

SAS Board Minutes
Jan. 28, 2020
338 Hawthorne Ave. NE

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

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

Previous month's minutes – Michael noted a wording change needed in the November 2019 minutes/budget presentation, line 1 of 2nd paragraph: “On the expense side... a slight increase from ~~this~~ **last year.**” Cynthia moved that the minutes be approved as corrected; Doug seconded. Motion carried.

Fiscal Report

December accounting and balances/appeal letter results – Tim noted that appeal results were behind budget significantly last year, in part because of no donations via the summer appeal, which did not include a return envelope. The fall and end-of-year appeals did better but still fell short. Individual donations, however, were up, including \$2,177 that came in in November, including a substantial donation from the former owner of the SAS woodshop. Board discussed having Chet write an article for the Kestrel thanking the new property owner for continuing to let SAS use the shop.

Overall, SAS ended the year \$1,803 ahead, thanks to \$3,000 moved from the unrestricted operating funds. The budget forecast was for a \$7,010 shortfall. Doug asked about a couple of old budget items that continue to appear on the reports, including the fund for use of goats for removal of invasives at the Nature Reserve. They are zeroed out and Tim said he can hide those so they no longer appear on printouts.

OCF Nature Center proceeds – Tim proposed using some of the Oregon Community Foundation Nature Center fund proceeds to pay for some of the Nature Center operating expenses. He sought a blanket approval to use these fund proceeds, as long as the expense is \$500 or less. For anything over that, he would come to the Board for approval. Among expenses this would address: the bird strike installation (\$250), wifi (\$500/year) and website fees (\$150/year). Michael moved that Tim be authorized to use proceeds from the Oregon Community Foundation fund to cover Nature Center operating expenses of \$500 and under. Doug seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Remaining Gehlar development funds – This fund originally had about \$800,000 and the remaining \$58,646 will go toward the water treatment system (our expense about \$4,000 of the \$12,000 total) and the costs to equip the Center – chairs, bookshelves, etc.

Tax review – All Board members are to review the SAS tax forms. Michael questioned the assets figure of \$1.7 million. It was determined that documents are still reflecting ownership of the Nature Center, which will change for 2020. Tim will sign the forms so they can be submitted. It was noted that one provision is that SAS have a conflict of interest form that is signed annually by Board members. *** Action item: Laurie to prepare the form for Board signatures at the next meeting.**

National Audubon Report update – Tim and Ray have been working on this. It's long; Tim will share with the Board when it's complete. National does share a small portion of membership fees received from Salem-area residents as a result of the report being filed.

Oregon Audubon Council Conservation priorities – Tim share the report with the Board. He noted that SAS does write letters of support throughout the year for various conservation issues that arise.

Articles of Incorporation – By state law, SAS assets have to go to a 501 (c)(3), so we can't inset U.S. Fish and Wildlife as our designee to accept assets should SAS ever dissolve. The Friends, however, are a 501 (c)(3). ***Action item: Tim will approach the Friends to see if they are will to accept SAS assets. If so, he will come to the Board for approval.**

Committee Chairs – Glen Lindeman has told Tim he plans to step down as chair of the Field Trip committee at the end of July. He will continue to lead trips, but does not want to be the committee coordinator. Tim said Mike Unger may take on the lead role. Birder's Night Committee Chair Eugenia Becker may be stepping down this fall. She has plans to move to Redmond but the specifics are tentative as yet. Judy said there are other committee members who may be able to step up to the chairmanship.

Nature Center update

Water system – Tim said the planned system to address coliform contamination and excess iron has been OK'd and should be complete soon. Total cost is about \$12,000, with the expense shared between SAS, the Friends and the Service.

Fundraising plans – Tim has drafted a proposed fundraising agreement with the Service. One element discussed was a donor wall, which is included in the proposal Tim also will encourage the Friends to be a part of the project and plans to make a presentation to them at their Feb. 11 meeting, which will be held at the Nature Center. One question to be answered: If fundraising exceeds \$500,000 a year, SAS would have to undergo a full audit. Tim needs to find out if SAS funds are included in that total as well as Nature Center donations. Next step for that project is getting a construction cost estimate. The original estimate was about \$400,000 for Dave Marshall, with another \$500,000 to finish the next phase of Gehlar Hall. Tim said some cost-saving ideas were discussed on the DMT call today. Included was a proposal to use vault toilets rather than flush. The Service also can handle construction management on this project, which will be a major cost-saver. Given cost-cutting, Graham speculated that the cost could be \$150,000-\$200,000, rather than \$400,000. Once the DMT approves the design tenets document Samantha has drafted, Tim will work with Dalke to get a conceptual design and cost estimate for the Marshall classroom.

Bids for the contract for the Nature Center parking lot and new entrance (as well as the revamped entrance to Baskett Slough) will close Feb. 6 and a contractor should be selected in March. Total approved funds for the work is \$1.2 million. Should the project not require all funding, "add alternates" have been identified, which include the volunteer base camp element at Ankeny Hill and the Buena Vista parking lot and access road to the Dave Marshall classroom.

***Action item: Tim will share with the Board a) the fundraising plan draft ; b) donations so far to the Dave Marshall classroom donations; the building tenets document; a copy of the Nature Center website design he and Tara Choate have developed.**

Public Events Planning

Yard/Garden – This event comes up March 20-22. Michael said he is willing to chair this again and will ask Mary Ritter to help out again.

May event at Nature Reserve – Michael said he is working with Lee Slatum on the planned memorial for Don Christensen, which includes a brass plaque to honor Don's contributions to preservation and improvements at the Reserve. Michael said Don's family may provide funds for the memorial but he may need to come to the Board for some funding approval as well. No date has been set other than to look at a weekend in May.

New Earth Day event April 18 at the Salem Convention Center – Tim said Maureen is working on securing volunteers to staff an SAS table.

Saturday Market – It was agreed to try to secure two slots for a booth this coming season – one in May and one in September.

Board Sharing – Maureen noted the Beginning Bird class coming up April 4.

Michael said he's contacted the Confederated Tribes regarding them accepting SAS's bird specimens. He's heard nothing back.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Next Board meeting: Feb. 25, 6 p.m., at 338 Hawthorne NE.