

**Western Field Ornithologists Board of Directors
Conference Call Board Meeting
Wednesday, July 20, 2016**

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, Diane Rose, Dave Shuford, Catherine Waters

Board Members Absent: Frances Oliver, Steve Rottenborn, and Raymond VanBuskirk

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

MINUTES

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

Minutes from 27 April 2016 conference call passed unanimously via motion to approve by Kurt and seconded by Dan.

The next Board Meeting will be Thursday, September 29th at 11am in the Fireside Room of Fortuna's River Lodge Conference Center. Lunch will be provided.

1:06pm **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Report: We are right on budget for the first 6 months of 2016 and fund balances are healthy. June YTD net income of \$32,835 is unfavorable to budget by \$17,000, which will be caught up in July. As of 6/30/16 the balance in the checking and savings is \$252,288. Included in this are fund balances totaling \$82,753; The San Miguel/Publication Fund has a balance of \$62,919 to be increased by \$4,000 (from Cuba trip) and \$1,000 (from Central Sierra trip) in July; the Pasadena Audubon/WFO Youth Scholarship Fund has a balance of \$16,411 which will be increased by \$2,000 in July by a generous donation from Pasadena Audubon Society in memory of Mike San Miguel; Birds of New Mexico maintains a balance of \$3,423. Although the balance in the Scholarship fund is "abundant" not all was given to scholarships this year because we cannot count on similar contributions from donors or field trips in future years.

Membership:

Report: Current membership is 1,110 domestic members, a net decrease of more than 80 in the last 6 months, which is a concern. Despite outreach efforts to boost renewals, only 7 members renewed recently. Long-term members are more likely to renew than short-term members.

Discussion: Various ideas were presented to encourage renewals, e.g., recognition of membership levels listed in **WB** and/or the Newsletter, calling non-renewal people, changing the wording on notifications that goes out to non-renewals.

ACTION ITEM: All: If anyone has any ideas for boosting renewals, please send a note to Suzanne.

Jon suggested that we encourage Life Members to become Patrons and offered to sign a letter along with other Patrons. It was suggested that Life Members and Patrons be recognized at the conference.

After reviewing our various membership levels, the Board eliminated the 'Supporting' and 'Contributing' member levels because they are rarely used.

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne will work with Tim to update the the membership levels on the WFO website

The Board approved Suzanne's recommendation to change the 2017 procedure of sending *WB* issues to all 2016 members, and instead, use the opportunity to encourage renewals, which will save print and postage costs of at least 100 copies of *WB*.

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne will prepare an outline of the 2017 renewal procedures for review at the September Board meeting in Fortuna.

Resolution: In light of some confusion, the Board wants to clarify our policy in print that our student discount policy is for young people (10-17 years old) who are active students.

The Board approved granting a Life Membership to Lena Hayashi for her significant contributions to WFO; this will be announced in the Newsletter and at the Fortuna Conference.

ACTION ITEM: Dave and Cat will write up a note that describes Lena's contributions to WFO.

1:30pm PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Western Birds (WB)

Report: We have 7 manuscripts accepted for 47(3). Sixteen manuscripts have been received so far in 2016, a little off the pace from last year (18 by this date). We returned 4 manuscripts to authors for revision in 2016 and 4 manuscripts are currently in review. Matt Bartels of the Washington Bird Records Committee and Washington Ornithological Society (WOS) inquired about the possibility of reprinting the WA reports published in *WB* in some publication of WOS still to be defined. Phil agreed to this as long as the original publication in *WB* and its DOI number were clearly specified, i.e., "Reproduced by permission from *WB* 47:86-119, doi 10.21199/WB47.2.1."

Digital Object identifier (DOI)

Update: All the hurdles for assigning DOI numbers have been cleared and assigning numbers began with 47(2). We could retroactively assign DOI numbers to articles published in the past, though this would be a tedious task taking several days, because the DOI numbers must be entered individually.

Three to four months after modifying the files of *WB* articles posted to our website so that they would be picked up by Google Scholar (issue 45(1) used as a test case), they are still not appearing via Google Scholar though they are via "general" Google. Google Scholar says it may take several months for them to pick it up. Google Scholar raises the scientific profile of *WB* on the internet.

1:45pm Avifaunal Change volume

Report: Dave S. reported that 17 papers for Avifaunal Change are in, and being reviewed. The entire manuscript should be ready near the end of 2016 or the beginning of 2017. Cat is continuing in her efforts on researching Amazon Print on Demand.

Update: We are continuing in our efforts on getting Wikipedia listings for **WB** and WFO.

Biodiversity Heritage Library: The Publications Committee recommends that WFO join the Biodiversity Heritage Library. Phil has researched this and found one example of a set of publications that after being in the system for two years, had over 10,000 downloads of publications through the site. There is no financial obligation connected with this.

Background: This library was the brainchild of people who were in an outreach program at Harvard University Library and at the Smithsonian Library and they had received grant money to originate a library to salvage the *paperwork* that had been done in the 20th century and earlier so that it would be available to all scholars. They recently received grant money to move into the modern era. WFO is one of the first organizations that they approached because WFO goes back in time to when the non-digital era overlapped the digital era. Once **WB** is posted in the library we can cease to contribute our future publications but we cannot withdraw our past publications. This will be a good announcement to make in **WB** and we will put that in 47(3) provided that we can test to see that we are actually in there.

Motion: Jon moved that WFO join the Biodiversity Heritage Library under their standard agreement, seconded by Susan and passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM: Dave Q. will turn over the Biodiversity Heritage Library project to Phil.

Scanning the *Euphonia*:

Background: This is a \$400 project. This is salvaging something for which we paid a lot more than \$400. It represented research that was going on in Mexico and gave it an outlet in English with abstracts in Spanish. It was three volumes, a total of 12 issues that will go up on our website.

Motion: Jon moved that we scan and put on the WFO website the published *Euphonia*, seconded by Dan and passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM: Cat will send copies of the *Euphonia* to Tom Brittain to scan.

Soliciting reviewers of a possible *Studies of Western Birds* monograph:

Proposal: Ken Able is in receipt of a manuscript of a monograph on Le Conte's thrasher that he would like to consider publishing in the series *Studies of Western Birds*. This manuscript began as part of a graduate dissertation by Jay Sheppard. He expanded on it over the years. Ken would like to seek and hire technical reviewers to look at this 400 plus page manuscript from the content standpoint. No further commitment on how or whether to publish is intended here. We decided a reasonable amount was \$500 apiece for two reviewers. The Publications Fund has the money available to handle this. Upon approval Ken could start looking for reviewers.

Discussion: Since this type of request is unprecedented, a lively discussion ensued including points such as: could we possibly find someone for free; that we are not a publishing house; we already have available reviewers; what shape is the manuscript in; it is a very specialized study. One can pay non-profit Board members services but you have to make sure it is competitive and has been put out to bid. Ken could approach such reviewers and say money is available if that's

what it takes. It would be a one-time only payment and no precedent should be established by paying someone \$500 out of the Publications Fund in order to get a much better product.

ACTION ITEM: Whether to seek reviewers as Ken outlined will be sorted out in the Publications Committee, after which they will report back.

2:20pm MEETINGS COMMITTEE

2017 Conference in Pueblo, Colorado

Report: Tom and Larry had a good meeting with people in Pueblo. The Convention Center is adjacent to the Marriott and quite impressive. It has huge breakout rooms, huge banquet facilities, a giant parking lot, a Board Room for our BOD meeting which can also be used for the Youth Scholarship function. There is a nice reception area that can be also be used for the vendors. The kitchen and catering is onsite. Adjacent to the Marriott is an area called the Riverwalk, which has restaurants, bars, bistros, etc. Colorado does not require a chauffeur's license to drive vans.

The director has sent us a revised specification listing of all the things we required and a budget, so we need to discuss that with Larry, Suzanne, Dave Q. The Marriott has 168 rooms and our needs are probably about 125 rooms. Across the street is Springhill, another Marriott unit, and they can handle the balance. Tom gave the Marriott a figure to hit for 100 rooms, and they will reply this week. The Marriott said that they would be willing to comp our rooms for the Board meeting and the Youth Scholarship reception. They are willing to work with us. We can also work with the Chamber of Commerce. We also need our bid for the comp rooms for our field trip leaders and keynote speakers. After talking to Dave Q. and looking at the survey from the Board members and others who have suggested dates, we settled on Aug 16-20, 2017. We will not announce the dates until the banquet in Fortuna. Colorado Field Ornithologists (CFO) is going to be involved, especially with field trips and publicity.

Discussion: Possible field trips in mid-August might be lakes for shorebirds in the Arkansas River Valley; mountains for three-toed woodpeckers and Pine Grosbeaks; a battery of hummingbird feeders where we could do a hummingbird study; and there is a fabulous ranch near Pueblo that everyone raves about. We might be on the early side for some migrants. All these sites are available within a 1-1/2 hr. drive from Pueblo.

There is no airport in Pueblo. You fly to into Denver and possibly transfer to Colorado Springs. It's about 2 hours to drive to Pueblo and it's a little over an hour to drive from Colorado Springs. We queried the Chamber of Commerce about a bus for the first 50 people or so, but we'll see. Regarding renting cars in Denver, there is a light rail that takes you to downtown where the rental rates are cheaper. If there are enough people perhaps we can coordinate a van from the airport.

We are hoping that hotel rooms will cost about \$110 at the time period requested. Perhaps some other time could be cheaper. Low to mid-budget hotels are 2-1/2 miles up the road, (Hwy. 25 at the junction of Hwy 50), where you have Ramada, La Quinta, Comfort Inn, Super 8, Motel 6, etc. and all kinds of fast food restaurants. Our hotel price in Petaluma was about \$119 and it was \$139 In San Diego, so if we can get Pueblo rates down to \$120 it will certainly be in the range that we have had previously. We think we will get to \$109.

The weather in August will be close to 100F but it is dry heat, often with thunderstorms in the afternoons in the mountains. Colorado is an open carry state with the exception of 'gun free zones,' which include hotels and is well posted throughout the state.

Action Item: Tom and/or Larry will look into Colorado's 'open carry' regulations before the Fortuna Conference.

2:35pm 41ST Annual WFO Conference, Fortuna CA, September 28 to October 2, 2016

Report: We have 230 people that have signed up for the conference. We added three field trips on each day due to demand. In total we have about 535 participants in the four days of trips out of approximately 720 slots; that's about 75%. Rob Fowler has done a great job and he's gotten almost all the field trip members to register. If new registrants sign up field trips on all four days we can only accommodate another 40 people.

Everything has gone well with the workshops and people are signing up. Diane has just one more person to register of the workshop leaders.

Homer sent out notifications to the recipients of the scholarships. We have the Youth Scholarship field trip and workshop on Saturday; Raymond and Homer will lead it.

Steve has a full slate of 22 papers submitted which includes Diego Blanco, a scholarship recipient on the Sierra trip.

We have a WFO member, Bob Pann, who is donating at least 30 books for the silent auction. People just seem to show up with books to donate at the conference.

ACTION ITEM: Susan will send an email to registrants about two weeks before the conference reminding them to bring donations for the silent auction. Anyone who wants to communicate with the registrants at this time should let Susan know so she can add it to the email.

ACTION ITEM: Additional outreach needs to be done, especially outside of California regarding publicity.

ACTION ITEM: Dave Q. will put together a roster of help needed at the conference from Board members and volunteers; he will distribute that about a month before the conference.

2:45pm FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

Central Sierra Trip, June 20-28, 2016: It went extremely well and people were happy with the results. We thank Jon, Lena and Ed for making it possible.

Cuba Trips: We are waiting for a report on the most recent Cuba trip. We have another Cuba trip tentatively planned for late November 2017. Jon has agreed to lead that trip. Kurt would like to go along and pay his way but not take one of the twelve spots, so he would be a leader-in-training, with the idea that in the future he would be able to lead this trip. Gary has approved that and offered a 10% discount, which Kurt would like approval to accept. The Board agrees.

Potential Future trips: Phil has talked about a trip in June 2017 in the San Jacinto Mountains. Jon talked about doing a long weekend in Bishop next summer. Jon and Kurt are talking about doing a similar type trip to Coachella Valley next October if we they can agree on a date.

Another issue involves having a couple of people help Kurt with logistics in an official capacity and once they agree, they need to see if this is manageable. These things take a great effort, so maybe they should get a benefit, i.e., they get to go on a trip.

ACTION ITEM: If anyone has some ideas for a support staff for Kurt please let him know.

We are always open to new ideas and hope that some other people may step up and lead a trip. Please feel free to contact Kurt. Volunteering is a key part of it, but being on a trip or making sure that things go right is an essential part of it.

2:50pm NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Report: The committee conferred about a month ago to put together a slate. Coming up for a second term will be Director C, which is Jon Dunn, and Director D, which is Raymond VanBuskirk. Then there are two Directors termed out, Kurt and Cat. Raymond has stated that he will not to stand for a second term, as he is over-committed. Therefore, we are going to have a one term (Raymond's second term) up for election, and Directors I and J, Kurt and Cat, for a first term with a possibility of a second term three years down the road. We have four people that we are going to submit for a nomination: Ken Able, Karen Havlena, John Garrett, and Kimball Garrett. We have received all of their CVs and bios. Tom plans to send these out about 30 days before the BOD meeting in Fortuna so the Board can review them. We have to decide on a second term that Raymond would have had and which person would receive that. That will be open for discussion in Fortuna. Proxy votes will be accepted. Either send us your proxies or voting choices so we can submit those to Liga for the count.

ACTION ITEM: Tom will send out CVs of the potential Director nominees about 30 days prior to our meeting in Fortuna.

The last part of this is the Officers for 2016-17. Tradition is that Tom will be standing for President, Kurt has agreed to stand for Vice President and we thank him for that. Liga has agreed to continue as Recording Secretary and Suzanne has agreed to continue as Treasurer/Membership Secretary.

Potential nominees that we contacted from other states (New Mexico, Colorado, Nevada, Alaska, and Idaho) all said that it was not a good year for them to step forward but they might be interested in the future. The Nominating Committee supports anyone recruiting someone else to the list, especially if they are from out of state.

Susan noticed that 67% of WFO's Board members are men. She wondered if there is any effort to decrease that.

We have always been surprised at past Board elections on how many names of potential Board nominees emerge when we are all together and thinking about it at the Annual Board Meeting. That's a very important discussion. There is something about the setting that seems to draw out suggestions that haven't occurred to anybody on the Nominating Committee prior to the discussion. We all look forward to that in Fortuna.

Tom has invited all of the candidates to attend our Board Meeting in Fortuna. That situation could be very disappointing if the person does not get elected. Board meetings are open for anyone to attend. If the nominees attend this Board meeting they will be up to speed going into their first Board meeting. There is at least a trio of us who were not elected the first time we were nominated.

3:05pm Other Business:

Background: Ed brought up the topic of the Institute for Bird Populations (IBP), a California-based research organization. He has been extremely impressed with their work. In many ways they are complementary to WFO because they focus on the same geography that we do. They use

contracts and grants to support basic research; almost always centered on areas of conservation concern. They have a very impressive list of publications and staff. Their financials are extremely prudent and IBP has a low overhead. Ed had a conversation with their Executive Director, Rodney Siegel, about a possible connection between IBP and WFO. There might be areas where we might work in concert, but not in a formal partnership, e.g., presenting more papers at WFO, having a higher profile within WFO and letting our membership know who they are; solicit donations; and provide more exposure. IBP have published quite a few papers in **WB**. Ed talked to Rodney about submitting even more papers, especially the more descriptive research that they do and which may not be appropriate for the *Auk* or *Condor*.

Proposal: Ed wanted to get a sense of the Board if we should proceed and get more details on this and come back with a formal proposal at a future Board meeting. They use interns, but for legal purposes they call them 'volunteer technicians.' IBP usually uses young people to help with some of their field research and they cover all of their costs. It is basically a research intern position. This is an opportunity for someone who is just getting started as an ornithologist to get into the field and do some hands-on high quality research. We talked about the possibility of sponsoring one of their 'volunteer technicians' (over the age of 18), using the money from the WFO Scholarship Fund to pay those costs. This furthers our mission because it is a way to further develop young ornithologists and allows them to do more research and gives IBP additional money to support another position. The cost is undetermined at this time but we wanted to get some discussion among the Board and then, assuming that the Scholarship Committee is on board, and the Board is on board, we can get more details to create a proposal.

Discussion: This would be contingent upon what sort of relationship would be developed between IBP and WFO, whether it be something like our relationship with the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology (WVZ) or whether we periodically donate a certain sum that could be directed towards interns. It seems expensive picking up the full costs of an intern but we could cover part of that if we have a productive relationship.

We considered the concept that WFO and IBP would select a candidate and then the cost would be paid by WFO if we make that decision. We have a lot of people who have come through our scholarships that are now approaching or are already more than 18 years of age which gives IBP an opportunity to review our past scholarship recipients.

The Scholarship Committee hasn't had a chance to go over this in detail and we will share our thoughts, which should probably be before our next meeting in Fortuna. Regardless of the possible partnership, we would hope that something came back to WFO, e.g. an article in **WB** or for the Newsletter, or a presentation tied in with the next conference. These are things we will be talking about in the committee.

The concept is not one of funding a position. These are volunteer technicians, interns or short-term positions that are project oriented. The concept that Rodney and Ed discussed was that WFO would simply provide the money to IBP to support a particular 'volunteer technician' for a particular project. We would not be involved in the hiring but we would want to be involved in the selection process. We would be providing something like a grant.

In addition, there must be some sort of amount that Rodney envisions. If it is something like \$10,000, Homer might be looking at the Scholarship Fund in a different way, but if it is \$1,000, he is going to get other Board members to support that. In the Scholarship Committee Report there is a link to some of IBP's projects. Some of them are 6-week projects. It may not be an amount in

support of an entire project; it may just be for part of one. Some of these are summer projects based on the age of the volunteers involved.

ACTION ITEM: Ed will ask Rodney to outline a timeline and a scenario under which a person would be selected and utilized in the field; outline the sequence of events; the generalized duties of this 'volunteer technician;' the typical time period of a project; and some kind of dollar amount. This would give the Board something more concrete to consider.

Thanks for unearthing the idea, Ed.

3:25pm Motion to adjourn made by Jon, seconded by Tom, and passed unanimously.