

**Western Field Ornithologists Board of Directors
Teleconference Meeting
Wednesday, May 1, 2019 1pm-3:50pm**

Draft Minutes prepared by Liga L. Auzins Wurster, *Rec. Sec'y.*

Board Members present: Kurt M. Leuschner, *Pres.*; Jon L. Dunn, *Vice Pres.*; Suzanne M. Carota, *Treas./Membership Sec'y.*; Liga L. Auzins Wurster, *Rec. Sec'y.*; Kenneth P. Able, Wendy L. Beers, John F. Garrett, Kimball L. Garrett, Daniel D. Gibson, Homer M. Hansen, John H. Harris, Karen A. Havlena, Bryce W. Robinson, Stephen C. Rottenborn, Christopher W. Swarth.

Absent: Matthew Baumann, John Garrett.

Guests: Lena Hayashi, Scholarship Committee, Ed Pandolfino, Publications Committee, Diane Rose, Meetings Committee, Phil Unitt, editor *Western Birds*(**WB**).

MINUTES

1:00pm Meeting called to order, welcome and roll.

Motion: Minutes from January 30, 2019 accepted unanimously via motion to approve by Ken and seconded by Kimball.

In Memoriam: Jerry R. Oldnettel (1942-2019). Jerry was an outstanding figure in New Mexican field ornithology during the past quarter of a century, passed away April 11, 2019 at age 76. He found and photographed 9 first state records for NM. He was a member of New Mexico Ornithological Society and the NMBRC (Paraphrased from John Parmeter).

1:05 pm **FINANCE:**

Treasurer's Report: (Suzanne): Our financial reports as of March 31st look good. Our funds are up about \$5,000 from year end. We expected more sales of both the *The Biology of a Desert Apparition: LeConte's Thrasher(Thrasher)* and *Trends and Traditions Avifaunal Change in Western North America(Trends)* books. The totals haven't changed a whole lot since year end. Although the *Trends* e-book version went up in March and the *Thrasher* e-book went up last week, we have not sold any versions of e-book as of last night.

Membership is stable. I seem to have lost track of Ted Eliot, a 30 year member. He was a Board member of Point Blue and he is 91 years old. His **WB** was undeliverable and his email bounced.

1:12 pm

Roles and Responsibilities: Suzanne: I think that sometime in the future we need to have an in-depth discussion about the many things I have learned about governance, reporting, policies, procedures and the gray areas with which we should be careful. The retreat in Palm Desert is a good time to do that. For the people who won't be able to attend, maybe we can have a lengthy conference call to review. We do need to discuss roles and responsibilities for the Board. I googled advertising and non-profits and I got an education which I would like to share. We have expanded reporting requirements because WFO had over \$200,000 in income last year. You are all individually named in our returns, therefore your names are going to be out there in the public (the

IRS and the State of California). I can send out information with specifics. The Attorney General of the State of California has a lot of information about how to run a non-profit. Our accounting software offered a webinar called, 'Financial information for Board members'. I asked for a power point file which they sent. If anybody wants to look at financial data and what your responsibilities are let me know.

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne will send out educational information including financial, for nonprofits.

ACTION ITEM: Kurt: We will try to talk about this in Albuquerque in August and in Palm Desert in October. In addition, we can do a special conference call if needed.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: (Tom) We haven't had a meeting in a while and there is nothing pending with the Finance Committee. I would like to emphasize that Suzanne and I sent over the very complicated IRS and Franchise Tax Board non-profit documents recently. It is ready to send off to the State and the Federal government.

1:18pm

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE: (Ken)

ACTION ITEM: All: Please seek submissions for **WB** and refer them to Phil Unitt, Editor.

Report: The first item on the agenda here was about advertising in **WB**. Let's take the advertising off the table because of IRS regulations. There is no way we want to incur \$5,000 for the mailing permit when running some \$100 ads in **WB**. I would ask if there is general interest in the board in pursuing sponsorships for some aspects of **WB**.

Jon: The optical companies have decided birders don't produce sufficient income as hunters do, but it still would be worth reaching out to people like Clay Taylor and Bruce Webb (formerly with WFO), who have connections. Another way to spin this, is to view it as a public service announcement (PSA). We would charge the person who wants to run the announcement for page charges, so maybe it is \$60 rather than \$100 and we break even. We should view it as much as a service to our membership as opposed to looking to make money.

Suzanne: We can announce publishing a book, we can't endorse it or list the price or ordering information, but we can do it as a PSA. We ask for a donation from the people to do that and we can even ask for a donation for page charges, but we can't advertise. This is to keep us from engaging in business that other people pay taxes on. We can list website information and a logo. We just cannot price it or endorse it, but we can report it.

Ken: We are going to mention the Oregon book, a natural history of the Malheur region of Oregon, edited by Alan Contreras, in the newsletter for which we will be charging page charges. The next newsletter is going to be e-mailed.

Kurt: Let's keep the door open on the page charge idea and the sponsorship idea. As things come in we will make sure that Suzanne approves them.

Kurt: Putting an ad in the Oregon book is what started this conversation.

Jon: I get a sense that everyone is in favor of this if we don't run amiss of the IRS or ignore the 5013c.

ACTION ITEM: Announcement: Ken: At the end of the Board meeting or at our conference in Reno, NV in 2020 I will be leaving the Board and that will create a need for a new Chair of the Publications Committee and an Editor of Special Publications. No action is needed right now but everyone should be aware of this.

1:33 pm

Report: Ken: North American Birds (**NAB**) seems be dying a slow death. We've talked about a lot of possible ways WFO could get involved. The journal is owned by ABA who does not wish to part with it nor do they wish to have any interference. It is an expensive operation that we could not take on our own. We should keep our eyes and ears open, keep in touch with the regional editors in the West, and look for opportunities for things that we might be able to get involved with in the future. Dan discovered a little note in 2011 in **WB** from Alan Contreras who described what the Oregon Society had been doing. They have been archiving reports for the Northwest. (They did not get into California.) They were putting them in digital searchable files and storing them all on their server. They have scanned decades of material. Files, which are already in Word, and are searchable could be logged away someplace and stored on our website or wherever we wanted to put them for future access. If the Regional Editors for **NAB** are continuing to function, and everybody was willing and wanted to, they would basically submit their reports. This is not proprietary information as far as I am aware, they simply submit their reports to us and we archive them. They could simply send us a copy before they send it in to ABA's **NAB**. That information would always be there and if **NAB** does go under maybe those people might be interested in doing that knowing the information was going to be kept. The regional editors may just not care to do this and say, "If the journal (**NAB**) is gone, I'm gone".

ACTION ITEM: Consider possible solutions for NAB. Nothing need be done right now.

Ken: I had a lengthy conversation with Ted Floyd about this in Ventura. I came away with no useful information at all except he doesn't like any of the parts of **NAB** which I think are important. He thinks everything is going along swimmingly and they are ready to burst into bloom. Obviously, this simply is not true. If WFO got involved, the part that would be a lot of work would be the coordination; somebody keeping up with the Regional Editors and making sure they get the reports, etc.

ACTION ITEM: Ken asks Jon to talk to Ted Floyd again regarding the future of NAB.

Ken: Cat is going to do one more newsletter. It will be the summer newsletter. John Garrett will be assuming those responsibilities thereafter.

E-book update: Ken: We had **Trends** available on the Amazon site quite a while ago, but for some reason we didn't get the link to the e-book site up on our own website on the publications sales page so it wasn't obvious to people ordering the book that that was available. So now we do have links up there for both books, **Trends** and **LeConte's** and we will see what happens. We need to re-evaluate in Albuquerque if we are not getting any action at all. The site has not been up and advertised. In addition, we should be having more reviews coming out soon. The only ones I've seen have been in **WB**. I assume that we will receive copies of reviews once they appear in other journals. There is one at some stage of development for the *Wilson Bulletin*.

Other Books: The **Gambell** book by Paul Lehman is being copy edited now. I think it is reasonable to hope that it will appear sometime in the fall. The Inyo County book has just completed being peer reviewed, and that will go back to the Heindels for revision. This book will probably be published in 2020.

1:45pm

MEETINGS:

Albuquerque, NM, August 21 - 25th, 2019 (Kurt)

Update: Our next Board meeting will be in Albuquerque. Rockjumper has graciously declined to sponsor our reception as they have contributed \$1,000 for the past three years. We don't have a sponsor for the reception but the show will go on nevertheless. We can always look for another sponsor. There might have been some expectation on the part of Rockjumper of teaming up with our field trips, but it is not certain. We should keep this aspect in mind for future dealing; sponsoring this type of thing is solely for the sense of community.

Report: Chris: We have 8 vendors who have committed to presenting their products on tables in the Promenade. We have 3 nonprofits, CNPS, NMOS, and Central New Mexico Audubon will be there. Artists are Wren, Noah, and Narco-Craig. Zeiss will be represented by Luke Tiller, and Front Range Birding is coming in from Colorado. The cost of the Reception is relatively low (\$3,500) compared to last years. The caterer gets good reviews. The Reception will be at the Student Union Building on campus which is a short walk from the museum where we will be meeting first for the tours.

Kurt: The idea is to shuttle everybody over to the museum starting around 5pm. People will walk through the museum guided by some graduate students past the special display about Bob Dickerman including the picture of the Swarth Award that WFO gave him, and from there people will be walk over to the reception.

Field trip leaders: Matt who is not on this conference call, sent in a report that he has just about enough leaders. There are 3 open spots he is working on. Matt, Andy and Dave Kreuper met yesterday so we will have another report from Matt soon.

ACTION ITEM: Kurt: Maybe we can have a flyer describing Bob Dickerman and his vast accomplishments.

Kurt: Maybe it's too late to talk to Zeiss about that this meeting, but in Albuquerque we could perhaps discuss a role for them at our next meeting, i.e. contributing to the reception.

Diane: I would like to see the CVent contract signed around the first of June. Before it gets signed I would like to pass it through to Tom Blackman so that he can look it over and see that the negotiations I did were satisfactory. The reason I want to do it in June is that Bryce is going to set up the website for this but I am going to set up the various pathways for the registration types. It is very complicated and it has a steep learning curve so I would like to get started on it in June. Tom agrees to reviewing the contract. Kurt: If you need my signature get it before June 5th. Diane: I need to have and of two of four signatures, President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Past President.

Reno, NV, Meeting September 9-13, 2020:

Kurt: We seemed to have settled on Reno, NV, September 9-13, 2020 at a place called Whitney Peaks.

Report: Ed: A few months ago, I was asked by Jon and Kurt to consider possible venues in the Lake Tahoe area. Looking for a non-smoking hotel eliminates almost everything in Nevada. Looking at Lake Tahoe first, the sole option was way too expensive. I looked at two non-smoking hotel

options in NV, one being Carson City, but they are too small. The other option was the Whitney Peak Hotel in downtown Reno which I know to be a good venue. They can host us next Sept. 9-13, which is a good time for birds and weather. The negotiated room rate is \$125.00 which is a little bit high, but it is a pretty good discount given the place. The banquet will cost \$40/person. There will be meeting room fees that we can't eliminate due to some issues with the way they are organized. AV costs may be in the \$2200-2800 range. We have lots of field trip options, including places in Ca., i.e., the north shore of Lake Tahoe. We may have to carpool. We will get assistance from some of the locals, i.e., Elisabeth Ammon, Executive Director of the Great Basin Bird Observatory (GBBO) and past WFO Board member. I can probably persuade Martin Meyers to help. It's a reasonable venue. For historical purposes, this will be the third time we met in Reno.

Kurt: We should get a consensus about the 2020 meeting location in Reno. Does anyone have any objections or comments going to Reno next September?

Kimball: I have the 2001 meeting archived and I can send a copy to Kurt who can send it to the Meetings Committee, etc. It is archived at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology (WVZ) as Cat organized the archives.

Ed: The Reno meeting although it is not in Ca. it is right next to Ca. and it will have many field trips into Ca. There is an airport right in Reno and a \$10. shuttle service. Parking at the hotel will be free. It is downtown and there is a parking garage across the street which will be free for us. We should stage the vans right in front of hotel. If we go, there I need an okay. I need to start negotiating a contract. I will go forward in getting the details on the contract, we can look at that and decide if we want to sign and then we can start organizing the field trips.

Motion: Kimball moves that we investigate the venue in Reno from Sept. 9-13, 2020, seconded by Jon and passed unanimously.

Suzanne will be willing to work on the budget for this with Ed once he has the preliminary contract to put together.

2:07pm

Scholarship Committee: (Homer)

Announcement: Lena Hayashi is now one of our committee members, is on this call and is available for any questions. The committee is trying to further support our alumni with research opportunities.

Report: We have 9 applications for the Albuquerque meeting. We have approved 10 scholarships of \$1,000 each for travel which includes 6 scholarships 18 and under, 2 undergraduate students and 2 graduate students. The graduate applications are a bit delayed because they coincide with the submittal of abstracts in June. The idea is to get them to come and present at the conference. We will fall within our budget.

The policy is to consider each category separately, i.e. one can receive a scholarship for 18 and under and then again as an undergraduate student and even graduate student. We technically have 4 categories, the fourth being the Field Trip Scholarship which we have not given out recently.

Lena: Extending the scholarship to college level, is what makes WFO different. We are trying to give an opportunity for these students to pursue ornithology as a career. We need to support them in undergraduate and graduate school. We want to be able to mentor them through the whole process.

Review: Ed: We have \$10,000 in the budget for scholarships for this conference and we have 9 applicants right now. What we could do, we could just say we will accept all 9 of these applicants and we will leave room for one more graduate application. In the meantime, Suzanne and Homer could look at the budget and see if there is room for 11, in which case we do get two graduate applications. We could do both. We certainly could do the 9 we have. Everyone gets to go and plus one graduate within the existing budget without looking at the numbers. Everyone gets to go and you can fix the terminology and policy in the future.

ACTION ITEM: Lena: We do have a sizeable budget now in the Student Programs. We can go with what we have now, after which we will clarify the terminology and bring it up at the next Board meeting so that it becomes very clear.

Diane: Graduate scholars do not receive as many tickets to the banquet as they don't have chaperones.

Kurt: At the most it is going to go up to 11 scholarships and we still stay within the budget. If it goes over, I am willing to take that risk.

Motion: Ken moves that we approve all 9 under 18 year olds and all undergraduate students that have been under discussion and that we also move awarding scholarships up to two graduate students not to exceed \$1,000 over budget (if we stay within \$11,000), seconded by Wendy and passed with one abstention.

Motion: Ken moves regarding scholarship recipients that we remove an age limit if a person is a full-time graduate student in a degreed program and we have other safeguards in place regarding their application and remove the 30-year-old age limit, seconded by Steve and passed with one abstention vote.

Homer: Changing the name of the Scholarship Committee to The Student Programs Committee is the most appropriate name for the committee to cover all the variations in that committee. This committee has been an *ad hoc* committee and I would like to make it a "standing committee" of the WFO Board as there are many discussions and fiduciary responsibilities and monies going through this committee. I would like to make it into a formal standing committee for our by-laws.

An *ad hoc* committee is a temporary committee that accomplishes a specific function and dissolves after that function has been accomplished. Standing committees are tied in with the by-laws which furthers the mission of the organization through the by-laws. We have a dedicated fund for this committee.

ACTION ITEM: Kurt: Let's keep the above two issues, name of committee and type of committee, for future business at the retreat, etc.

3:03pm

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE: (Chris)

Report: I have contacted ABSCO and although I haven't heard anything back, I have tried to get **WB** carried as widely as possible in academic libraries in the West. I am working with ICAHN and Ken Able and the authors of the upcoming two books to see if we can get some sponsorship either individually or through an organization which would like to contribute to the publication of those two books. We have done this with other WFO special publications. Perhaps we can make *gratis* copies available to certain schools or organizations. It's a good way to raise some additional funds for the organization and specifically for these two books. Pasadena Audubon was the major contributor to

the scholarship fund over the last four or five years to the tune of \$12,500. I have met with Laura Garrett, the President and John Garrett's mother, just to let them know how much we appreciate their help and their partnership. One of the things I was trying to clarify was some of the name changes that have taken place with the scholarship fund. The name of this fund has changed a bit. Currently it has the name of Pasadena-WFO Scholarship Fund. It could become the Mike San Miguel Youth Scholarship Fund. Mike San Miguel was the major contributor to that fund, and we are continuing his legacy by keeping his name prominent in the name of the Fund.

ACTION ITEM: Chris can send Laura Garrett a note regarding the slight change to the name of the fund and say it is pending the Pasadena Audubon approval. Kimball can discuss this with the San Miguel family.

ACTION ITEM: Kimball needs to ask the question about the name change with the family and about taking it off the Publications Fund also. Chris will get the feedback from Pasadena Audubon and we will vote on it in Albuquerque.

3:16pm Website Subcommittee: (Bryce)

Report: I am updating the website to be more attractive to youth and to draw in more participation. Feedback from youth was that they never look at the website except to see an old issue of **WB**. There is nothing there for young birders. They would use the site if they had useful information on birds, birding or networking. They look at the Youth Scholarship information but only if they had not received it and are considering applying for one. The Colorado Field Ornithologists(CFO) website looks modern and attractive. Both Susan Gilliland and Jon Dunn said content is the priority. Some potential website ideas that came from brainstorming was to have a list serve which we have, but it is not active yet so that youth can pass information to one another. Other ideas are to have California Birds posts and to have updates to the CBRC, something that Tom Benson could put out, Kimball and Jon suggest that John Garrett could post taxonomic changes annually.

Kimball: Although that kind of information is on the CBRC site, we could make it more youth friendly.

Wendy: The CFO site has a picture that changes thereby seeing what is on the site. With this mechanism they could see the new changes to CBRC and they can click on right away instead of a static page that we have now where it is harder to navigate. They need something that is more interactive.

Bryce: Additional feedback from youth were things like providing a bird quiz every month or so. They want useful information on birds. To encourage participation from youth we should have more activity on social media. A list serve in my opinion is kind of an old-school device as opposed to Facebook, twitter, etc. Maybe we should consider having links to WFO's accounts on Facebook or twitter on the website so that they're easily observable for youth and they can find those venues for having discussions or posting things like bird quizzes, etc. Another improvement would be to have more information about Board members including a photo, a brief bio about who we are, and what we do along with some contact information too. We are going to a new platform for registration and it will work just like Regonline.

Kurt: Is there a cost that we need to consider or approve for the next budget? Do we need to hire somebody to do all these upgrades?

Bryce: Yes, depending on what kind of scale we are looking at and what we want to attack first. I told Susan Gilliland and Lena Hayashi we would have a discussion here first, then I would summarize what was said and then we would come with plan on how to do some of these things.

ACTION ITEM: The next step for Bryce is to formalize the plan and present it to us for the next meeting for approval, listing all the things that need to be done, and who will do them, and the cost.

ACTION ITEM: (ALL): Let Bryce know what you would like to see on the website or if you want to get more involved join the Website Subcommittee.

Chris: I have thought about a few things and I would be happy to work with Bryce and whoever else wants to do this to come up with a plan and/or a list of suggested changes that would make the website more appealing and welcoming.

Kurt: It is reasonable to get help. Move forward, and figure out if you need to hire somebody and how much it might cost.

Jon: Let me prioritize all three moving parts: 1) you have Bryce and others looking over the website; 2) you have the youth 3) the key player is Bryce. Maybe Tim and Susan Gilliland are working together on this. I reached out to Justina Martelli and she has agreed to be another key player, People involved may be Tom Benson from the CBRC and Kimball and John Garrett. If youth starts posting, these posts need to be looked at for ornithological accuracy, so we should line up the key players and if all that can be done, then we get an idea of costs to revamp, including the adult oriented (main) part of the website.

Bryce: I agree. I will be in the field this summer so my communication will be slowed down but I think that I can get some people moving on some things and get a plan well developed.

ACTION ITEM: Let the Subcommittee push forward with this as no one on the Board has any objection. Also, the Subcommittee should be in touch with all the key players mentioned by Jon above. As to making the website mobile, that is something Tim can do.

Bryce: Does WFO have a twitter account? I know we have a Facebook page which is not very active. Concerning ornithological organizations, twitter is super active and it is useful to me in the community and it is a way to increase readership in **WB**. It is a great way to draw in people, especially youth and people that are coming up and are interested in birdlife. I think getting the twitter account going would be a good move. Professional organizations are going that route when getting out papers and events, etc.

Jon: Bryce can you give a presentation at the August meeting if there is time?

ACTION ITEM: Bryce: I can set up Twitter for us and have someone else monitor it while I am in the field during June and July. I will be the primary person for screening the tweets. If you want to see the type of things I tweet you can go to my webpage or what we would be sharing as our own regarding **WB or news in ornithology, or what WFO is doing, or the conference. It will be benign stuff. While I am in the field (June and July) I will have someone else monitor our twitter page, perhaps Justina.**

3:40pm

FIELD TRIPS: (Kurt):

Report: There is no update on a field trip coordinator. That was an idea put out there that nobody has stepped up for.

Humboldt/Del Norte County Field Trip Summer 2019: The trip is filled.

Santa Cruz Island Summer 2020 (changed from fall 2019):

Palm Desert WFO Retreat: October 12-14th, 2019

Kurt: It is time to start thinking about getting a hotel blocked off. It is the same hotel we used for our Coachella Valley extended weekend in Palm Desert. You will be hearing more about that when we send something out. Hopefully you can attend that weekend, especially Sat. and Sun. and consider staying over Monday.

Jon: Obviously, Board members and officers are invited, but we should think about who else to invite. That's been the plan all along, to keep people involved with WFO.

ACTION ITEM: The Board should e-mail to Kurt with people they think would contribute and benefit by attending the Palm Desert Retreat.

The real retreat and working day is going to be Sun., 10/13/19 of that weekend. There might those who want to stay over Monday to continue discussions and try to get some work done. If you arrive early (Fri. or Sat.) there will be some opportunities to do some birding at the Salton Sea, etc. Hopefully you will hear something soon.

COLUMBIA: November 2019.

We have the minimum (8) signed up. There is room for two more.

TASMANIA:

This trip has twelve people. There is room for 3 more. Kurt is the leader for the Tasmania trip. The trip will raise a lot of money for the Publications Fund, the Field Trip Fund, and the Students Support Fund.

CUBA: Maybe November 2020.

ACTION ITEM: We are always open to trip ideas

CONSERVATION/SCIENCE POLICY: No updates.

CHECKLISTS: Report: Steve: The checklists have to be printed before July, before the new AOS changes can be incorporated.

ACTION ITEM: Jon will send the draft of the 60th Supplement so the new changes can be reflected in our new checklist.

AWARDS COMMITTEE: (Jon)

Report: Two candidates are nominated so two will be given.

ACTION ITEM: we will send out something for the Board to approve for the WFO Outstanding Service Awards (WFOOSA).

We have 3 basic awards: The WFO Outstanding Service Award for significant accomplishment over time or maybe a very short period; The Craig Award implies beyond that and the Swarth Award is for outstanding publications. It is best if a half page summarizing the accomplishments of the nominee can be submitted. This is not a competitive award; we can give out as many as necessary.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE (Jon)

Report: We have two very worthwhile candidates who said they are willing to come back on the Board and we have two openings. If anyone on the Board has additional nominations, write them up, but in this case, it behooves us not to have a competitive election. We have two indispensable people who want to come back on the Board. Although I favor democracy, this particular year I do not favor that. The two candidates need to send in their CVs to Jon and Kurt.

New Business: None

Kurt: Next meeting is in Albuquerque, August 22nd. I will be in touch before then. Feel free to contact me anytime you want anything sent to the Board.

3:50pm

Motion: Dan moves to adjourn, seconded by Chris and passed unanimously.