

**Western Field Ornithologists Board of Directors
Conference Call Board Meeting
Wednesday March 18, 2015, 1:00-4:00 pm PDT**

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

Board Members present: David Quady, *Pres.*, Tom Blackman, *Vice Pres.*, Suzanne Carota, *Treas.*, Liga Auzins, *Rec. Sec'y.*, Ed Pandolfino, *Past Pres.*, Jon Dunn, Kimball L. Garrett, Daniel D. Gibson, Susan Kelly, Kurt Leuschner, Joyce Meyer, Frances Oliver, Steve Rottenborn, Raymond VanBuskirk, Catherine Waters

Guests: Robbie Fischer, *Past Treas.*, Kenneth Able, *Awards Committee Chair*

MINUTES

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

Minutes from December 3, 2014 conference passed unanimously via motion to approve by Tom, seconded by Cat.

Next BOD Meeting: The next meeting will be our Annual Board Meeting on Thursday, June 11, 2015 at 11am MDT in Billings, MT.

1:05pm Administrative Item: Financial Assistance for Annual Conference

We will maintain the existing policy regarding occasionally defraying the cost of a Board member attending a conference. Any Board member who wants to know whether assistance was provided can ask the meeting committee chair and learn whether it has been granted and to whom.

1:12pm FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

November 2015 Cuba Trip: The Cuba trip information went up on the website today. Ed P. will announce the Cuba trip to all members today and will open registration to Life Members in a few days. It will be open to all members on March 26th.

August 2015 Shorebird Workshop: Larry Sansone has received permission to bring a group into the Ventura Gun Club where he has been doing photography for many years. The dates are being finalized. The classroom part of the workshop will be at the WFVZ. Larry will use his photography for the classroom presentation; Jon Dunn will lead the workshop if his schedule allows.

2016 Rosy-Finch Field Trip: Raymond VanBuskirk is finalizing the dates for this trip with co-leader Dave Krueper. It will be in the second week in January 2016.

ACTION ITEM: Raymond will send field trip details to Kurt when available.

March 2016 Cuba Trip. Jon is willing to lead this trip, but the criteria for choosing the escort should be worked out with the committee. If anyone would like to be considered as escort for the 2016 trip to Cuba, please notify Kurt and Dave Q. We also need to confirm Gary Markowski's capability to offer this trip. The Board consents to do this trip.

ACTION ITEM: Kurt or Jon will contact Gary Markowski as to his capability to offer the trip.

1:17pm June 20-27th 2016 Central Sierra Trip: Ed P has roughed out the itinerary for this trip, which Jon, Dave, and Lena Hayashi will co-lead. Details will be worked out over the next few months.

Desert Studies Center, Zzyzx, CA Event Oct. 9-11, 2015: We have 40 spots reserved. Kurt will send out a reservation form to everybody soon. The invitation will have an RSVP with a time limit; all you have to do is say that you can, or cannot, attend. We will first invite Board members and the list of invitees that Dave Q prepared, i.e., **WB** staff, Committee staffs, and newly elected Board members, etc. The issue of inviting significant others will be addressed after everyone has responded, when we'll know if any spaces are available. Newly elected Board members will get their invitation in Billings.

1:20pm FINANCE COMMITTEE

Approval of 2015 budget

Report: There have been two line changes since Suzanne requested approval of the 2015 budget on March 7. The Avifaunal Change Symposium was moved to the 2016 budget based on recommendation by the Publications Committee. From a bottom line perspective that puts us at a loss of just under \$7,000 for 2015. Hopefully we will make money on the conference, receive revenue from trips and workshops and perhaps we can improve our revenue from page charges. The other line change is due to the Scholarship Committee approving 6 applicants for Billings, which resulted in a \$1200 shortfall of the \$2500 that was budgeted for scholarships. Sierra Foothills Audubon Society (which covers Place, Nevada and parts of Yuba Counties), represented by Heath Wakelee, has given a grant of \$1200 to our Youth Scholarship Fund. We will acknowledge the grant in Billings.

Discussion: The concept of outreach to various Audubon Societies was discussed. The steps to be taken on how to do this will be determined by discussion among members of the Outreach and Scholarship Committees. One suggestion is to make a presentation at an Audubon Board meeting. If we want to award more scholarships we have to find a way to pay for them.

ACTION ITEM: Joyce and Frances to discuss what they think would be a reasonable way of combining efforts of both committees and to bring a recommendation to the Board in June.

Motion to approve budget from Suzanne dated March 7th with the addition in two lines of \$1200 (expense and revenue), with the same bottom line result, made by Susan Kelly, seconded by Jon and passed unanimously.

Suzanne has also sent the Board a spreadsheet with lots of added accounts so we can track more detail within the budget.

1:36pm Review 2015 financial results. Report: On March 13th Suzanne sent the Board the February 2015 actual YTD. We came in way above budget. Our cash on hand reached \$192,000, which is fantastic. The first two months of the year were basically membership dues. We have \$140,000 of operating cash. 170 members have not yet renewed from last year. Robbie sent emails out to 60-70 requesting that they renew. Suzanne has also e-mailed the list of all the people who received gift memberships from various WFO members.

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne will send out lists of non-renewals to Board members. If they know anybody on the list that they would feel comfortable contacting, reach out to them, and let Suzanne know who you contact. She will keep everyone posted on who is being contacted.

February 2015 financials cash position. Report: Suzanne recommends putting some of our free cash that is not earning any interest into laddered CDs. We have \$204,000 total and we recommend putting \$30,000 of that into CDs. It would mean that instead of \$90,000 in CDs we

would have \$120,000 in CDs, leaving about \$80,000 in operating cash; that's two full years of operating expenses. \$40,000 worth of the \$120,000 of CDs will mature every June, providing additional cash should we need it.

Motion to approve Motion 1 on the attachment dealing with an increase with the amount of money we have in CDs with CalFirst made by Jon, seconded by Tom, and passed unanimously

Motion to approve Motion 2, formally authorizing the six scholarships that we have already granted for Billings, moved by Susan Kelly, seconded by Kimball, and passed unanimously.

Note: Suzanne is doing a fantastic job especially during this difficult beginning of the year when we have budgets and membership renewals. Kudos to Cat for recruiting Suzanne, and to Robbie for sharing her expertise with Suzanne. It has been a very smooth transition.

1:57 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Billings, Montana Conference 10-14 June 2015

Report: Ninety people registered on the first day, so Ed created a few more choices because of popularity. We have three workshops still open, on owls, raptors, and flycatchers. We are still working on the layout for the shirt design, of a McCown's Longspur. We are recruiting more vendors and planning a reception for the Scholarship recipients. We are still working on publicity including announcing the conference on list serves. Cat and Dan have volunteered to conduct the silent auction again. They requested an announcement to all the registrants, shortly before the conference, that they should bring auction items to the registration desk. The current newsletter will invite members to ship books to the conference hotel, care of Dan or Cat; local Audubon Societies in Montana should receive this invitation as well. Lastly we are seeking no cost LCD projectors and a slide projector for the conference, because LCD projectors rent for about \$250-350/day; renting three of them would consume our audio/visual budget.

2:05pm Humboldt County, CA Conference Sept 28 – Oct 2nd 2016

Report: Tom, Susan, and Dave Q. visited Humboldt County in late February, which coincided with Redwood Regional Audubon Society's Annual Banquet where they met a lot of people. There are two possible conference venues. One is a traditional hotel, the Red Lion, the only hotel in Eureka that can hold a conference. The second venue is River Lodge in Fortuna, about 10 miles south of Eureka. It is a city-owned conference center that is adjacent to four motels and an RV park. There are pluses and minuses with both venues. We are working on costs and then we can make a real comparison. On the field trips and ground part we met with Rob Fowler who is more than willing and able to put together field trips. We discussed potential keynote speakers from the area. If some Board members know people up there more on the academic side, please let Tom know your thoughts on keynote speakers. We are projecting about 200 people. Our conference attendance has been going up and exceeding expectations every year, so 200 is our low-end attendance estimate and it could go as high as 230 or 240. We had 270 in Petaluma and we had nearly 300 in San Diego, so we can get well over 200 in Humboldt County. The Red Lion may not be big enough, and might limit how many people we can register simply by the size of the facility. We should be in a lot better position to choose a venue in a little more than a month from now and be able to report on it by the June meeting. Maybe we can work out some kind of carpooling from the Bay area, alleviating concern about Humboldt's distance from population centers.

ACTION ITEM: Send Tom your suggestions for Humboldt keynote speaker.

2:17pm PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE:

Western Birds (WB)

Status: 46(1) is in page proof and upon Phil's return March 23rd the issue will be ready for circulation for final review by the Board and associate editors before printing. 46(2) will be entirely comprised of Dan Gibson and Jack Withrow's "Inventory of the species and subspecies of Alaska birds." This copy should be ready for Tim essentially as soon as he is finished with 46(1). Covers for both 46(1) and 46(2) are ready and will be printed simultaneously thereby saving money. 46(3) has 7 papers accepted plus 7 in review and 8 have been reviewed and returned to authors. For the year 2014 we received 40 manuscripts, thus far for 2015 we have already received 9 manuscripts.

Electronic *WB* (eWB)

Report: The Board received a message from Ed P. giving them the opportunity to look at the mock up that Tim has created. The committee has already looked at this and it received many positive comments. The discussion is about how to and when to open this up. The next step would be to populate the site with articles. We are going to protect, as was agreed previously in the committee, the most recent two years so that they will be accessible only to members. All the older issues will be available to anybody who goes to the site. Right now the only full issue Tim has posted is the most recent issue, 45(4). The suggestion would be for Tim to go ahead and update the most recent two volumes (for members only) as soon as he can, and then over the next few months populate the archive with older issues of ***WB***. Initially we will go back to volume 40 because volumes 1-40 are already available on SORA. Once Tim has prepared everything from volume 40 to the current volume and has them up on the site it would be a good time to go public with the site which might possibly take until mid-year. **eWB** would be updated issue by issue. The restriction would not be two years; it would be the most recent two volumes. In other words if the first issue were available today only members would have access to volumes 44 and 45 but as soon as soon as 46(1) is available all of 44 would go into the archives and become available to all. At the beginning of volume 46 there would be one full year restricted but by the end of 46 there would be two years restricted. Ed sent a WFO news e-mail and Cat will put it in her newsletter, telling members that if they want to opt out of the print version they should contact Suzanne. If we don't hear from them they will get the print journal. Everyone will have access to the electronic version. Let's see how long it would take Tim to do volumes 40-43 on the website. If it takes too long we can go public without those being available but it would be nice to have the continuity. If it is not a big time difference we prefer to wait until we have every issue available. We can get statistics on every single click on each page any time we want.

2:30pm Avifaunal Change Volume

Status: Dave S. and Bob currently have 30 manuscripts that authors have submitted or plan to submit. 12 of them are in hand and are in various stages of review. Of the 12, 6 have received a couple reviews each. None of these 12 manuscripts has been returned to authors for revisions but some should go out shortly. Bob and Dave S. have set the end of March as the extended deadline for submitting the outstanding manuscripts, and will reassess the situation at that time. They hope to keep the review process rolling and get manuscripts back to authors in the spring and summer for revisions to be completed by the fall. Before long they will have to select a copy editor as they anticipate copy editing will occur in the late fall and the early winter of 2015. There is no money in the 2015 budget for Avifaunal Change but there will be next year once a budget is worked out. Sometime later in the year, perhaps in 6 months, we should have some mock-ups of pages or even articles that could be used in an effort to seek funding from various organizations.

2:34pm Rare Birds of California (eRBC):

Status: Last Friday Dave Q. met with Joe Morlan, who was re-elected Chair of the CBRC. They discussed what additional corrections would be made to the version that is now online. The guiding principle is going to be that we will only correct the printed text. We will steer away from amendments that try to improve the text and certainly steer away from updates, e.g., trying to keep up with changes in taxonomy. Correcting the text and no more is the objective. Dave Q. will put together a comprehensive list of corrections to the text that will have been implemented online. An ongoing process to deal with any apparent errors that come to light further down the road will involve the CBRC annually looking at suggested corrections and deciding which they think are appropriate. The Publications committee will also look at it and both will agree on what if any further changes ought to be made to the online version. It is Dave Q.'s intention that the corrigenda cite the authority for each correction wherever possible.

2:40pm Page charges for WB especially for BRC reports

Report: The committee met on February 17th to discuss the perception that BRCs were not making good faith efforts to help underwrite the costs of publishing their reports, focusing on BRCs because they are groups of people who could share among themselves whatever they decide to contribute. We thought this was a concern, and Suzanne provided us with specific information on what various bird records committees had contributed. Some contributions were extremely minimal. Long ago Phil drafted a very diplomatic statement about page costs that is on the website. It asks a modest \$25 per page or whatever one in good faith can contribute, recognizing that some people have a project underwritten by money and others are doing something on their own. We got to the point where Jon and Kimball drafted a boiler-plate letter (pending approval by the committee and the Board) to be sent to all the state BRCs. It will be tailored to each committee and hopefully to each individual chair. The draft letter also requests that the BRC identify their contribution so that Suzanne can track it. We felt that BRCs had a real responsibility to make a good faith effort to help underwrite the costs of publication, because their reports are often quite long. When page charges were established in the mid-1990s \$25/page was requested. In 1997 \$25 represented about 45% of actual print costs. So if we bring that into 2014, 45% of actual print costs would be about \$38/page. So \$38 would represent about half the pro-rated costs per page of producing **WB**.

Discussion: WFO through the Publications Committee subsidizes the printing of a great portion of what is submitted to **WB**. Many authors pay their page charges in full and others pay what they can afford. However, few papers that come to WFO are as long as the BRC reports and sending in \$25 may be all that the BRC can afford. What we are trying to do is get them involved in the process, whoever the report's authors are. We will not shut out the BRCs under any circumstances. If they cannot afford a page charge we are not going to reject their paper.

BRC reports are different from other **WB** submissions for at least three reasons: some of the reports are really long, most of the committees are repeat customers, and they are a committee.

We are not asking for 100% of page costs. We are hoping that among all the committees together their contributions approach 50%. BRCs should make some effort themselves to fundraise. Simply refusing to give anything, which is basically what we have had in a couple of cases, is unacceptable and that is why the committee decided on the approach we've described. The page charge issue is a dagger pointing at our heart financially if we are going to get long reports and no effort to compensate us financially.

We are not demanding anything. We are simply asking for a good faith contribution to publishing costs. We are making sure that BRCs have this suggestion up front, in addition to at the time of submission when it is mentioned again. What we had in mind, 1) was to bring this issue to the attention of the authors in the letter acknowledging receipt of a report for review and 2) the other which is the one we are following right now is a boiler-plate thing that is sent to all these committees whether or not they are actively submitting a report right now. We think people will respond positively and reasonably well and a lot better than they have in the past when they realize this is of more than passing importance to WFO.

Suzanne can generate quarterly a report of what we are getting percentage wise on the page charges for each BRC committee or at least what state it is coming from.

In 1992 The WFO Board of Directors very carefully asked every ornithological publication what their page charges were, after which the Board made a very conservative decision. They never sought all of the cost of a page. What they did seek was to defray the printing costs so that **WB** remained active and vital and able to carry out their mission and the goal that had been set forth for them by WFO.

Discussion tabled to June meeting due to time constraints.

3:07pm **AWARDS COMMITTEE**

Description:

Volunteer Service Award: For the last 5 plus years we have given one or two Volunteer Service Awards each year to people who have provided voluntary service of value to WFO over some period of time. Active Board members are not eligible.

The Craig Award is named for Alan Craig, one of the founders of WFO. He was one of the editors for the 3 years that *California Birds* was published and was the sole editor for the next 14 years of **WB**. He himself was the first recipient of the award, in 1987, and the organization made a point of saying that the award would be given only infrequently, for exceptional service to the organization. It was next given in 2010 to Ginger Johnson, another of the founders of **WB**, who for 44 years has been a key contributor to producing each issue of **WB**.

The Swarth Award was established in 2011 after years of discussion of what to name it and how to describe what it is for. It has not yet been awarded to anyone. The Board in its succinct announcement said that the Harry S. Swarth Award is to honor a body of work that significantly advances field ornithology in the West. Subjects could include status and distribution, life history, identification, behavior or other important aspects of the study of Western North American birds.

You all received a report from the Awards Committee that outlined recommendations to the Board. The committee voted unanimously to recommend presenting a Volunteer Service award to Nathan Pieplow. He has attended meetings as far back as one can remember, presented excellent bird sound panels since at least 2009, and offered workshops on bird sound at several meetings, sometimes at a considerable inconvenience to his own schedule. He is one of the big hits of our meeting.

Jon moves to give the Volunteer Service award to Nathan Pieplow as described by Ken; seconded by Tom and passed unanimously.

The committee voted unanimously to recommend presenting the Craig Award to Guy McCaskie, whose service to WFO has been essentially continuous. He was one of its founders, served as the first President, and has been on the CBRC as a member and as its Secretary since its inception, except when he was termed off by its rules – and then he always came back on at the first opportunity. He served as Secretary of the CBRC for more than 14 consecutive years, retiring from that position earlier this year.

Kimball moves to give the third Alan Craig Award to Guy McCaskie as described by Ken; seconded by Tom and passed unanimously.

The committee unanimously recommends to the Board that we present our first Harry S. Swarth Award to Robert W. (Bob) Dickerman. He is an extraordinary candidate for the award. There is no candidate who more precisely fits the definition of the award; moreover, Bob is a man whose work has been done in the spirit of Harry Swarth. Dickerman's life overlapped Swarth's. Bob published while Swarth was alive, granted his first paper – which he worked on at the age of ten – was in review for about 10 years. But it is only for that reason that they weren't publishing contemporaries.

Dan moves to grant the first Harry S. Swarth Award to Robert W. Dickerman; seconded by Cat and passed unanimously.

We have given to the recipients of the Service Award and to Ginger a framed print of an Andy Birch watercolor showing three Sabine's gulls in flight, as well as a certificate. When the Swarth Award was created we decided it deserved a special memento, so the Board approved commissioning a painting from which we could craft signed prints for the Swarth award recipients. The plan was to engage Thomas R. Schultz who illustrated all the gulls for the National Geographic field guide as well as many of the other plates. Tom produced a sketch of a single Sabine's gull some years ago; we'll ask Jon to work with Tom on the painting.

3:20pm Certificates to honor Pierre Devillers and Jean Craig Terschuren

Proposal: The committee had a lengthy discussion about presenting Certificates of Appreciation to Pierre Devillers and Jean Craig Terschuren in recognition of their roles in founding and establishing CFO (at the time) and then WFO, and their contributions to the early issues of *California Birds*. They published a significant number of papers and perhaps even kept the journal afloat. A certificate for this sort of thing is a unique thing. One would have to be crafted. The committee voted 4 to 1 with 1 abstention to recommend that these certificates be prepared and presented to Pierre and Jean.

Background: Pierre Devillers with Guy McCaskie started this organization. They started *California Birds* and both he and Guy made many of the early contributions. They were the authors of the first checklists on California Birds and sat along with Jean Terschuren on the editorial Board. The papers Pierre contributed included identification and distribution in California of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker group (still the reference that people refer to today), Chimney Swifts in southern California, and distribution of certain large gulls in southern California and Baja California. It was Pierre who figured out along with Guy what young Thayer's Gulls were all about, and finally the juvenal plumage of Kittlitz's Murrelet based upon a bird in San Diego. It was initially identified as a Marbled Murrelet; Pierre recognized that it was not that species, but rather an undescribed plumage of the first state record of Kittlitz's Murrelet and wrote a paper for *California Birds*. He figured out that the skuas reported off North America did not represent any of the species that had been declared; they were South Polar Skuas. It was for that paper that he was elected a Fellow of the AOU. Jean wrote a few papers, notably the first Kentucky Warbler for California and a very

important paper on the Eastern Whip-poor-will; she also served on the Editorial Board along with Pierre.

Cat moves to grant Certificates of Appreciation to Pierre Devillers and Jean Craig Terschuren, seconded by Joyce, and passed unanimously.

3:35pm NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Report: Kimball reported that we have four positions to fill, two termed out directors, Kimball and Bob and two current directors, Joyce and Ed, who opt not to seek a second term. So far we have identified two candidates who have never been nominated before, one from California and one from elsewhere. We will be canvassing a select group of recent directors who have been off the Board for one or more years. We are also approaching at least two previous nominees who had not been elected. We are sure that out of the roughly 10-12 people we are approaching we should have no problem identifying a minimum of 5 viable candidates. We do have as of today a very good candidate from Colorado. The committee prefers to have a discussion on this before we get into the specifics on nominees. But we would still love to have suggestions. The actual election is not until June, but our current Board deserves at least a month to ponder a slate of candidates and their CVs and qualifications. It will be well before mid May that we share the names. Basically anyone can submit a nomination. We do try to let first time nominees know that there is often a pattern of not making it on the Board the first time around in competitive elections. We want to make sure people are aware of what exactly the process is and what they are getting into. The nominating committee consists of Kimball, Chair, Jon, Cat, Bob Gill and Raymond.

ACTION ITEM: Send Kimball ideas for possible nominees to the Board for June election.

3:42pm OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Partnership activities with Colorado Field Ornithologists (CFO): Report: One of our nominees is from CO and is someone very closely connected with CFO so there is a direct lead in there. CFO is excited about their conference in Salida, CO, which is a week before our conference in Billings. They have 191 registrants so far at their event, but only a few of them are signed up for Billings at this point. Jon volunteered his time at his own cost whenever possible to attend their conventions and to participate in leading trips and giving gratis events just to keep his place as the liaison person with CFO and to be involved. He had a very nice dinner with their Board. They spent 2-3 hours discussing ways to partner and Larry Modesitt, CFO's liaison representative, kept detailed notes of all of this. We hope to maintain an ongoing dialogue and sharing in ways to look ahead and working together for the benefit of both organizations. The more Larry and Jon can stay in touch and participate in each other's events the more that this partnership can be successful. Getting more of their participants may take time and effort and we shouldn't look for short term gratification of meeting any particular goals. There is probably no better group than CFO with which to partner. Larry is going to make a real effort to be in Billings.

We will next meet at 11am MDT on the 11th of June in Billings

NOTE: We thank Dave for running the meeting efficiently and that we are adjourning before 4pm.

3:47pm Motion made to adjourn by Jon and seconded by Kimball and passed unanimously.