

SAS Board Minutes

Jan. 22, 2019

338 Hawthorne Ave. NE

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

Call to Order: Ray called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

Previous month's minutes – Ray offered corrections to three names on Pg. 2 of the November, 2018 minutes: David Landkamer, Georgia Marshall and Barbara Butzer. Michael moved that the minutes be approved as corrected; Doug seconded. Motion carried.

Review of Action Items – 1. Tim has not had time to prepare a package of changes to SAS bylaws. ***New action: He will have items for Board review next month.**

Fiscal Report

Tim emailed the financials to the Board. He said the tax return is ready to be e-filed by the accountant. Tim also should be able to finish and send the annual report to National Audubon in a few days. Ray questioned the detailed survey on diversity that National has requested. He said we need to formalize a response before answering that survey.

The restricted CLEAR grant for meetings has \$472. SAS will spend \$325 of that through May for the church room rental. We will need to renew that grant before fall.

Tim said the Operating investment funds and the Nature Center operating funds both saw about a 10% decrease in the recent market downturn.

There is a balance of \$38,766 left due on the Dalke contract to construct the Nature Center. Ray said SAS will get a \$42,000 reimbursement from the FWS once the federal government reopens. He also said there will be about \$2,000 more due for water testing at the Center. In short, though, SAS should have plenty of funds left to cover all the expenses.

Nest boxes – Chet has the materials to resupply the inventory before Yard/Garden Show. Michael said he still needs to talk to Chet to confirm the number of boxes to be made for the show.

Lowell reported that the nest box event at Silver Falls this past Christmas did not go smoothly. Because of different placement for the SAS activity, more families showed up. In 2017, SAS built about 120 boxes in 4 ½ hours. Volunteers had material for 150 boxes this year and it was all used up in 2 ½ hours. In addition, there was no one to collect payments and they were short \$250 at the end of the activity. If SAS can find out this coming Christmas where the SAS activity will be located, it should help with planning for volunteers and materials.

2019 budget – Tim said we are looking at several increased expenses: \$1000 more for bookkeeping services; increased rent to Marion Soil and Water; and increased rent for the Jason Lee room at the Methodist church, although the CLEAR grant will cover that. He said he will get a proposal next month from the insurance agent. Having the operations investment fund helps us weather these kinds of increases.

In a side note, he said he has analyzed some of the data from the recent Christmas Bird Count and found that the number of Northern Flickers is dropping steadily, which could, in turn, affect the number of cavity nesters that depend on woodpeckers to create nest holes. He said downy and hairy woodpecker numbers seem to be holding up well.

Discussion topics –

Education funding – Ray had requested a discussion of allowable uses of the various SAS “education” funds. SAS has three income streams dedicated to the general category of "education": interest from the educational endowment at Oregon Community Foundation (OCF); interest income from an investment account at OCF of Nature Center funds; and the CLEAR grant from Marion SWCD that Judy manages. Tim said the OCF funds are permanently restricted. OCF sends an interest check every 6 months and of that, 22% is restricted to support of SAS education programs and 68% to future educational efforts at the Nature Center.

Use of funds from OCF endowment is entirely up to the Board's discretion. As the CLEAR grant is currently written, it authorizes expenditures to cover scholarships for the Traveling Education Program. Questions have arisen about what else might be covered within the scope of the Traveling Education Program, including costs for durable and expendable supplies in support of the program.

Each grant is capped at \$1,000, but SAS can apply for five grants throughout the year. Ray said he would like to write the grant in a way that allows funds to be used for supply costs as well as scholarships.

In discussion, the Board raised the issue of having the grant cover nest box materials. However, number of nest boxes also is a matter of shop capacity (volunteer hours), not just materials.

In a wide-ranging discussion, the Board looked at making the traveling education classes free to schools. Judy said SAS is reaching only about 12 of Salem-Keizer's 41 public elementary schools, ¾ of which are Title 1 (low-income). Another option: Maintain the class fee but pick up incidental costs.

As a result of discussion, Ray asked Tim to analyze the fiscal consequences of each of two options: 1. No charge to schools for Traveling Education Program classes -- tuition and program delivery costs paid from a CLEAR grant. 2. No Traveling Education Program tuition charges; program delivery costs paid from a CLEAR grant or from education investment income. **Action item: Tim to analyze and share with the Board before February meeting.**

Another issue: The scholarship application for teachers. **Action item: Lowell to devise a simplified request form for teachers to use.**

Separate issue: The record-keeping and accounting for scholarship tuition income and non-scholarship tuition income from the traveling education program. This has generated a lot of confusion and scrambling for records. Tim pointed to the CLEAR meeting grant – expenses are paid directly from it. This could be a model to use in clarifying the CLEAR scholarship grant process. **Action item: With Tim as lead and assistance from Laurie and Lowell, describe the steps leading from requests for scholarships, to reporting as each class is presented under scholarships, to draw-down of the CLEAR grant and all associated transfers and accounting. Present as a written protocol that includes who is responsible for each step, timeliness expected of the activity, and required documentation.**

Ray will work on the new CLEAR grant, to include language so that it can cover durable and expendable supplies as well as scholarships. **Action item: Building on input from Judy, Laurie and others, he will complete and submit the report for our current education CLEAR grant and request another grant segment. Given January Board discussion, and need for February discussion of Tim's analysis, new request will be delayed until March 1.**

Information topics –

Nature Center coordination – Ray said he would like to continue on in a role on the new operations team (whatever the DMT becomes) after he leaves the presidency. Michael said he thought the committee would become a coordinating group to establish operations. Doug added that it would probably include representatives from the Friends, the Service, educators, etc.

Another issue is the Facilities and Operations agreement, which needs to be finalized. SAS needs to have an internal committee to work on that, which would relieve the new President of some Nature Center involvement. Michael has agreed to oversee that group. Ray wants to have a conversation next month about the scope of this committee and coordination with the Service and Friends on operations.

SAS Conservation Committee – Joseph Youren and Ray have joined David Harrison in an expanded SAS Conservation Committee. Joseph is interested in state-level conservation. David is well connected nationally and Ray is interested in local issues. They are also reaching out to local experts for assistance on a variety of issues. Among those contacted for help:

1. Ron Garst, Pudding River Watershed Council, retired USFWS salmon biologist
2. Rick Bastasch, retired water policy specialist and Straub Outdoors Board member
3. Mitch Rohse, Audubon member and retired land use planning manager with LCDC
4. Dr. Tom Robertson, Audubon member, ex-EPA biologist, retired community college environmental educator
5. Al Smith, retired state and federal fish research and management biologist

Others have yet to be contacted.

Yard/Garden Show, Michael – He said he's getting materials together and will contact Chet about nest box kits for the show, which takes place mid-March. Mary Ritter is again helping organize volunteers. He said they may schedule a volunteer training class. Mary has suggested presenting it two consecutive nights to accommodate more people. Tim said he is willing to staff the show again to handle payments. **Action item: Maureen will send a new list of volunteer names to Michael for contacting about working at the show. Judy said she would have a sign-up list at Birder's Nite.**

Beginning Birding class – Maureen said the date is set for April 6.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.

Next Board meeting: Feb. 26, 6 p.m., at 338 Hawthorne NE.