

**Western Field Ornithologists Board of Directors
Board of Directors Conference Call
Wednesday, January 31, 2018, 1pm – 4:00pm**

Minutes prepared by Liga Auzins Wurster

Board Members present: Ken Able, Wendy Beers, Tom Blackman, *Pres.*; Kurt Leuschner, *Vice Pres.*; Suzanne Carota, *Treas./Membership Sec'y*; Liga Auzins Wurster, *Rec. Sec'y*; Jon Dunn, Kimball Garrett, Homer Hansen, John Harris, Karen Havlena, Larry Modesitt, Diane Rose, Steve Rottenborn, Dave Shuford

Guest: Phil Unitt, *Editor, Western Birds, WB*

Board Members absent: Dave Quady, *Past Pres.*; John Garrett

MINUTES

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

1:05pm We all have minutes to approve and you all see Liga's note that there was a glitch with the 1 November 2017 minutes so we should approve, make some corrections or pass judgement on it in some form at our next meeting on 2 May 2018. Subsequent Board Conference Call will be 2 May 2018. Our Annual Board Meeting in Ventura CA will be on Thursday, 27 September 2018 from 11:00am to 4pm in the Ventura Beach Marriott Hotel Board Room.

1:10pm Donations

- We have two new Patrons, Karen Havlena and Jay Withgott, which gives a total of 9 Patrons.
- We now have 10 new Life Members who were previously on the installment plan and now are paid in full.
- Scholarship Matching Donation Status: We have \$6200 toward the match (\$10,000 donated as match).
- New Grants and Donation: An emphasis was placed on the importance of board members donating to these funds as show of good faith (since we're asking members to do the same).
- Grant of \$1000 arranged by Graham Chisholm from Bird Conservation Fund for our Publications Fund. Thanks to Cat W. for working with him.
- \$6000 anonymous donation for the Publications Fund; thanks once again to Cat W.
- Another \$1000 anonymous donation to the Publications Fund.
- These funds are not restricted to a publication project.
- If you are over 70.5 years old, donation to a 501C3 can come from an IRA, credited against automatic required withdrawals; no taxes are paid and can be deducted as a charitable donation.

1:20pm Finance Committee:

Budget Review and Approval: We need to discuss book pricing first, since it affects budget; also, we are still working out numbers for the Ventura conference. Suzanne will resend a budget incorporating pricing agreed to at this meeting. We need to approve the budget today, with the understanding that there will be some modifications.

MOTION: Diane moved, Larry seconded, to approve the budget as outlined and amended by Suzanne, subject to modifications. Passed unanimously.

Some "unusual" items in the budget:

- New recording device for Recording Secretary to replace the broken one.
- \$1000 for researching new Publications Committee projects. Basically this is contingency money if something came up that needed money. (It may be that it will not be used.)
- Legal fees for publications contract review.
- 2017 financial statements reviewed showing a \$40,000 net income driven by fundraising.
- As of 31 January 2018, the Publications Fund balance is up to \$126,000.
- **Membership:** We have 1,134 members as of January 2018; there are some new members from our upcoming conference area (Santa Barbara, Ventura counties). We have about 314 non-renewals for 2018 at this point (a little better than last year); snail mail envelopes will be sent to them.
- **The Scholarship Fund** is up to \$21,000
- A discussion ensued on how to handle anonymous donors; we need to know the name if they wish to be a Patron; Jon Dunn is unhappy with not identifying anonymous donations. Sometimes they come from mutual funds/IRA, with no name attached.
- **Life member installments:** Suzanne would like to discuss shortening payment from 4 to 2 or 3 installments; She would also want to increase cost considering the cost of maintaining membership.

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne will have a package of suggestions at the next board meeting, i.e., for revising life memberships member policy including when benefits accrue; how to install certain members, and how to determine their eligibility. A year-end contribution envelope will be mailed with issue #3 of WB.

- Currently about 160 members do not get a hard copy; so how would they get the solicitation? It would cost us about \$300-400 to reach these people.
- Renewals Schedule: an e-mail is sent in December; another is sent in January to non-renewals. After 1 Feb, a hard copy renewal form is sent to non-renewals.

MOTION: Motion made by Ken and seconded by Jon that WFO will send out, one time only, a donation solicitation envelope for WB in fall 2018 (with issue #3). Results to be evaluated in 2019.

1:20pm Publications Committee:

Report: The Directors have reviewed Ken's report. *The LeConte's Thrasher* monograph by Jay Sheppard should be out in spring 2018. **Trends and Traditions** is making good progress; two copy editors are working on the manuscripts; we are a little over halfway done. Attention now is on finalizing layout, table of contents, foreword, etc. At least 4 manuscripts have gone to Tim B. for typesetting; there are no proofs yet. One paper just came in last week, and the last is promised by

today; other papers, (about 5), are still in process/revision. We will be sending all manuscripts who have gone through the process to the typesetter in one or two months.

eBook

Report: Cat has done a lot of work on this; many thanks to her. We would like to soon be ready to sell eBook copies of our book-length publications. Costs are remarkably low, and WFO is very much behind the times in this regard. Is there still a commitment of the Board to move in this direction?

Action Item: Seek go-ahead from Board to have finished files of the two books, *Leconte's Thrasher* and *Trends and Traditions* to be sent to Allen Press to be mastered for eBooks. It will cost \$750 to \$850 for both titles. The next step (to sell eBooks after Allen Press has done the masters), will require updating and modification of our WFO web site (as it is currently configured, it cannot be used to sell eBooks). Web site modification should cost about \$3500.

- Query about PDFs of individual contributions in *Trends and Traditions*: Ken says we can be set up to sell PDFs (authors will be given them); we need to determine pricing of PDFs.
- Will we go back and do eBooks of *Rare Birds of California* and of *California Bird Species of Special Concern*? *Rare Birds of California* is already available for free on our web site, but it can't be downloaded, so maybe there will be a market for an eBook. CBSSC can be downloaded from California Department of Fish and Wildlife's web site.

Motion: Ken makes motion, Kimball seconds to approve costs (about \$850) from Publications Fund to have Allen Press make eBook master files for *LeConte's Thrasher* and *Trends and Traditions* and approve allocation of \$3500 for upgrades to web site so that it can handle sales of eBooks. Passed with 12 ayes and 1 abstention.

- **Book Pricing:** There is a research and pricing matrix put together by Dave Quady. Recommendations for pricing and bottom line philosophy: We do not view publications as money-makers, and may require some degree of subsidizing. We ought to price publications as low as we possibly can. \$25 plus tax, and shipping and handling for *LeConte's Thrasher* (run of 500; may revise down to 400). \$45 plus tax, and shipping and handling for *Trends and Traditions* (run of 200).
- The Board decided it was not worth the hassle to have a pre-publication price for *LeConte's* monograph.

MOTION: Motion made by Homer and seconded by Kimball to adopt the above listed pricing as recommended by the Publications Committee. Passed unanimously.

- **Western Birds(WB):** 49(1) will be printed in about two weeks; all material has been typeset; it will be 96 pp. and will include the first report of the Hawaiian Records Committee, as well as the CBRC report. There were 37 submissions in 2017 (rebound from a low of 28 in 2016). Board members should encourage associates to submit papers to WB.

CBRC checklist publication: \$200 budgeted for this year. There was some discussion of utility of such a hard copy checklist that will soon be out of date; but many people like them so we will go ahead and print some.

**2:55pm Meetings Committee:
Ventura 2018**

Status: Much groundwork with hotel/catering has been done by Karen. Thank you. Field trip schedule (12 trips) is mostly completed; list of leaders is identified. Pelagic/Island Scrub-Jay trip is booked and down payment made.

Science sessions: Plenary and Keynote speakers and topics are chosen; David Ainley will be the keynote speaker. Solicitation of papers will be sent out 6 months in advance of the meeting.

BEO (Banquet Event Order) has been produced and reviewed, and sent to hotel. Karen is working on the menus with the hotel.

Reservations: Karen has also put together an announcement for hotel room reservations, which Ed P. will send out as a blast and one week later Cliff Hawley will put on Facebook. Once that is done, we will finalize the budget and registration costs, etc. Registration will open on 3 June for Life Members. Phil requests that any updates to *Western Birds* announcement be sent to him ASAP.

Diane needs a digital format of Teodelina Martelli's scrub-jay painting soon to put on registration envelopes; Kurt L. will work with her to get that. Teodelina was a WFO Scholarship recipient and was one of two ABA Young Birders of the Year.

Last year *Rockjumper* sponsored our reception at Pueblo. Perhaps we can get other sponsors, i.e. Swarovski, this year.

Conference Venue and Chair 2019

Albuquerque, NM, might be held possibly the third week of August. Kurt has contacted Matt Baumann about helping; he has also talked with Andy Johnson. There are lots of field trip opportunities and a potential meeting hotel venue. Tom, our President, would like us to vote on the 2019 meeting site at the May board meeting. The venue needs more research and hopefully a RFP would have been presented to the venue and a response received.

Conference possibilities for 2020:

Either Northern California or areas adjacent (e.g., southern Oregon, western Nevada)

“Ed's Bible” Update: Tom acknowledged Dave Q.'s extensive work on our guideline on how to run a conference or better known as “Ed's Bible”. Dave needs accolades for this! Thank you Dave Q.!

3:13pm Scholarships:

Scholarships for Ventura Status and Timing: We will extend 8 scholarships, and there will be an additional scholarship provided for a youth birder selected by the Central Valley Bird Club (in part through funds raised for CVBC by Jon Dunn). Perhaps Cliff Hawley or John Harris can help to expedite this as time is short.

- Elisa Yang and Dessi Sieburth (past scholarship recipients) are interested in being more involved in the conference. Hopefully they will assist in leading field trips.
- Outreach to Donor Organizations

Action Item: John Harris will present a proposal in our May meeting for sponsoring youth scholarships from their organization (CVBC). WFO will pay 100% for youth scholar pelagics.

3:15pm Field Trips

- Sierra (Siskiyou): Lena Hayashi will be helping with the Siskiyou field trip.
- Cuba is scheduled for 16-27 Nov 2018 with Jon and Kurt; we need to advertise right away. Reg-On-Line needs to be set up ASAP, with registration opening around March.
- Owens Valley weekend will be 31 Aug-3 Sep, 2018 led by Jon Dunn
- Phil Unitt is tentatively trying to arrange a Colombia trip for 2019. 2019 is wide open.
Many thanks to Jon Dunn for his work in doing fund-raising field trips; it is a very important part of our budget.

3:15pm Nominations Committee:

- There are Officer and Director positions open for 2018. Bryce Robinson, Chris Swarth, Cat Waters, Catherine Hamilton, Matt Baumann and Dan Gibson (to fill Jon's slot should Jon become an officer) are all available. We have three openings (four if JLD becomes an officer) and many candidates.
- Status of Recruitment: CVs and letters of intent should be sent to the board at least a month before the meeting in Ventura.

Executive Session Not needed.

3:45pm Other business:

Suzanne reminded the Board about gift memberships – they should be offered soon. Of about 314 members who have not renewed, 40 of them were originally gift members. Board members who gave gift memberships should be informed when the member has not renewed.

3:50pm Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.