

SAS Board Minutes
Jan. 23, 2018
338 Hawthorne Ave. NE

Present: Ray Temple, Tim Johnson, Michael Babbitt, Carolyn Homan, Judy Brunkal, Doug Spencer, Lowell Spring, Maureen Leong-Kee, Laurie Buswell, administrator **Guests:** Jennifer Ringo, ODFW Wildlife Restoration Coordinator

Call to Order: Ray called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. Introductions were made for benefit of our guest speaker.

Guest presentations

Ray introduced **Jennifer Ringo, ODFW Wildlife Restoration Coordinator**, to present information on funding opportunities available through ODFW.

She said her primary duty is as federal aid coordinator – overseeing federal funds ODFW receives through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Funds are dispersed primarily through state wildlife grant and Pittman Robertson fund.

ODFW's funding has been a user pay model. It started in the 1930s with the Pittman Robertson Act, which created a permanent source of funds for wildlife programs (wild birds and mammals) through a federal excise tax on guns and ammunition. The money goes to states based on the number of hunting license holders and geographic area of the state. Oversight is via USFWS. When Oregon want funds, it writes a project statement and has to have a 25% match, usually provided by license fees. (A different act supports fish restoration programs.)

Oregon uses Pittman Robertson funds for game management, waterfowl programs, wildlife areas such as Summer Lake, habitat restoration (juniper removal, oak improvement), research on species such as sage grouse, red and kit fox, etc. For the match, ODFW does some projects in cooperation with Oregon State University, using a professors salary for the match or something similar.

Overall, ODFW gets 50% of its funding (\$371 million biennial budget) from hunters and angler (\$48.9 million from federal funds and excise taxes; \$135.3 million from hunter/angler license sales). She said the funding model is breaking down because they have to keep raising license fees, forcing some people to drop out. Also, fewer young people are becoming hunters.

She said there is public interest in helping fund wildlife conservation efforts but no mechanism has been created. An Alternative Funding Tax Force was created in 2015 and a public opinion survey showed overwhelming support for wildlife conservation. The task force asked what ODFW needed in order to fulfill its mission and the figure devised was \$87 million/biennium. Of that 54% would go to conservation and \$12 million would be earmarked for external grants.

The task force also looked at a variety of sources for the \$87 million (fees on recreational equipment, license plats, bird seed tax, etc.) They landed on an income tax surcharge or beverage container surcharge. A fund was to be created, but bills did not pass in the last Legislature. In 2018, there are two new efforts.

HB4015 would establish the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund and an advisory committee and appropriates \$13 million in seed money. The bill's text can be found online.

At the national level, officials also are trying to figure out how to bolster funding. The wildlife grant program is woefully underfunded – \$50 million in all for the states. Oregon gets about \$900,000. And the program is not funded at all yet for 2018.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act (HR4647) dedicates \$1.3 billion annually from development of energy and mineral resources and federal lands and waters to the Wildlife Conservation Restoration Program. Oregon would get about \$52 million per biennium for conservation to protect 294 species of

“greatest conservation need” and habitat across the state. This program would work the same as Pittman Robertson, with a 75/25 match. The bill has been introduced in the House and is expected to be introduced in the Senate soon. Bob Rees, executive director of NW Steelheaders, is leading Oregon efforts to pass this act. He's at executivedirector@anws.org

PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES – Carolyn

Michael moved minutes from November be approved as submitted; Judy seconded. Motion carried.

Review of Action Items –

Tim to research another volunteer appreciation event – to be carried over. Ray said that if the Chapter meetings end, he would like to see the September meeting act as a chapter meeting, with elections and presentation of financial information, but have the focus be as a Volunteer Appreciation event.

Ray to share email from Kathryn Alexander at Straub – done.

Stephanie Hazen to come back with a proposal for Board action re: sale of donated duck stamp art – carried over.

Maureen to put out a request for Yard, Garden, Home show volunteers – done.

Lowell to pursue with Chet the issue of swallow boxes vs. wren boxes – done.

Laurie to research cost of conference call should we need to convene these way at some point – done.

Treasurer's Report – Tim

He emailed information and the proposed budget, which is similar to last year with some adjustments to administrative costs. He included a 4% draw from investments, should that be needed to balance by year's end. He said the budget year is off to a good start with the year-end appeal bringing in \$1,500 more than the budgeted amount.

Rat called the budget reasonable and called for a motion to approve it. Michael moved approval with the understanding that adjustments would be made as necessary. Doug seconded. Motion carried.

Nature Center update

DMT call – Doug, Michael

The Board was sent an email summary of call details. A subset of the Design Management Team will meet Feb. 1 with Dalke construction, the only firm to submit their qualifications for consideration. If that goes well, they will be asked to submit a project proposal.

The call also covered receipt of habitat restoration funding, \$24,000 in all, from Marion Soil and Water Conservation District, Willamette Restoration LLC and Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.

Decision Topics

Yard, Garden, Home show planning, Maureen – She said Michael has agreed to be coordinator. She sees planning as a committee project. Ray said the handouts need work. Maureen recommends having a theme, such as “Having a Bird-Friendly Yard.” It was suggested that we use a handout similar to the one used at the Capitol Subaru event – a list of websites where pertinent information can be located. **Action item: Ray to do some more research and send a list out.**

Bird boxes will be for sale, as usual. (**Action item: Chet needs to be alerted to the need.**) Maureen to check with Eugenia and Mike Unger on top selling items. She also will handle recruiting volunteers for the show. Tim will handle collecting the money daily and processing the credit card sales. Laurie said SAS is signed up for the show.

Facilitating member participation in Board meetings – Ray asked if we want to do this and how we could do this efficiently. Doug suggested continuing to encourage people to attend in the President's message in the Kestrel, with a link to the agenda, which is posted on the website. Ray also asked Board

members to alert him to invite specific SAS members, or others, who might have an interest in a particular upcoming agenda item.

Streamlining Board meetings – Ray said he would like to get the agenda down to Decision topics, as well as occasional speakers with information of general interest. Some pieces, such as information topics, could be handled via email. Doug agreed we should focus the agenda on items that require Board votes.

Ray said he would try to plan fewer agenda items, especially when there is a speaker. He will set adjournment at 8 p.m as a goal.

Holding meetings via Skype or on a weekend were mentioned but discarded as impractical.

Information Topics

Funding for a new shop table saw – Ray said he and Stephanie have wanted to acquire a new “safe” table saw for some time as a good thing to do for our shop volunteers. They made an initial donation and Lowell Spring and Pat Gallagher have stepped up to complete the necessary funding.

Minto Brown Conservation Area rules – Ray said today is the first of a 15-day comment period on the rules. He has sent the Board a draft of his comments and suggestions are requested. He thinks there will be a lot of pressure from runners and bikers to loosen some of the rules.

Riverfront Park Master Planning – The update is underway and there is an online community survey on the city's website. As part of this process, Ray sees a contingent that values open space and another that likes a more “California beachfront” model with vendors, food carts, etc. The plan will include a new piece on the southeast that was part of the Boise Cascade property.

Next meeting – Feb. 27 at 338 Hawthorne

Adjournment – 8 p.m.