

SAS Board Minutes
Aug. 25, 2020
Ankeny Hill Nature Center

Attending: Tim Johnson, Michael Babbitt, Maureen Leong-Kee, Carolyn Homan, Cynthia Donald, Doug Spencer, Judy Brunkal, Lowell Spring, Michael Williams and Laurie Buswell, administrator **Guest:** Jenny Ammon

Call to Order: Tim called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. and welcomed new Board candidate, Jenny Ammon, who will be voted on by membership at the annual meeting, being held as part of the September Birder's Night, Sept. 11. Jenny is the Natural Resource Educator at Marion Soil and Water Conservation District and has worked previously at Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife and in other natural resource positions in Iowa and elsewhere. She said she hopes to help with the education piece at SAS. Other Board members introduced themselves and welcomed Jenny.

Minutes from July – Michael W. moved the minutes be approved as submitted; Michael B. seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Review of Action Items

- 1) **Tim to talk to a CCTV producer about the possibility of virtual trips:** He talked about the idea with the Field Trip Committee and members felt it would not be practical so holding off for now. Instead, we're distributing "virtual" trip information via our email list of about 300 names on places to bird and what was recently seen/heard. Mike Unger has done 3 so far. Jenny noted that the City of Salem's enviro education program is looking for experts and there are bird units. She said someone may be contacting SAS.
- 2) **Doug to link Lowell to the Friends' elk program** – Doug has been on a long road trip and has this on his to-do list
- 3) **SAS diversity statement** – Mike Williams said it's probably best to lump all categories in one "inclusive" statement and Michael Babbitt said he also has some language along those lines that will work.

Committee Reports

- 1) **Mike Unger, Zoom Communications Update** – Mike provided a written report noting he had signed up for the new SAS Zoom account that is good for a year and includes the webinar add-on and Zoom Pro. The cost, through Tech Soup, was \$340, as approved by the Board. An account is set up with PayPal integration. Seven events are set up so far using the new account and practice runs have included a Birder's Night trial. For the 4 webinars already held, 70 people signed up, although participation is a bit lower than the sign-up number. For the Birding Tips/Tricks webinar set for tomorrow, 29 people have enrolled. Pre-registration is required for all webinars. Two paid webinars (owls and woodpeckers) brought in \$330.
- 2) **Birder's Night** – As noted, SAS will use Zoom technology for the September presentation by Mitch Rohse about his Africa trip. This may be the avenue for October and November as well (Jeff Hardy and possibly Harry Fuller in November). Up to 100 people can participate in a webinar – logistics could be challenging for the sharing session at the end, however.
- 3) **Education** – Tim talked to Lowell (who could not attend tonight) and this program is pretty much on hold until Nature Center opens. One option is to use Zoom webinars for his programs. Lowell said he would consider it and Tim said SAS could provide a camera and microphone for his computer, if necessary, to allow this. Tim said it might be wise for SAS to invest in these items anyway, in case a future speaker is in need. Mike W. said he has equipment that could be used. Tim said a goal is to get some of Lowell's programs online. Jenny said Salem-Keizer is using the "Canvas" program.

Jenny noted that it will be important for SAS to have a product available for schools during these times, noting a lack of science presentations for elementary students in particular. But it will be important to have Q&A capability as part of any webinar aimed at schools. Mike W. mentioned another possibility – a kit that

enables this kind of production because sometimes it's just a matter of telling people how to set it up. Maureen said SAS resources could be posted on OSU's site so that people who need access can get to them.

***Action item: Jenny and Mike W. to connect about this and then connect with Lowell. Mike will work on several ways to approach this and Jenny said K-4th grades are probably the target audience.** Creating content now can be a model going forward.

- 4) Field trips** – Cynthia is the new chair and trip compiler, replacing Glen Lindeman who served in this role for many years. She said Fred Stephens has stepped down as a trip leader. But Paul Evans, Dominic Valenti and Harry Fuller have joined as leaders. SAS is no longer doing shorts at Cascade Gateway because of a change in usage there. She said a field trip schedule is set up starting January 2021 but it's tentative depending on Covid developments and protocols at that time.

Paul has proposed a field trip at Pintail Marsh for Sept. 3 limited to 5 people with pre-registration and mask requirements. The goal is to find ways to work around the pandemic but it's totally voluntary for field trip leaders to organize outings. The number of participants is up to them as well.

Feedback on the "virtual" trips has been positive.

Beginning Birding – Maureen said she would check with Nick but agreed holding this class via webinar is totally doable. ***Action item: She'll also check with Mike Unger on his class schedule to avoid conflict.** Tim suggested also coordinating with Mike to get information in the Holding Court section of the Statesman Journal, which has been a good P.R. outlet for SAS events and classes.

- 5) Conservation** -- Ray told Tim the committee continues to sign off on letters of support for various conservation-related issues. David Harrison is on the board of the American Bird Conservancy and some issues come from them. Many also come from Portland Audubon and the Oregon Audubon Council. A letter that is in progress involves querying Oregon State University's President on harvesting occurring in the Elliott State Forest that is focused on monetary return, not conservation.

No reports from the Wood Shop or the Nature Reserve. Tim said the Reserve crews are still hard at work every Wednesday starting at 9 a.m.

Annual Meeting – An annual meeting is required by the bylaws and director elections are held as part of the meeting. Mike W., Jenny and Cynthia are up for election and Maureen for re-election. Tim said a "poll" will be held at the beginning of the September Birder's Night webinar to take the vote.

Nature Center update – Tim said the DMT met today but he does not yet have Graham's report. Tim will distribute that when he gets it. He said the water system and the UV radiation system are working but it's not clear if Oregon Health Authority has signed off. Action item: Tim to find out if OHA has OK'd the system.

He said the Nature Explore area got \$55,000 through a Fish & Wildlife Service program, which is enough to pay for it. Another \$10,000 came through FWS for signage.

The N.C. fundraising agreement is still in progress. We have to have it in order for SAS to raise funds. It has been approved to use Gehlar money for the Dave Marshall classroom but we're still not sure about other funds raised.

Also today Graham said the Service may yet manage the Dave Marshall project as they did Gehlar Hall, which would be the best arrangement for SAS. Graham asked that SAS hold off on Dave Marshall design until October or November.

Work proceeds on an operations manual and systems for the N.C. Part of that is getting the website finalized, working on a logo and branding, etc. Mike W. will help with these items and help Sam with a chart to track tasks, supplies needed, etc. He's also looking at a language plug-in for the website for Spanish speakers and a calendar feature for the web. Tim said he would send the Board a link to join the Zoom planning meetings that are held every Wednesday. Anyone can join in.

Diversity Update – Tim said we need to get the SAS website and materials into bi-lingual format and participate in some multi-cultural events. He distributed a flyer for a diversity webinar set for Thursday, Aug. 27, presented by Virginia Tech.

Coved update – Nothing new

Financial report – Tim emailed the usual reports. He said we've gotten through the year without having to draw on investments. He drew \$3,000 at the beginning of the year but that was to fill a deficit remaining at the end of the previous year. The chapter currently shows a profit of \$500 and money is still coming in from the summer appeal, which has raised about \$5,000. It's a solid outcome, given the loss of so many fundraising events such as Yard & Garden. The webinars are helping a bit but they are largely a way to connect with members.

Other items

Bird specimens – Michael B said the chapter's federal Eagle permit through FWS has expired. The migratory bird permit is good until 2021. He talked to FWS Regional office and also to the Grand Ronde tribe about giving our specimens to them but there was little interest. He said he will talk to the representative at the tribe's museum to see if might be interested but they also would need a permit and there is a fee. However, if SAS gets a letter from the Refuge saying SAS is using the specimens for educational purposes on behalf of the Refuge, the fee would be waived. ***Action item: Doug said he would talk to Sam about the possibilities.**

Memorial for Don Christensen – Michael B. said trees have been planted in his honor and the Reserve crew has some stones to be placed. Michael has gotten some bids on a bronze or brass plaque and the cost is \$400 to \$500. He will do some more checking. Meanwhile, a ceremony is up in the air.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Next Board meeting: 6 p.m. Sept. 22, at Nature Center unless otherwise notified.