

**Western Field Ornithologists Board of Directors
Conference Call Meeting
Wednesday, February 5th, 2014, 1:00-4:00 pm PST**

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

Board Members present: Ed Pandolfino, *Pres.*, David Quady, *Vice Pres.*, Robbie Fischer, *Treas.*, Liga Auzins, *Rec. Sec'y.*, W. David Shuford, *Past Pres.*, Kenneth P. Able, Tom Blackman, Jon Dunn, Kimball L. Garrett, Daniel D. Gibson, Robert E. Gill, Ed Harper, Kurt Leuschner, Joyce Meyer, Frances Oliver, Dan Singer, Catherine Waters

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

MINUTES

1:03pm Meeting called to order, welcome, roll call

Minutes from November 6 2013 conference call passed unanimously **via motion to approve, as amended, by Kimball and seconded by Ken.**

Next BOD Meetings: **Confirmed conference call for 21 May 2014, to be held from 1pm to 4pm PDT.** The following meeting will be at the San Diego Conference on 9 October 2014 to be held from 12noon to 4pm PDT.

1:07am FINANCE COMMITTEE

Report: Financial Software: The budget for the software has been sent to Robbie. This number will decrease in 2015.

Report: Investment Sub-committee: Recommendations are complete and the process of moving money will begin shortly. The approved process requires that any money transferred requires two signatures.

Report: 2014 Budget: The 2013 financial statements have been sent out. We increased our bottom line due to successful trips and Olympia Conference. The 2014 Budget has been sent out. We do not need to get separate approvals for expenditures that are in the budget.

Motion: Dave Q. moves to approve the 2014 Budget as submitted by Robbie, Dan S. seconds, and passes unanimously.

Proposal: Robbie will be stepping down as Treasurer/Membership Secretary after the October 9 2014 Conference BOD Meeting. For replacement of this position, we have at least one person who has expressed interest, Suzanne Carota. The position is open for additional candidates.

- **Action Item: Dave Q. and Ed P. will work on finding a possible replacement.**

1:12 pm PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Update: Status of electronic *Rare Birds of California (eRBC)*: There are still two people who are reviewing **eRBC**. Phil, Cat and others have reviewed it and it is available on the CBRC and www.wfoornithologists.org websites although the official announcement has not gone out. As Robb Hamilton, the lead editor, declined to write a forward, Cat wrote a two paragraph piece which was reviewed by Phil and Dan G. It is from the Board and acknowledges the huge

contribution of the CBRC. There will be an announcement in the WFO News e-mail, Cat's written newsletter, and **WB**. Some reviews have already been arranged.

- **Action Item: Finding advertising avenues for eRBC.**

1:18pm Update: Status of electronic *Western Birds* (eWB) beta version: To summarize, the committee decided that rather than go forward with a password protected source for **eWB**, that we first had to have a searchable archive of all the old issues. Since SORA is no longer reliable, we need to back off and do that. This might take as long as three months possibly.

We need to get the archival **WB** hard drives to a place like the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology (WFVZ). Robert Waters has volunteered to do this when everything is available. He will give a copy of the hard drives to Phil and if the Board decides, someone else. Phil has finished downloading everything that is on SORA to the museum (SDMNH) server, uploaded it to Dropbox and sent that link to both Cat and Dan G. The next step is to put the proper links onto our WFOpublications website after we create the search engine.

Report: Survey of members regarding eWB: The Publication Committee proposes to send out an invitation via the WFO news e-mail process to our members to participate in a survey that has only two questions. The first question would be "How frequently do you read **WB**?" If we do have a subset of those who *never* read **WB** they should be aware that they have an option to continue to be a member and not have to receive **WB**. That saves us money. The second question asks, "Would you like to receive **WB** electronically only?" If 10% of our members would like this, that would save approximately \$1400 in printing and mailing costs.

- **Action Item: Ed will report on the results of the questionnaire.**

1:28pm Avifaunal Change Symposium at 2014 WFO Conference in San Diego:

Report: Bob and Dave S. have been soliciting contributions to the symposium via notices and soliciting people individually, or other people are soliciting and providing us with names. We have about twenty papers and some abstracts to date. Once we have the first set of abstracts together we can circulate them.

Discussion: The science sessions can accommodate about 22 presentations and we agreed to leave some room for other papers, i.e., papers generated by virtue of being in San Diego. We did not want to have a concurrent session. If we get twenty papers it would be adequate for a publication, but we are still looking for more papers. The plan is to put the papers through an independent peer review. We are trying to get broad coverage both taxonomically by group and geographically by the WFO area. We are still looking for papers concerning both the Pacific Flyway wetlands(waterfowl) and pelagic species.

- **Action Item: Please contact Dave S. or Bob for any input regarding possible papers.**

Update: Symposium Budget: We want the volume from this symposium to match the first volume we did for **California Species of Special Concern (CSSC)**. Cat sent out copies as examples to five printers who will make bids when we have a page count. This will be a budget item in 2015. We want to decide how much of the publication budget will be used so that we do not over commit on other things. We are hoping we can get some sponsorship for this. We have three people who will be editing it. Once we have abstracts we can start asking for sponsorships. Maybe we could have advertising in this publication, since we have already put sponsorship logos on the back cover of **CSSC**.

- Action Item: Seek sponsors for Avifaunal Changes volume.

1:38pm Report: *Western Birds(WB)* 45-1 is full and should be ready to be printed by the end of February. The question is do we send it out as soon as it is printed or do we need to wait for more renewals to come in? 45-2 is practically full as we have five papers accepted already. We thank John Sterling for having finished all the Feature Photo articles for this year. The question is do we print two covers at a time or one at a time? Peter LaTourrette wants to do them one by one.

- Action item: Cat and Ed will put together announcement re **eRBC** for the 45-1 issue.

1:45 pm CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Report: San Diego Conference 8-12 October 2014: We will have two receptions, our usual reception on Fri. night at the hotel, and a reception Wed. night around 6:30pm at the San Diego Museum of Natural History (SDMNH). We have not decided if we will have an additional charge for that and also perhaps make a donation to the SDMNH. Ed P. agrees to do a talk on the history of WFO in lieu of the keynote speaker. Tom has completed the Field Trip Schedule for the conference, with commitments to be confirmed from a few leaders. In addition to the regular field trips we have on Thursday and Sunday, Tom is putting together two post-meeting trips: The overnight Sun-Mon trip is to the Salton Sea area which Jon has offered to lead with Guy. Phil has been working on a possible Baja trip. Tom has put together a local committee comprised of mostly WFO members who will help with volunteering and with putting local leaders together. He is also looking for Board members to be on each of the trips. San Diego Field Ornithologists (SDFO) will be our official hosts and will have a 5% profit share. Workshops: Jon and Kimball will reprise their warbler workshop, and Homer Hansen will lead a sparrow ID workshop. Nathan Pieplow is doing a bird sound class. Peter Pyle tentatively agreed to a molt workshop and possibly a vireo ID class. Tom may possibly schedule a pelagic workshop if leaders are available. We only have space for three concurrent classroom sessions. Kurt is in charge of the T-shirts and is looking for the ideal species to put on a shirt. Debbie Van Dooremolen has rotated off the Board and has been co-organizer for the science session for the last 5-6 years. Bob Gill will partner with Dave Q. this year. As Debbie left behind a trove of documents with templates and a calendar for the sessions, we are well equipped to carry forward. Dave Q. would like to have a volunteer this year who would then co-host the event beginning next year with Bob.

- Action Item: Sign up for San Diego field trips (one Director per field trip) through Tom.
- Action Item: Send ideas for T-shirt to Kurt.
- Action Item: Volunteer to assist with Science Sessions.

1:55pm SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Report: Robbie is stepping down from the scholarship committee but she will work on the scholarships for the Montana Field Trip for which she has 6 applicants already. Joyce agreed to take over the Chair of the Scholarship Committee. The next scholarship opportunity will be for the San Diego Conference. Ted Floyd was contacted in terms of publicizing the scholarship opportunities as he has ABA involvement and a blog, etc. Ted suggested for Montana that we also include a travel stipend. Right now we have about \$8000 in the scholarship fund. We will see who the applicant is who achieves the Montana scholarship, find out where they are, and then possibly include a stipend of \$300-400 to offset their travel costs. When they applied we assumed that they could get there on their own, but on the other hand the stipend might be helpful. In Robbie's opinion for San Diego, we should offer 3 scholarships. For a conference scholarship we

cover two nights hotel, field trips on Saturday and Sunday, not including a pelagic, and a banquet. Many times we have young people who are accompanied by parents. Robbie recommends covering two banquet tickets and possibly a \$50 cash gift to cover their food. It would cost us about \$300-400 dollars depending on how much the hotels charge. For San Diego our out of pocket would be about \$400 if we covered \$50 for food, two banquet tickets and two nights in the hotel. So offering 3 scholarships for San Diego would be about \$1200 total.

Discussion: Conference Scholarships: Pasadena Audubon has indicated that if our balance starts to decrease that they would feel positive about contributing once again. Pasadena Audubon donated \$5000 to put into our scholarship fund right after Mike San Miguel died. With such a large balance, maybe we should be more generous in our scholarships and ask Pasadena for another contribution. The Montana scholarships would be about 25% of our \$8000 fund, a percentage we could use as a guideline in the future. We do replenish it by our silent book auctions and members donate specifically to the scholarship fund. As the outgoing Chair, Robbie is not in favor of both organizations trying to work on behalf of the same scholarship. We call our scholarship fund the Pasadena Audubon/WFO Youth Scholarship fund so we already acknowledge their involvement. Two groups administering the fund is complex. We got John Garrett involved on the Scholarship Committee to cover the aforementioned in regards to Pasadena Audubon. Maybe we need to communicate with Pasadena Audubon and let them know exactly how we have used the money. We can defer to Robbie, Joyce and John Garrett to decide exactly when and how is the best way to approach them to help replenish the fund.

Discussion: Field Trip Scholarships: Until now we have not considered a stipend for travel for field trip scholarships. This stipend was not listed in the Montana Field Trip Scholarship Announcement. A lively discussion ensued.

Robbie moves that we allocate \$300 as a travel stipend for the scholarship recipients for the Montana trip seconded by Ed H. Although most agree, objections are raised which leads to losing the second and a withdrawal of motion by Robbie. Ed P. withdraws the motion also.

2:20pm Montana Conference 2015

Report: Our lead hotel person, Nancy Hillman has left her position so we started over with another person. Frances prepared a document that she sent to them for a response. We are negotiating on pricing. After no objection from the Board, Ed H. will contact Ed Dinsmore to speak on mountain plovers as the keynote speaker on Saturday. In the past we have paid our keynote speakers a \$200 honorarium, two nights of lodging, registration, and the banquet costs for the them and a guest. Jeff Marks could introduce the plenary sessions and talk about his book, Birds of Montana and the bird distribution of Montana. Andrew Gutenberg will be doing the T-shirt; perhaps a McCown's or chestnut-collard longspur in a display fight? We sent a very extensive note to Tom and Sherry and we were trying to determine all the costs prior to negotiating the contract so we can develop our budget. That is in process right now. As the contract has not been signed yet, Ed H. has been in contact with them repeatedly to convey our interest as there is stiff competition for conferences at this time slot and there are not many alternatives. Ed P. will review the numbers before finalizing the contract. A conference call with the Tourist Commission Center would be indicated to finalize the numbers.

2:26 pm AWARDS COMMITTEE

Report: Volunteer Awards: In past conferences we have given volunteer and service awards to two people and we agreed to set that as a limit. If anyone has someone that they wish to propose for a volunteer award, please send Dave Q. their names with a little write-up by the end of March. He will then circulate them to the Board and we will make a couple of choices, if two are obvious. Maybe the point should be that the person so honored should be a past editor, i.e., Kathy Molina. Maybe there is a way to honor all of the current editors in some way for their hard work, but to start singling out current individuals is too hard.

- **Action Item: Send possible nominees for Volunteer Awards to Dave Q.**

2:33pm NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Review: The following is a review of current Board position standings in the way of elections needed this year: Ken Able and Dan Singer are termed out as of the San Diego meeting. Therefore we must elect two members to the Board, each of which could serve for 2 three year terms. Last year we had three positions to fill, one of them being a single three year term and we had five nominees, which means that two of them, Homer Hansen and Mary Gustafson were not elected to the Board for the first time that they were on the ballot. Mary indicated that she was interested in being considered again. Homer will be contacted shortly. The proposal would be if these two people are willing to be candidates that they would be two of the nominees. They are both from out of state, Mary from Texas and Homer from Arizona. We would seek a third candidate for the two slots. In the past we have tried to go for gender diversity, geographic diversity, and also specific skills and experiences that candidates can bring to the Board. One of those specifics is the merit of having someone on the Board who is from the location where we are going to have our near future conference. Montana is covered with Ed H. The next conference will be in Northern California. On the Board at that time there would be four people from Northern California, Ed H., Frances, Ed P. as past Pres., and Dave Q. as Pres. We would be looking for candidates from Northern California as a third nominee. Please put forth names along with a short paragraph with what you know about them and some indication as to whether you know if they would be interested or if you have inquired, by the end of March so the Nominations Committee could come up with one additional candidate for the Board, which would give us a slate of three candidates for election to the Board in San Diego. Jon nominates John Garrett because of his connection to Pasadena Audubon. Lauren Harter has also been mentioned. Ed P. puts Dan Airola from Northern California forth but he needs to be asked about his availability. The Nominating Committee is Carol Beardmore, Jon Dunn, Bob Gill, Cat Waters and Dave Q. and anyone else who wants to weigh in. We will bring a slate to the Board.

The Officer positions are a bit different. We have not seen any merit in competitive elections up until now. Ed P. has already talked about choosing a way to replace our Treasurer. Liga agrees to continue as Rec. Sec'y. What we need is a candidate for Vice President. We do not have a definitive candidate at this point in time to announce, but we hope to do so in the next few months. A prerequisite is a willingness to serve.

- **Action Item: Send possible candidates for Board nominees to Dave Q.**

2:40pm OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Update: We had a conference call December 12th where we discussed the following points. 1) How we could go about increasing membership. Our current membership is stable; there is a

balance of new members, attrition, and old members. Any member can give out three gift initial memberships. Board members can give out as many as they like. 2) We identified a number of regional organizations, i.e., Snow Goose Festival, Morro Bay, etc. and how, with their permission, we could get some of our brochures to their venues. Tom is going to initiate this type of thing in San Diego. This will extend to places like Oregon, Washington, etc. 3) We have talked of having state liaisons, of which we have already started in Washington and continued with San Diego and Montana. We looked at what we could offer these organizations. Additionally we discussed the possibility of approaching some academic organizations. In regards to donations, we publically thank donors annually in **WB** in addition to writing personal notes. In regards to the idea of partnering with an organization like Colorado Field Ornithologists (CFO), one of the incentives could be offering CFO members a reduced rate and hopefully this would be reciprocated. We already have that level of membership for one year for people who go to the conferences as well. Perhaps the committee can put together some resolutions that the Board can vote on by the May meeting. We definitely need to disengage from the idea of a long term stable membership and pursue additional avenues for increasing membership. Robbie is tracking gift membership re-subscriptions. Robbie will send out a list of those members who have not re-subscribed after receiving a gift membership to the Board members who initiated these memberships. Although it is successful, it is not 100%. There are birders out there who are not necessarily readers of journals. Emphasizing the other benefits is a good way to go and also offering the **eWB**.

- **Action Item: All try to give three gift memberships per year.**

2:50pm FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

Update: Montana Field Trip 2014: The Montana Field trip has been full for some time. Once we have the scholarship recipients selected we will finalize the room arrangements.

Update: New Zealand Field Trip 2014: The trip sold out very quickly and we are all set. The flights are arranged. Everything is going smoothly and we stand to make good money from it.

Update: Cuba Field Trip November 2015: We almost have the dates pinned down. Gary Markowski is in Cuba making arrangements with the locals, etc., including setting the dates which will be sometime in November and returning well before Thanksgiving.

Announcement: Possible New trips: Kurt had an idea for possibly a weekend at the Desert Studies Center in Zzyzx, CA in October 2015 (maybe the 1st or 2nd weekend). He has special connections there and could get us a researcher rate of about \$120 for the whole weekend including food. Since we are having our conference so early in that year (June in Montana), perhaps we could have a mini-retreat for Board members and family. We could open it up to Life Members too at a slightly higher fee, i.e. \$200. We can make some money for WFO plus we can have a nice weekend out there. We could handle up to 40 people. Saturday could be out in the field and Sunday could be a mini Board Meeting. You could visit Shoshone, China Ranch, etc. It's a nice time of year to be out there and there are good birds. Cat volunteers to help.

3:00pm GULL WORKSHOP

Report: Jon and Kimball put tremendous time and effort into this workshop with a classroom presentation and a field session. Pam Sansone did a great deal of work on the Powerpoint presentation. We received only positive comments from the 21 participants. It netted approximately \$2500. The invitations described it as a benefit activity for the WFO Publications Committee and **WB**. Half of the money goes to the general fund and the other to probably defray

the costs of color covers for this year. Jon suggests doing a workshop of this type for shorebirds, a morning classroom with the afternoon in the field.

3:05pm WFO Directory

Update: The directory has been updated. The Outreach Committee now is comprised of Frances as Chair, Tom, Jon, Robbie, Kimball, Ed H., and Cat. The Scholarship Committee is now comprised of Joyce as Chair, Robbie, John Garrett, Jay Withgott and Kurt. Also Phil has been added to the Meetings Committee. A copy will be sent out to the Board and officers, and to our webmaster, Joe Morlan.

3:15PM Motion made to adjourn by Cat, seconded by Jon and passed unanimously.