

**Western Field Ornithologists Board of Directors  
Conference Call Board Meeting  
Wednesday, January 26, 2016**

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

**Board Members present:** David Quady, *Pres.*; Tom Blackman, *Vice Pres.*; Suzanne Carota, *Treas./Membership Sec'y.*; Liga Auzins, *Rec. Sec'y.*; Ed Pandolfino, *Past Pres.*; Jon Dunn, Daniel D. Gibson, Homer Hansen, Susan Kelly, Kurt Leuschner, Larry Modesitt, Frances Oliver, Diane Rose, Steve Rottenborn, Dave Shuford, Catherine Waters

**Absent:** Raymond VanBuskirk

**Guest:** Phil Unitt

**MINUTES**

**1:02pm** Meeting called to order, welcome, roll call

**Minutes from October 7<sup>th</sup> conference call passed unanimously via motion to approve by Dan and seconded by Cat.**

**1:04pm** **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**Report:** The 2015 year-end financial report: Our net income was over \$27,000. Membership dues came in at \$46,000. From income and the conference we added \$7,000. We ended up with cash of almost \$20,000. Half of the \$27,000 went into our general reserve and the other half went into fund balances, most of it going to the publication fund.

**Membership:**

**Report:** In December we had a significant number of people renewing and people renewing for multiple years prior to the dues increase Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, generating about \$5,000 dollars which technically comes out of 2016. Our membership from year to year remains just under 1200 domestic members. As of December 31<sup>st</sup> 170 members had yet to renew, which is better than the prior year. We are sending out the hard copy renewal envelope to everybody who has yet to renew, after which we send 1 or 2 e-mail reminders from Ed and following that, Suzanne sends a list of about 130 people to Board members and asks that they contact anyone appropriate. After that we could send out something that is not intrusive but to ask why they are not renewing. 148 members to date have opted out of receiving hard copies of ***Western Birds (WB)***.

**Action Item:** Process for handling lapse memberships tabled until April meeting.

**1:13pm** **Proposed 2016 Budget**

**Report:** Right now we are projecting to break even. There are some areas that we meet the budget. It reflects the increase in membership dues and two field trips (Cuba and the Central Sierras), and the profit from the 2015 conference of \$6,000, which is pretty conservative. There is a \$10,000 item requested by the Publications Committee for the Avifaunal Change book. Approval of the budget will be contingent on Suzanne updating the budget to reflect decisions we make today.

**2016 Budget passed unanimously via motion to approve by Jon and seconded by Tom.**

## **PUBLICATION COMMITTEE**

**1:20 pm** *Western Birds (WB)*

**Report:** We already have all the material for 47(1) except for one article typeset and will be ready to print in February, be ready to mail on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February, thereby keeping our three month interval from the last issue. To summarize, last year we had a total of 36 submissions which is down slightly from 30 in 2014, but we have already had 6 in 2016. We have 3 articles already accepted for 47(2).

Congratulations to Phil and Dan and everyone associated with **WB** for getting all four issues, not just in print, but into our mailboxes before Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>. They have been working towards this goal for a long time.

### **DOI (Digital Object Identifier)**

**Proposal:** The DOI numbers would be one of those small additional items in the budget as an annual fee of \$275 and then there is a small charge per article. The total cost projection is \$500-600 per year. The main onerous task involves getting these numbers, which serve to identify an article for eternity. The primary extra work will be links to other DOI numbers. That means adding the DOI numbers to as many articles as we can and every bibliography. To complete the application we need to decide: when will we start assigning the DOI numbers and the hosting provider, whether that is GODADDY or just ourselves.

**Discussion:** The DOI number (#) is a number assigned to the citation and that number can be used to access the article directly. We would start with volume 47. The previous volumes would be under consideration as the estimated cost might be about \$12,000 based on current figures. Another purpose of the DOI# is that if our domain name (westernfieldornithologists.org) were changed, for all our articles that gotten up on another website, the DOI# would serve to get to the article even if the original link is no longer valid. That is the central reason that the DOI attempts to justify itself. It is instant access and a benefit to all – members, researchers, etc. We should inform our membership. With the DOI# one can tag papers in a journal which would take one back to the organization, i.e., WFO that publishes the journal and their website, showing that WFO publishes papers in field ornithology.

**Action Item:** The publications committee will put together for discussion and approval for our April meeting a specific proposal as to what they propose to do regarding DOIs. Phil will open the process by completing the application now.

**1:40PM** **PAGE CHARGES**

**Report:** Last fall when we discussed increasing page charges for **WB** we did not discuss increasing the charges for supplying pdfs for authors. Should we charge for pdfs, since we now prepare pdfs for posting on the web?

When publishing papers and asked for reprints we could do 50 or 100 copies and they were printed separately with a specific extra cost. If we are doing these already with no additional costs it seems that we should just be providing the authors with a copy and not charge them extra. Currently if you are a member of WFO you can go online with a digital subscription and you can download a pdf of any article. If you are not a member you would probably have to pay. The concluding suggestion is

that we just not have to worry about keeping track of who has paid and who's a member and who wants to join by buying a pdf. We can always encourage authors to join.

**Recommendation:** We should not charge for pdfs or reprint charges.

We want a free flow of information of our publications. We are always keen to get authors, and they should be supplied with a pdf free of charge whether they are members or not. Once they get the pdf we cannot control to whom the author might send this pdf. We mail out about 40 hard copies per year to every non-member for free that publishes in **WB**

**Dave S makes a motion that we no longer charge authors for a pdf reprint regardless of whether they are members or not members, seconded by Jon and passes unanimously.**

**Action Item:** Phil will modify the form accordingly and change the page charges to \$30. Suzanne will cease sending out hard copies of articles because that costs \$10-12.

**The Board adopts the practice** of mailing out reprints as a courtesy (no charge) only to those authors who request it and are not members. The authors get a pdf regardless.

#### 1:58pm **Avifaunal Change volume**

**Report:** We are not accepting any more manuscripts as we now have 27 manuscripts in hand and all have gone out for review. We returned 19 of those for revision and plan to get the rest out shortly. On January 8<sup>th</sup> we sent out an update to all the authors to get their manuscripts back to us and letting them know we are aiming for a publication date in late 2016. We are currently searching for a copy editor and for someone to do the layout.

**Discussion:** We have been waiting for a final page count and Tim Brittain has indicated that he would make time for doing the layout, but all decisions are to be made by the editors, Bob Gill and Dave Shuford, both of whom have worked very hard on the book. There are 3 different printing companies out there that are waiting to turn in bids, but we have other steps to take first.

#### 2:02pm **FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE**

**Cuba Trips:** We just finished a successful Cuba Trip. Kurt talked to Kimball about putting a report on the website. Gary says everything is in order for the March Cuba Trip and if all the payments are in he will be sending WFO a check. Gary at this point does not know when we will be flying back from Havana so we cannot make our individual flight reservations to Miami as yet. He will be sending that information to both Ed and Kurt and hopefully the group. We have 13 people registered and 5 people on the wait list.

**Central Sierra Trip, June 20-28, 2016:** The plan was to have 12 people on the trip but we wound up with 13 people and 1 scholarship person, which presents a little complication for the last two nights; therefore if we do have a cancellation we will not fill it with someone on the waiting list.

**Pre-Conference Trip with Colorado Field Ornithologists (CFO)** will be a few days before our next conference in September/October 2016. Jon is working on that but he also needs help in figuring out the 4 nights of hotels and that kind of thing. WFO and CFO would split the profits as we would charge \$700 extra for this trip.

**Discussion:** Jon and Larry have been working on this and Larry sent out an e-mail to CFO to see who would have an interest. The question is what size van do we have, and should we open it up to WFO members. The plan would be for people to fly into Sacramento on the 21<sup>st</sup> and then head out to

various spots to see birds that they would not see at the conference and then to arrive in Fortuna the night of the 28<sup>th</sup>. We have a bond with CFO and this is one way of partnering by offering their members to attend a WFO event, but Board approval is needed for the concept and also for the division of the donations. The CFO Board endorsed the trip. It could be reciprocal if something were organized in Colorado for WFO members at the WFO conference there in 2017. Without knowing the cost, CFO people haven't committed for the fall trip. Larry will take care of the sign-ups and the publicity for CFO. Jon will put together a day-by-day description to entice people, and then both Larry and Jon can proceed in getting recruits. Jon is making a very generous donation of his own time to help foster a relationship with CFO people. It would be a nice precedent to set, leading up to the WFO conference in CO next year. We need to look down the road for facilitators who can deal with the logistics rather than leaving it up to the leaders. Diane volunteers to help with the hotel arrangements and suggestions for places to eat, etc. These types of things are going to make the partnership work.

**Action Item:** These plans should be finalized by the April 27<sup>th</sup> conference call, i.e., ratio of which members make up the roster (suggestion: 5 from CFO and 2 from WFO). These details will be worked out by Jon, Larry and Kurt.

**The Board agrees to do this trip.**

**Other trips:** Last week Kurt participated in a search for Gray Vireos in Anza Borrego with Phil Unitt and his team. They decided that next January they are going to do it again, Jan 20-22, 2017 and open it up to WFO folks as well. Kurt will be working on that with Phil and Lori Hargrove and others.

We are still working a Rosy-Finch trip or January 2017 which will be led by Raymond and Dave Krueper.

We talked about doing another Cuba trip after this March one. It might be either in 2017 fall or December 2018.

Phil Unitt has mentioned doing a trip at the top of Palm Springs Tram this June. We will see if we are still going to do that. It would be a couple of nights of camping in the research area.

## 2:20pm **MEETINGS COMMITTEE**

### **41<sup>ST</sup> Annual Conference of WFO in Fortuna CA, September 28 to October 2, 2016**

**Report:** We have contracts with the River Lodge and the caterer. We have the charges all in hand, but have to add the gratuities. The motel and hotel lodging situation is difficult because we are not dealing with one, but 4 motels. Each has independent ownership, and getting them coordinated for a group rate is very difficult because we really don't have any leverage to talk to them about that. There are two items, 1) the rack rate and 2) getting comped rooms, which are important for our bottom line. We should have something worked out soon. The rooms are not that expensive up there. Dave Q has contacted Nathan Pieplow who is up for the sound quiz which we will do on Friday night.

With Regonline we will have a meeting between Dave Q. and Susan and Frances. Frances is going to teach the others how to handle the Regonline program. I spoke to the keynote speaker, Mark Colwell, a PhD. educator at Humboldt State who is an expert on shorebirds, in particular Snowy Plover and plovers worldwide. He was one of Lew Oring's students; Lew was very complimentary about him. I requested a brief outline of his talk, a bio and a reference to his website, so we can put that in Regonline. We have a rough sketch by Gary Bloomfield of the Gray

Jay (dark subspecies) for the T-shirt. We have 12 field trips established each day. There will be all day trips on Thursday and Sunday. We have about 50% of the trip leaders set and we will get some more local experts from the area shortly. There is a lot work to be done between now and June but most of the pieces are in place.

For the science sessions, C.J. Ralph is being sought to do the plenary introduction talk at the first science session and will talk on something of general interest. After his topic is decided we can better know who to approach for the introduction to the second plenary session. Steve will be sending out the call for papers in March (6 months ahead of the conference).

**Discussion:** There has been some discussion about the number of field trips as some people have suggested there might be about 300 attendees. A suggestion was made to limit the number of participants to 12 for each trip, otherwise we lose our status of being more exclusive on those trips and participants get lost in the crowd. As far as expanding the number of trips, it is really a function of areas and leaders but we will plan with Rob Fowler a few extra field trips that we can throw in on Thursday and Sunday if we need them. Those field trips would probably be going to the same areas that the other field trips are going but will start in the opposite direction, as we did in Tijuana River Valley in San Diego. Historically through Ed's statistics, about 44% of the people go on field trips so we are well within the boundary. Pelagic trips are infeasible due to the lack of proper sized boats, and 50% of time they cannot get out of the harbor.

There are members who got so frustrated over the San Diego and Montana field trips that they just didn't go on our organized field trips. They don't want to make a point of it and they don't get to meet our Board members. There are a lot of people who do not complain, they just give up. Having some additional trips for these people is perfect.

## **2:40PM 2017 Conference in Colorado**

CFO plans to have its 2017 convention in the spring, in northwest Colorado, most likely in Steamboat Springs. The advantage of that to WFO is that wherever we choose to have our conference it will be a long way from Steamboat Springs because one can't get to Steamboat Springs easily. The Front Range is airport accessible and the birding is pretty good.

**Discussion:** When we last discussed 2017, we talked about a conference during the latter couple of weeks in August or the first couple of weeks in September. If you did eastern Colorado, e.g., Sterling, like CFO did, you have the potential of the shorebird migration plus passerine migration which would encourage both CFO and WFO people because there would be a lot of things to see. Fort Collins not only has facilities but also it is close enough to airports. You could also go into the mountains for some birds. The greatest migration would be along the Front Range in some reservoirs not far from Ft. Collins and also the Pawnee Grasslands. The other alternative would be the southern end of the state where there are also some migrant traps in reservoirs near Pueblo.

We need to settle on a date and a location. One non-trivial chore is settling on the conference venue and associated hotel if they are separate. CFO would help out with the planning and designate some people to do this, and can help decide between Pueblo and Ft. Collins. Denver is an easy place to commute to and there is a shuttle from Denver to Ft. Collins. On the other hand, there is a great migrant trap east of Pueblo that everybody raves about in CO but is about 2-1/2 hrs from Denver. We don't know what insurance we can take out in CO with the CFO people but we certainly need to think about that. There is a consensus of the Board to hold the conference in late August and to get CFO people involved and then also a consensus that eastern CO is better than western CO.

2:49pm

**Nominations Committee:**

**Report:** We have two Board members who are up for renomination, Jon and Raymond, and two Board members who will be rotating off, Kurt and Cat. So we have two spots to fill for sure, and possibly, three, if someone will be going from a director to Vice President. We will have a committee meeting soon, so we can go over some of the candidates we have and start making contact with them to check their sincerity and willingness to participate and work. We will come up with a final list of three or four candidates for the two slots and maybe 4 or 5 if there are three slots. The members of the committee are as follows: Jon, Raymond, Bob Gill and Cat.

**Discussion:** Anybody else on the Board can suggest nominees. The 3 bullet points to be elected to the Board are: 1) whether they are a willing worker; 2) do the work in a timely fashion; 3) do what they say they are going to do. Please send any applicable names to Tom. The nominations committee will get together shortly and review the list and try to come up with some potential candidates plus propose the Officers slate.

2:53pm

**Awards Committee**

The following are the conclusions the committee reached in the note that Ken Able sent out to Committee members.

**Service Award:** The committee recommended unanimously to give the award to Ed Harper, now that Ed is off the Board and hence is allowed to receive recognition for having done the photo panels since 2008 and for putting on a very fine meeting in Billings, MT last year. We would like the Board's approval to give the service award to Ed Harper for his many years of service. The Board approves.

**Craig Award:** When this award was originally established, the Alan M. Craig Award was to be given on an irregular basis for exceptional service to the organization and certainly the recipients so far Alan himself, Ginger Johnson, and Guy (last year) fit that bill. Tim Manolis had served WFO for a very long time as member of the Editorial Board/Associate Editor of *California Birds/Western Birds* (37 years of continuous service), and as President 1986-1989. We could not think of any other member of WFO who has such a lengthy term of service to the organization and hasn't already received the Craig Award.

**Motion made by Jon and seconded by Dan and passed unanimously to give the Craig Award to Tim Manolis.**

We have been a little remiss in what goes along with the Craig Award. i.e., forgetting to notify Ginger and Guy that they have their choice of Life Membership in WFO or free registration at subsequent meetings. When we approved the Craig Award we said either or but since that time we thought we would give them their choice. The Board approves this change in the Craig Award. So we will give Ginger and Guy their choice, and also Tim after he receives the award.

**The Swarth Award:** This award was meant to be WFO's highest award, and was meant to be given from time to time. The Board decided to present the award to Bob Dickerman at our conference call meeting last March, but as you remember Bob sadly passed away before that news could be communicated to him, and before the Billings meeting, where the award was announced posthumously. The committee whether whether it was appropriate to consider granting the award this year, and recommended to do so for a the following reasons: We have an outstanding

candidate in Peter Pyle, and he will be attending the Fortuna conference, and it is one that Chris Swarth, Harry Swarth's grandson, will certainly attend and will take pleasure in seeing the award being made. It was the unanimous recommendation of the committee.

**Motion made by Jon, seconded by Dan and passed unanimously to bequeath the Swarth Award upon Peter Pyle.**

The Board decided that we notify the awardees of their impending honors in a timely fashion so that they can make appropriate plans for the meeting.

**Discussion:** It would be nice if Chris Swarth could talk about Harry sometime during the presentation of the Swarth Award, but a field ornithologist might be more appropriate.

Tom Schultz has been commissioned to paint a Sabine's Gull for Swarth award recipients only. In committee, the possibility of giving a print of that painting to Craig Award recipients also was advanced. (Both Ginger and Guy received the Andy Birch print of Sabine's Gulls in flight.) There was not a strong consensus on the part of the committee to limit the yet-to-be-completed Tom Schultz painting to Swarth award recipients. The Board decision is to keep the Birch print for the Craig award and the Schultz painting for the Swarth Award exclusively.

It was decided that conference registration and the banquet (two tickets) should be granted to the awardees as should two nights of lodging. The costs will be charged to the budget in a manner to be decided by Suzanne and Ed (Awards or Conference Committee). So we will pick up two nights of lodging and two to four banquet tickets for Tim Manolis and Peter Pyle (Peter is giving a workshop so he is already given two nights of lodging). Tom Schultz's painting will not be sent to Dickerman's family.

3:15pm

**SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**

**Report:** Over the past four months the committee has discussed scholarships for the conference as well as field trips. We are getting many new donors with the Audubon Societies coming in and we are examining ways to recognize them. Raymond has been helping out and compiling information for applicants for our 16 applicants. The scholarship recipient for the Central Sierra Field trip will be decided within the week. Our goal is to have outreach to as many states as possible. For the conference we are going to remain consistent with selecting 6 scholarship recipients between the ages of 12 and 18 and then based on some of the discussions coming out of committee members and feedback coming out of the Billings conference; we also elected to give 2 scholarships to undergraduates, 18-22 year olds (y.o.). This is all in the notes that have been sent out. We want to get the word out and also a general awareness of WFO.

For the conference we want the recipients to meet each other in addition to the reception held for them. We are planning to have a half-day combined field trip/ ornithological field skills workshop on Saturday: the field trip from 6-9:30 and the skills workshop from 9:30-11am. The idea is to present information, resources and ideas for the youths. Raymond, because of his work with Rosy-Finches, is going to present some of the things he did. The last part of this is to try to come up with a real strong local outreach effort, whether it is to schools, Audubon societies, or any youth groups that may be interested in attending. We offer the free attendance to the conference for youths under the age 18. We would like to request some sort of write-up about their experience that we could use on Facebook and also provide to our donors

**DISCUSSION:** If you link our website to ABA and the recent *Birding* magazine you can find Desi (a WFO scholarship recipient) being interviewed by Ioana Seritan (another WFO scholarship

recipient). Desi also has an independent write-up, which went on their youth program blog, where he mentions WFO again.

Some of the Board is supportive of these general guidelines but some of the programs seem too regimented. The general philosophy is that youths that go to meetings want to integrate as much as possible with high-powered birders, e.g.. Guy McCaskie. We want them to take the first step, and have them look at the WFO website and sign up to become members, to show a commitment on their part rather than us dismissing all of those fees as unnecessary. Don't put the obligation on them to write something. Many of them have done it on their own and it comes from the heart from these youths.

It is nice to see all this activity coming from the scholarship committee. WFO is very much a committee driven organization, but the Board has the final say. One Board member thinks this reflects too much micromanagement. On the age categories, we don't think we need to be that strict. As far as the skills workshop and the youths' field trip is concerned, it does say 'not required to attend' so that would be okay as an option. They did get together for the dessert in Montana, and we found that they got together spontaneously at the reception. Some of the Board doesn't see any harm in offering or at least having the opportunity to have their own field trip/skills workshop as long as attending it is not a requirement.

Another issue is with the scholarship for 18-22 y.o. There is a great deal of difference between 12 y.o. and 22 y.o. Mixing them together may break up the coherence of the group.

As a Committee Chair, Homer is representing multiple views that are coming from other committee members, Board members and WFO members. The committee voted unanimously on the 18-22 y.o. with 7 people present (all committee members except Robbie) on a conference call. Regarding the 18-22 y.o., this subject has come up in the past and it had to do with free registration for our conferences for students. In the past the concept of scholarships for 18-22 y.o. was rejected.

The budget was set at 8 scholarship recipients and that we would follow the same age range as in the past. It's not that two older students are being added onto 6 scholarship recipients; it's that the proposal is reducing the number of 12-18 y.o. that would be supported as scholarship students.

It is a good idea to bring in the collective youth; it is good for the organization. It has tremendous opportunity for outreach and also supports what this organization is trying to accomplish, and future membership. What are the age demographics of this organization? And how many of those fall in the range of 25-40?

We can reach out to college age students through our student memberships and gift memberships without giving them a full blown conference scholarship.

CFO has had the same issues, so they decided to add a new Board member who is a PhD candidate this year. We need to have some way of appealing to college youth, too.

It's obvious the committee has spent a lot time and energy discussing this. Why don't we try this at the Fortuna Conference this year and if it works: great; if there are some things that don't work it could be modified after that.

We have had two Board members that started as teen-agers and they have been very very involved and have had a huge impact on birding and WFO over the past 40 years. The youths are going to have a huge impact on us. Where are we going to be 20-40 years from now?

Discussion regarding the \$10 to become a member and send in an application has been tabled for further discussion by the committee.

**Motion made by Frances, seconded by Susan and passed by a 8-5 vote: that that we expand the age range to include 18-22 y.o. as a trial run for one year, for the purpose of offering scholarships for the Fortuna Conference**

On the point of a youth workshop and field trip it was decided that they would be offered by invitation rather than requirement. We will need to work out if others will be available also, i.e., adults and/or parents.

The Board thanks Homer, Scholarship and Youth Programs Chair, for all the work he has done and for generating some of the most animated discussion that the Board has had in some time.

4:00pm

**Archives Committee Proposal**

**Action Item:** Dave Q. will send out an e-mail in regards to proposing an Archives Committee; get some feedback on the idea and outline what we had in mind.

4:02pm

**Motion to adjourn made by Dan, seconded by Frances and passed unanimously.**