

SAS Board Minutes

Oct. 26, 2020

Via Zoom call

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

Guest: Mike Unger

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

Webinar report, Mike Unger – Mike shared his latest report on Audubon webinars presented – 12 to date, with 209 people signing up and 74% attending. Of those signing up, 64% are Salem Audubon members. Significantly, \$480 has been spent to set up the system and income is \$560 (Tim said it's \$1,760 for the year.) Owls of the Northwest is the most successful paid webinar with 21 registrants and 18 participating. Birding tips and Tricks is the top free webinar – 38 registrants and 22 attending.

Mike is impressed with how people have taken to Zoom. Few technical difficulties have been encountered of late. Zoom's being used for other Audubon activities including Birder's Night and some committee meetings. Practice sessions have been held to get presenters and committee members up to speed with the technology.

Upcoming webinars include Oregon Ducks and Geese, Christmas Bird Count Tips and Techniques, Where to Go Birding in December, Exploring Raptors. He's working on new topics for next year including bird size and shape, behavior, habitat, color and pattern. Tim has also mentioned a webinar about what's happening at the Nature Center.

In other tech news, Mike is working on getting a YouTube channel for SAS. It's free and a good place to put chapter videos, including the bird classes. Jenny said that once a YouTube channel is set up, the Oregon Environmental Literacy Program has a directory of environmental resources and the YouTube channel can be used to access the resources. Tim is looking into captioning and translation for meetings. He is pursuing for Santiam Flycasters because they have some members who are deaf and this, plus translation for Spanish-speakers, might be a way to reach additional audiences for SAS programs.

Also a Google Group has been set up for the SAS Board as a way to message any or all of the Board:
SAS_Board_of_Directors@GoogleGroup.com

The Board thanked Mike for all his work on the webinar programs.

Committee Reports

Wood shop – Tim said Chet says that given school program cancellations, the shop's supply of wood should be good for some time. Chet has made two bluebird nest boxes for the Bluebird project. Cynthia suggested an article for the Kestrel.

Conservation – Tim said Ray emailed regarding a letter SAS has signed onto in support of Audubon's Saline Lakes program legislation backed by Sen. Wyden.

Birder's Night – The second Zoom presentation was held in October. About 35 signed up and 27 participated. Harry Fuller is the November presenter and Chuck Gates in December. Tim is working to set up a Google Group for Eugenia to use to notify people of Birder's Night programs and to contact committee members. A possible budget item is purchase of a camera and mic to have available for presenters if they need it.

Field Trip Committee, Cynthia – The last four pod field trips of the year have been advertised. The committee will hold a Zoom meeting Nov. 13 to discuss resuming regular field trips (probably not) or continuing pod trips in January. Dominic and Harry are willing to lead trips in January. Another possibility to discuss is increasing the number of participants as long as Covid protocols are in place, although feedback about the smaller pod groups has been positive. Tim thanked Cynthia for her work to get the field trip registration process set up (complicated by issues with Google forms) and to trip leaders for stepping up to keep field trips happening. Trip

leaders share lists of birds seen on OBOL and eBird. Cynthia includes the info in the Kestrel. Maureen suggested sharing the trip lists with Mike Unger so he can share on Facebook as well.

Christmas Bird Count – Tim said National Audubon has approved local CBCs as long as participants comply with local Covid protocols. Nov. 15 is the date for local chapters to decide and announce plans. He said he has leaders for all sectors for the Dec. 19 count. The countdown will be handled via Zoom.

Minutes from September – A wording change in the September minutes was requested by Doug under pursuing disposal of bird specimens: anything **that's done** has to be documented. Mike Williams moved approval of minutes with that insertion; Maureen seconded. Motion unanimously approved.

Review of Action Items

- 1) **Michael B. to pursue disposal of SAS's bird specimens** – He said Lee Slatum said the specimens could be buried at the Nature Reserve and they could plant a couple of trees to commemorate the birds. Judy said she has frozen bird specimens that could be added to the ceremony. There are nests to dispose of but those could be deconstructed and allowed to decompose naturally. The other suggestion is to burn the specimens. Again, any process of disposal has to be documented. Michael said he likes to idea of memorializing some of the birds at the Reserve and perhaps burn the rest. ***New action item: Michael and Tim will meet at the Nature Center with Lee so he can assess the situation and the condition and number of birds stored there. They can then develop a proposal from there.**

Financial report, Tim – SAS bugeted a \$7,000 deficit in unrestricted funds but ended with only about a \$4,000 deficit because of \$2,000 increase from memberships, appeals that did well and decreases in some expenses. He will provide more detail when he does the 2020-21 budget presentation next month.

Regarding Nature Center funds and account, there are 6 accounts in 3 categories. We have \$286,500 plus \$150,000 in pledges to develop the next phases (Dave Marshall and Gehlar Hall extension). We need a new project management plan and Tim and Graham are going to work on developing that. The recommendation is to proceed with the Dave Marshall classroom as soon as possible because we have funds dedicated to it, there is sufficient funding to finish it and it will provide space for classes and other events/gatherings while the Gehlar extension is being built.

We also have \$50,000 at Oregon Community Foundation that has accrued \$14,600 in interest to use for the Nature Center. That account generates about \$2,300 a year that can support N.C. operations. In addition we have \$253,000 in an account to support Nature Center educational needs – could pay for buses, drivers or other educational needs. This account generates about \$10,000 a year. These monies could support the website, WIFI, etc. and Tim proposes to allocate the OCF fund proceeds to support operations.

Judy made a motion to allocate the funding as Tim outlined -- \$286,500 plus \$150,000 in pledges for construction, beginning with Dave Marshall classroom; interest from the \$50,000 OCF fund for N.C. operations; and interest from the \$253,000 account to support N.C. educational efforts. Mike Williams seconded and asked to make this a line item in the budget because it “makes it responsive and sends a message to the partners that we are committed to supporting the Center. That would mean a \$10,000 line item for Education and \$2,000 for operations. Tim agreed. Motion carried unanimously,

SAS has about \$13,500 in the unrestricted account. The current appeal has generated about \$1,500 and an end-of-year appeal is pending in mid-November. He said the Board's earlier approval to take \$200,000 out of the unrestricted investment account and \$50,000 out of the Nature Center restricted investment account and commit the funds to further development of the Nature Center has been done but the transaction occurred Oct. 1, so the monies still appear in the last fiscal report.

Nature Center update – The soft opening has been delayed again. The water system is still being corrected, there is no media plan, the roads aren't finished and the team decided to push the opening to early 2021 when the Center will look “finished.” At that point, visitors will be able to use the trails and the Nature Explore area, just not the Center itself until the Covid situation is corrected.

Water treatment update – The Board’s concerns from the September meeting were forwarded to the Service. As a result, a thermal coupling and flush valve have been proposed as the solution to getting a working water system for the Center. Dalke has stepped up to cover at least part of the cost. Not clear if SAS still will have to provide some funding. Michael B. thanked Tim for following through on the water system issue and applauded what appears to be a very good result.

Fundraising

Duck Stamp prints – Tim said SAS member Dick Aften had offered to evaluate the stamps SAS was given. He said there is a market – perhaps \$500 each. The idea is to work with Ducks Unlimited to find buyers. The local gallery that framed them also might be of help. Mike W. said eBay has listings for them. We could also photograph some and have a Kestrel article.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Next Board meeting: 6 p.m. Nov. 24 via Zoom