

SAS Board Minutes

May 26, 2020

Via Zoom call

Participating: Tim Johnson, Michael Babbitt, Maureen Leong-Kee, Cynthia Donald, Carolyn Homan, Doug Spencer, Judy Brunkal, and Laurie Buswell, administrator **Guest:** Mike Unger **Absent:** Lowell Spring (could not connect via phone)

Call to Order: Tim called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Previous month's minutes – Michael moved that the minutes be approved as submitted; Maureen seconded. Motion carried.

Review of Action Items – 1) Tim re: revising bylaws -- on tonight's agenda. 2) Laurie has not set up a Saturday Market booth slot for SAS. ***New action item: Laurie will follow up on this next week.**

COVID update – Case numbers are dropping (18 cases statewide today, 5 of those in Marion Co.) but with things opening up, Tim and Mike feel it's wise not to jump back into classes or field trips too soon. Tim said Lee Slatum wants to restart the Nature Reserve work crews and that has been OK'd because social distancing can be maintained.

Distance learning capabilities, Mike Unger – He has been researching platforms he could use to present his bird classes. The connection difficulties some Board experienced tonight with Zoom are worrisome, but he has researched 6 platforms for reliability, cost, ease of use, security and interface with PayPal and his outcomes point to Zoom as the best choice for SAS webinars. Tucson and Portland chapters are both using it.

He proposed a three-month subscription (\$55/month), to start in June, to test capabilities. He would use June to practice and write a Kestrel article about it, July to test classes and then present his hummingbird class online in August. It's a way to still present content and bring in some revenue for the chapter.

Tim volunteered to take on the needed administrative role for the classes (registration, payments, etc.), with Maureen as backup. Class times could be flexible, with evenings an option as well as Saturday. Maureen said she would entertain using Zoom to present the Beginning Bird class this fall.

As far as pricing, Mike said Portland charges \$30 for nonmembers and \$20 for members. Tucson's classes are free but there is a donation button. He said he would test both options.

Tim made a motion to approve \$165 to cover a three-month Zoom subscription to test webinar capabilities. Cynthia seconded. Motion carried. (Roll call: Yes votes were unanimous – Tim, Michael, Judy, Cynthia, Doug, Maureen, Carolyn.) It was agreed the chapter needs to provide something in lieu of in-person presentations. Tim added that we may need to have more tech options in the future – even for Birder's Night or other meetings.

Mike said he would make the purchase June 1 and keep Tim updated on progress.

Bylaws update – State statutes were revised in January to allow more liberal email voting. Rather than change the bylaws every time the pertinent statute changes, Tim proposed changing Article VII of the SAS bylaws on Meetings and Decision Making to read: "Decisions of the Board will preferentially be made in scheduled Board meetings. However, at the direction of the President or at the request of the Board, motions may be made and voted via electronic media, provided that the voting procedures comply with current provisions of Chapter 65 of the Oregon Revised Statutes."

Michael made a motion to adopt the revised language of Article 7 Tim proposed. Carolyn seconded. Motion carried. (Roll call: Yes votes were unanimous – Tim, Michael, Judy, Cynthia, Doug, Maureen, Carolyn) Carolyn suggested that we need to have a copy of Section 65 for the records and keep it current so that we are clear on the voting procedures that section endorses. ***Action item: Tim will provide a summary of Article 65 for consideration at the next meeting.**

Committee Reports

Education – Tim said Lowell had reported to him he is getting no requests for traveling education courses and that the focus now should be delivering education efforts at the Nature Center. Tim said program development and marketing work needs to be done and asked that Education Committee members develop a proposal for the Board. Judy noted it's a little early to begin planning since we don't know when programs would begin and if class size needs to be limited because of social distancing, etc.

Field Trips – Tim said he'd had no feedback but thought they would hold off restarting trips until September. Doug suggested planning should begin because more people are getting out. He believes safety could be maintained with people wearing masks and trips limited in size. Maureen asked about the possibility of having walkie talkies so people could social distance but still hear commentary and bird sightings. A question was raised of the need to charge for trips if equipment is involved. Another question: How would equipment be stored, cleaned and provided to trip leaders? Also, registration would be needed if trip size is limited. ***Action item: Tim will call a meeting of the Field Trip Committee to talk about these ideas.**

Birder's Night – There is a June article on the fall programs, otherwise nothing to report.

Nature Reserve – As noted, they are going ahead with the Wednesday work parties.

Fundraising – Tim said the appeal draft is ready. He's looking to plan a Birds/Wine event for this fall, and possible a Coast trip with a participation fee.

Nature Center Update

Tim said the DMT call was delayed for a week. Road construction has shifted to Baskett Slough but the contractor feels they can finish Ankeny work pretty quickly, perhaps by the end of July. They're still working on some water treatment kinks but the power is back on so tests can be done.

Fundraising for Phase II is at \$399,850 either in hand or pledged. Of that \$150,000 is for the Dave Marshall classroom and the rest will go to expanding Gehlar Hall. The investments are down 10 percent, but that compares to an earlier 22% decline thanks to COVID-19 effects on the markets.

One development: The USFWS has put enough money in its capital improvement project budget (a five-year plan) to finish Gehlar Hall. Those funds are not guaranteed but the refuge has said Ankeny is a priority project nationally. Doug said this is why it is very important to get state and local legislators, the Portland FWS Regional officials and other dignitaries to the dedication this fall.

Tim said planning will begin in June for the fall open house. Sam said she needs \$90,000 to finish the volunteer shed, the education area and other items. Spirit Mountain Community Fund rejected our grant Letter of Inquiry but Sam has identified a Willamette habitat group that might be a funder for this part of the project.

Financial Report

Tim said SAS was \$3,488 ahead through April but that we will finish with a deficit. Revenue was off \$4,106 for April and expenses were \$765 less than budget, leaving less net income of \$3,341. He projects about a \$7,000 deficit for the year. The goal is to chip away at that through webinars and other avenues.

As for the impact of COVID, assets were \$416,000 in 2019 and are \$362,000 now (Edward Jones accounts). However, assets were \$317,000 in 2016, \$346,000 in 2017 and \$387,000 in 2018. The figures show the value of a diversified portfolio and the stability even with a big hit like the pandemic.

Marion Soil and Water Conservation District move – Tim said the district is looking to move out of the leased Hawthorne space and buy a building. The target is an August 2021 move but could be earlier if they

find a location. This means SAS also would have to move and Tim said it's unlikely the SWCD would have room for SAS in a new facility.

On another note, SWCD wants to transition its Backyard Habitat Certification effort to Portland Audubon. Tim said he would like to partner with Portland on this to co-manage and market it, since it is in Salem Audubon territory.

Tribal bird survey – Tim completed a recent bird survey of Grand Ronde land Enchanted Oaks property in the Jefferson area) and they are interested in having Salem Audubon do other bird surveys for them.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Next Board meeting: 6 p.m. June 23, location or format TBA