corbin and Scott and asked for Board introductions. The wildlife biologists gave a quick outline of BLM and some of the projects that involve volunteer opportunities. The BLM Salem District's Cascades Resource Area where Corbin works involves about 175,000 acres which are managed for forestry, recreation, fisheries, hydro, plants, wildlife, etc. The Endangered Species Act is a big driver, Corbin said, and there are volunteer opportunities to help out with surveying sensitive and strategic species. Some of these surveys involve raptors, such as peregrine falcons, goshawks, bald and golden eagles, and Harlequin ducks on four wild and scenic river stretches. There are a Migratory Avian Productivity survey and breeding bird surveys to assist with. In Scott's coastal district, the marbled murrelet is a target. The BLM is not only interested in using SAS for volunteers but also accessing any information Salem Audubon may already have such as Ebird reports from BLM land or public lands.

The volunteer process involves one easy form, from which volunteers' interests are matched with program opportunities. The form accommodates individuals and groups.

Ray invited the biologists to come back with specific opportunities, with sufficient lead time so that SAS can publish information in the Kestrel. Thinking of spring projects, fall would be the best time to return to recruit, he said.

Discussion Topics:

Current SAS involvement in monitoring birds on public and private lands

Tim outlined the Nobel Oaks horned lark survey project, being done for Nature Conservancy on a 700-acre property in Polk County that involves 3 outings carried out by 4 people in May, June and July, and a new project on Hayden Island to provide a baseline survey of birds there that will involve 4 visits in June and July. Tim said SAS is building capacity to handle these survey requests. Ray asked how requests should be handled. Tim said it's important to match birding skills with the opportunities, rather than broadcast them as open to all comers.

PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES:

Minutes from March: Carolyn noted these had been distributed via email. Michael moved approval; Tim seconded. Motion carried.

Minutes from April: Ray had two corrections – the spelling of Greg Hranick's name and a clarification that Ray plans to finish his current term as president and serve another 2-year term if elected. Tim moved approval of the minutes as corrected; Ray seconded. Minutes were approved as corrected.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS:

- 1) **Nature Center design/build contractor contract** – Michael contacted the attorney SAS has worked with and he is interested in helping finalize the contract.
- 2) **Re: Nature Center educational programs and draft Alchemy of Design was working up:** Doug was to forward to the board, but Alchemy is still working on the draft.
- 3) **Getting the 3-page list of resources from the Habitat Symposium on the web:** Still needs to be done. New Action Item: Tim will get this posted.

- 4) **Re: Tim contacting Eugenia regarding the issue of a nominating committee:** Is this needed if Ray is staying as president? **New Action item:** Ray asked Tim to proceed to find out how the committee operated so the Board can consider this further.
- 5) **Re: Getting email list of habitat symposium participants entered so that list of resources can be distributed:** Still needs to be done. **New Action item: The document and content for the email to accompany it are needed. Michael will handle so that Laurie can then distribute.**

TREASURER'S REPORT – Tim

He noted that he had emailed a summary of finances, along with balances and a QuickBooks report.

He said that SAS membership numbers do appear to be down significantly – 200 members currently, compared with 300 or more in the recent past. Membership income is \$7,761 this year, compared with \$10,000 to \$11,000 last year. Laurie said many reminders have been sent, including reminders with the last email Kestrel people received. Tim said not only is it a loss of membership fees but a loss in terms of those most likely to respond to appeal letters as well. One possible change: When renewal notices are sent, include more information regarding what membership money does.

Maureen suggested having a drawing for an item (such as a birding book) for people who renew by the deadline. Issue of what members get that others don't was raised, since most SAS activities are offered free. The issue of sustaining memberships was discussed. **Action item: Ray asked Tim to explore again the idea of sustaining memberships.**

Tim said he revamped the restricted funds, rolling four accounts into one to make it less complicated. The balances will be reported in the same way from the one account.

Insurance – Tim met with the agent and SAS now has general liability insurance as required by our State Street landlord and the woodshop landlord. The chapter currently has only the general liability coverage. Tom asked if volunteers sign a waiver, since the chapter carries no insurance on them. Tim said waivers won't hold up in terms of preventing a lawsuit. **Action item: For next month, Tim will detail other items and costs so the Board can review them.**

Ray raised the possibility of seeking a grant to buy a Saw Stop model table saw for the woodshop. Cost is \$3,000 but the safety factor is many times higher than a traditional saw.

DECISION TOPICS –

Funding programs for Title 1 schools – Auburn School contacted SAS about having a nest box program but could not afford the fee (no resources such as Parent Club to help out.) Lowell has made a personal donation to cover the cost this time but the Board needs to set a policy. Ray suggested that the Education Fund at Oregon Community Foundation was basically set up to cover situations such as this and that there is money to cover quite a few similar requests from impoverished schools. Ray deferred Board decision until Lowell can weigh in. Tim asked why nest box material isn't applicable to the grant. Judy said she has asked and is awaiting an answer from Marion Soil and Water Conservation District.

NATURE CENTER UPDATE – Michael, Ray

Ray said the main message from the morning's Design Management Team conference call was that construction can't start until 2018 because Marion County is not allowing a start without a new entry road. If that issue can be resolved, construction could start in 2017. Ray said this is not a message to the general membership until things are firmed up. Regarding a public meeting in July, the DMT is going to discuss what the purpose of that meeting would be.

Tim asked about the Memorandum of Agreement draft Ray had emailed to Board – specifically whether the USFWS had agreed to maintain the Nature Center. Ray clarified that he wrote the draft and it had not been vetted with

USFWS, but he used language Graham has used in emails regarding the project. He said the Service is committed to maintenance in the current Memorandum of Understanding, but the MOA spells out this link.

Naming the Center – The Board picked three from a list of suggestions. Ray said he told Doug and Lowell he would let them weigh in on naming choices. **Action item: When Ray gets input from Doug and Lowell, he will email the entire Board for their rated lists and input so that a final section can be made.**

INFORMATION TOPICS

Ray had coffee with Jon Yoder, who has left Straub Environmental Center. He has his own enterprise to organize environmental lectures and outdoor adventures, starting with Bridge Talks this summer in Riverfront Park by the new pedestrian bridge to Minto Brown. Topics will include the bridge, the river, the history of Minto, etc. He's asking if SAS wants to be listed as a sponsor. After discussion, it was decided there would be no general endorsement at this time. **Action item: Ray will ask Jon to come back with a specific proposal.**

Adjournment: 8:10 p.m. **Next meeting:** June 28, 6 p.m.