

**Western Field Ornithologists
Board of Directors Conference Call
Wednesday, May 2, 2018, 1:00pm – 4:22pm**

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

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

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

Board Members absent: Ken Able

MINUTES

1:03pm Meeting called to order, welcome, and roll call. Our next meeting will be face to face in Ventura, CA on Thurs., Sept. 27th. In this meeting, we will have some topics that will take longer to discuss. If anyone has anything for the agenda, let me know and we will try to schedule.

We have minutes to approve and you all see Liga's note that there was a glitch with the minutes so we will approve, make some corrections or pass judgement on it in some shape of form.

Motion: Kimball moves to accept the January 3, 2018 and November 1, 2017 teleconference minutes, seconded by Karen, and passes unanimously.

1:06pm **DONATIONS AND NEW PATRONS:** (Suzanne) We have added two new Life Members since January 2018: Barbara Peck (near Redding) and Peter Shaw (San Diego). We have 204 Life Members which is about 20% of our membership. Potential change of parameters for Life Membership (specifically, price, number of installments, and when benefits of Life Membership begin) will be discussed at the Ventura Meeting, pending Finance Committee recommendations. Suzanne has come up with recommendations that have not been vetted by the Finance Committee.

ACTION ITEM: It is important to make the above noted decisions by January 1, 2019.

Jon argues strongly for discussion of this topic during this teleconference rather than putting it off until September. Currently, Life Members who start payment after 15 October 2015 don't accrue benefits until fully paid; prior to that they accrue benefits upon first payment. Basically, the proposed changes involve: (1) Increase the cost of Life Membership; (2) Three installments instead of four; (3) Life Member status will be initiated at the time of the first payment. Suzanne has circulated a list of 192 regular members who have not renewed; Tom would like Board members to urge lapsed members that they are familiar with, to renew by contacting them presumably by e-mail. This year's non-renewal list is about the same as last year's. We need to especially target: (1) those who have been members for more than 5 years; (2) students [n=25]; (3) gift memberships. The Board should choose which lapsed members to contact and let Suzanne know (so nobody gets contacted numerous times) – do this by May 5th. Tom and Dave Q. have already contacted about 39 members.

Action Items: By May 5th the Board should contact as many members as they feel comfortable.

Suzanne will send Wendy the revised list of 25 scholars for which the Scholarship Committee will be responsible for.

Suzanne will also send out lapsed memberships that no one has contacted and assign them to a Board member.

1:48pm SCHOLARSHIP MATCHING DONATIONS (Status, and Grants and Donations): (Suzanne) The scholarship matching donation (\$10,000 has been received and is still open; we raised \$6700 for a total of \$13,500, but donations have largely ceased. We should to make it easy for people to donate at the meeting. The timing of this is such that we can still contribute to the matching fund.

There will be an in-depth discussion at Ventura about a fund-raising/membership

1:53pm FINANCIAL REPORTS: (Suzanne) We're doing well with our net income and have an all-time high cash balance. Financially we are in a very good position. About \$4,000 already has been received in page charges for *Trends and Traditions (T&T)*. In June 2018 one of our long-term CDs will be maturing and will need to be rolled over from Cal First, who is not doing well with CDs, to U.S. Bank. The consensus of the Board is that Suzanne does not need approval from the Board to roll over CDs.

If we have 300 paying attendees at Ventura we would net about \$11,314; if we had 265 it would be \$4,800.

2:00pm PUBLICATIONS REPORTS: (Dave S.) Both monographs are in the final stages of publication. *LeConte's Thrasher* will be *Studies in Western Birds No. 2* and *T&T* will be *No. 3*. About 5 papers for *T&T* are in the copy-editing phase; all others are ready to go. All editing should be done by May 20th.

Paul Lehman's Gambell manuscript is currently in the hands of reviewers.

Discussion: There is a need for Board members to be very active in promoting these volumes. eBook sales can be done through Amazon. The Board agrees that the two volumes must be available to sell at the Ventura Conference in September. Suzanne reminds us that there are concerns about the process, i.e., inventory control; can't accept cash; need bodies to do the work, etc.). We would need to get the stock from Allen Press and who would be maintaining the inventory. A lot of details must be worked out to sell the books at the Ventura Conference. There were concerns about the schedule for completion of the books, whether they will be ready in time for the Ventura Conference, and who will be responsible for making sure that they get done in a timely manner.

Action Item: Tom and Ken will work out the details of the final stages of production.

WEB SITE: Preliminary proposal and budget for modernizing the web site (to support eBook sales and other modernizations) needs to be discussed.

Action Item: Contact Ken A. or Cat Waters if interested in modernizing our web site.

CALIFORNIA CBRC LIST: (Steve) The CBRC checklist is almost done and will include the AOS 59th Supplement, so it will be up to date through July 2018. Steve will finalize the list and send it to the Publications Committee, Jon Dunn, and whoever else wants to see it, next week.

2:35pm WESTERN BIRDS(WB): (Phil) There are ten manuscripts scheduled for 49(2); nearly all are typeset; will be 68-70 pp., and will come out on schedule at the end of May. Submission rate for 2018 so far is lower than in recent years. Baja California is ready to “jump ship” from NAB, so they may instead submit an annual report to **WB** synthesizing the four seasons.

Action Item: The Board should encourage qualified authors to submit manuscripts.

2:43pm MEETINGS: Ventura, September 2018 (Status):

Field trips: Kimball, Dave Perekstra and Tom are working on getting field trip leaders for all days. We will send that to Diane who will put them on Regonline. For the Thurs. and Sun. trips we have half of the Field Trip Leaders filled out, which means that we have 6 openings left. We are also looking to incorporate some of the scholarship people, i.e., Cayenne, Alyssa, Desi and Ryan to be co-leaders.

Keynote speaker: We have a biography from David Ainley, PhD., His talk will be about seabirds.

Merchandise: We will be selling mugs from last year plus new hats and T-shirts. The California Checklists will be for sale. We will do women’s T-shirts on a pre-order basis only.

Action Item: Kurt was talking about tweaking the WFO logo, the Sabine’s Gull design. The bird is a little misshapen in flight and eventually we might want to work on improving that.

SCIENCE SESSIONS, etc.: (Steve) may present the full CBRC report if there is enough room in the session. Given that the meeting is in California, Steve will make sure to present a report. The Board can help by drumming up papers. Rockjumper is being approached about sponsoring the Reception. Jon Dunn and John Garrett will help with the book auction.

REGISTRATION: (Diane) We need to update the meeting announcement for WB 49(2). Everyone should be testing it sometime between the 10th to the 30th of May. We start registering people on the 3rd of June. Although Diane will stay on for the registration duties after she rolls off the Board, she still would very much like to train someone to do it. It is unbelievably difficult.

Karen: We might consider finding a possible replacement for Regonline. Mono Lake Chautauqua and the Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival use the same system which is simple.

CONFERENCE CHAIR and VENUE FOR 2019: (Kurt) The 2019 conference will be in Albuquerque, New Mexico from August 22-25, 2019. Some of the key people, Matt Baumann and Andy Johnson in Albuquerque, have been contacted.

Action Item: Suzanne will check past records to see how profitable each conference was so we can discuss it at the Ventura Meeting when considering future sites.

3:03pm **CONSERVATION AND SCIENCE POLICY: The Tricolored Blackbird:** (Steve) California Fish and Game Commission (CFGC) considered the CDFW recommendation to list the Tricolored Blackbird. WFO re-sent its letter in support of the listing. The Tricolored Blackbird has now been listed permanently by the CFGC as Threatened (as of April, 19, 2018). Steve will try to find someone to talk about the Tricolored Blackbird listing at the Science Sessions so our membership will know that WFO was instrumental in obtaining the listing. In Central Valley Bird Club, Bob Nice is giving talks on this. Another person to consider would be Dan Arreola.

Action Item: Steve will send this letter regarding the Tricolored Blackbird listing to Phil so he can use it when he mentions the new Tricolored Blackbird listing in WB.

3:15pm **AWARDS:** The Awards Committee Report was circulated. Two Service Awards will be given out, one to Jerry Johnson and one to Joe Jehl, Jr. for their early work with the organization. A third Service Award will be given to Robbie Fischer for various contributions. The Swarth Award will be bestowed upon Daniel D. Gibson.

Motion: Kimball moves to accept all four awards to be given out at the 2018 Conference, seconded by John Harris and passes unanimously.

A few details still need to be worked out, i.e. notification to recipient, but we will keep this confidential for the moment.

3:28pm **SCHOLARSHIPS:** (Homer) (*Note: Homer's phone connection was typically garbled, but this was undecipherable, except for the following comments.*) We have 8 scholarship spots and 15 applicants, (5 from outside California including 2 from Alaska). They will be reviewed soon with a final list done shortly after May 20th. Lena Hayashi is now involved with the Scholarships Program. A suggestion was made to have the recipients at the registration area to raise their profile during high registration periods.

3:42pm **FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE:** (Kurt) The Field Trip Committee Report was circulated. The Siskyou trip has been finalized. There are 11 participants with one spot still available.

We are going to advertise the Owens Lake Trip as soon as we work out a few minor details. It is going to be Labor Day weekend and we need to get permission from DWP and Deep Springs College.

The Cuba trip is all set to go. It filled up in about 7 minutes. It is going to be in Nov. during Thanksgiving. Kurt and Jon will be leading the trip. Jon will be the WFO escort and Kurt will be cross trained so he may be the escort in the future.

We don't have anything for 2019. In January of 2020 Kurt would like to volunteer to lead a fund-raising trip to Tasmania. He just led a large group of people this past January so the trip is set up and ready to go. It can raise a lot of money.

As our membership dwindles, fund raising through these trips becomes more and more important.

3:47pm **NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** (Kurt) Homer is wanting to renew for a second term; Larry M. is not going to pursue a second term; Dave S. and Diane R. are terming out. Jon D. will vacate his position to be VP, leaving 1 year left. So, we have two full spots to fill, one "one term" only spot, and one "one year" spot. Dan Gibson is agreeable to filling the one year spot. That would leave 3 positions to fill. Candidates at this point are: Matt Baumann (New Mexico), Chris Swarth (CA), Cat

Waters (CA), Bryce Robinson (Idaho). Directors should always be on the lookout for future director prospects; emphasis placed on candidates who can demonstrate leadership.

4:03pm **BOARD OF DIRECTORS TOPICS:** Long term topics: Vision for WFO ten years out; revisit strategic planning from 2012 meeting in Petaluma; and address declining membership.

4:12pm **OTHER:** (Tom) We need bring up two points. No.1, is that Kurt needs to invite all these nominees to the Board meeting. No. 2, is that you must circulate their CVs to the Board a month and a half prior to Ventura. Tom would envision shortening up the automatic mundane Board meeting discussions and spending a lot more time on these long-term issues. Perhaps having a dinner somewhere after the field trips on Sunday after the conference would work.

We haven't issued a general newsletter to our memberships since December 2017. Do we have any plans to communicate with members between now and Ventura? The last one said we were going to be publishing books in the spring. The one thing we should look at long-term is membership decline in the last two years. The electronic newsletter is a good way to keep in contact with the membership and should be sent out soon.

Action Item: The Board should consider items to be put into the electronic newsletter and send those ideas to Tom.

4:22pm **Motion: Jon makes a motion to adjourn, seconded by Karen and passes unanimously.**