

**Western Field Ornithologists Board of Directors
Conference Call Board Meeting
Wednesday December 3, 2014, 1:00-4:00 pm PST**

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, Robert E. Gill, Ed Harper, Susan Kelly, Kurt Leuschner, Joyce Meyer, Frances Oliver, Steve Rottenborn, Raymond VanBuskirk, Catherine Waters

Guests: Phil Unitt, *Editor, Western Birds (WB)*, Robbie Fischer

MINUTES

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

Minutes from October 6, 2014 conference passed unanimously **via motion to approve by Tom and seconded by Joyce.**

Next BOD Meeting: The next meetings will be a conference call on March 18, 2015 from 1pm to 4pm PDT and our Annual Board Meeting on Thursday in Billings, MT.

1:03pm Approval of Bylaws

Proposal: We discussed at the San Diego meeting a modest word change that would require bird records committees to *regularly* submit rather than submit *annually* a publishable report to the editor of *WB*.

Kimball moves to approve the amendment for the bylaw change, seconded by E P. and passed unanimously.

The bylaws will be amended and a revision will be sent to Tim to post on the website. The bylaws can be downloaded from the website.

Approval of Committee Chairs

The board approves the committee chairs and people who have volunteered as listed in the current directory. After the CBRC changes in January the directory will be updated.

1:12pm FINANCE COMMITTEE and MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEES

Report: Status of the transition to APLOS is complete and it is working fine.

Financial outlook for 2014 year end: The outlook is excellent as the San Diego conference profits were about \$18,000. At the end of 2014 we will have a net profit of at least \$15,000 and cash reserves of at least \$180,000. That is well more than one year of operating expenses. The trips in 2014 contributed substantially to our profitability.

1:15pm Preliminary 2015 budget We are showing a loss for 2015 but this is due to the fact that the conference will be in Montana so the number of people attending will be reduced as will the profitability. We can approve the budget officially at the March meeting. The only thing we are waiting for is the numbers from Tim regarding the start-up costs for **eWB** which may include the

annual costs. We will send the budget out to the Board for approval around the second week of January. After approval by the Board, Suzanne will enter the budget into APLOS. She will be doing the budget quarterly.

Action Item: Send out 2015 budget for Board approval.

1:17pm Colorado Field Ornithologists (CFO) Partnership Proposed Motion

The recommendation from the Finance Committee is as follows;

That WFO offer an introductory one-year WFO membership to any current CFO member for \$20 and that WFO allow any current CFO member to register for our next conference (Montana) at the WFO member rates, and also giving those who register a one year WFO membership.

Motion made by Jon, seconded by Kimball that WFO offer an introductory one-year WFO membership to any current CFO member for \$20 and that WFO allow any current CFO member to register for our next conference (Montana) at the WFO member rates, and also giving those who register a one year WFO membership and passed unanimously.

Action Item: After the CFO Finance Committee meets January 15, 2015, we can coordinate announcements on our websites (WFO and CFO).

1:32pm PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE:

Electronic WB (eWB): Report: The people impacted by eWB will be Tim, who will put it together and maintain access to eWB; Suzanne who will deal with the issues concerning the print numbers; and Phil who will make sure that all the articles are all available for downloading, etc. The first step is for Tim is to get a budget for how much it will cost to put it together, what it will take to maintain it, and also a tentative time line. After approval by the Publications Committee, they will recommend it to the Board by the March meeting. We have the process described, including how this will be maintained over time, control of the access, and how to keep the articles online. We will have the opportunity for the Board to test it out, after which we can decide if we want to have one or two quarters before we go public with it. We look forward to sampling eWB early next year and to be out from the malfunctioning of SORA. Every issue will be available on our website to our members except the most recent two years, as the committee has recommended.

Action Item: eWB Budget approval by Publications Committee.

Action Item: The Board can test the beta version of eWB soon

1:37pm Avifaunal Change Volume: Status: Currently we have 10 papers plus 16 papers with various due dates, and 4 that we are waiting to hear from. We will have a much better feel once they go through the review process. By March we will be able to more fully describe what the volume will look like to potential sponsors. The Board should take a look at the list of potential sponsors that Cat generated and mark down on the spreadsheet with their name the people that they are going to contact and send the copy back to Cat. Anyone can add potential sponsors to the list. When we have something to offer them we will work up a formal letter that goes along a brochure. We need a complete package before we start making phone calls, i.e., cost of the book, what it would look like, etc. The Publications Committee will work on a brochure that would be presented to potential sponsors.

Action Item: Review list of potential sponsors and e-mail Cat with your contacts.

Action Item: Brochure for Avifaunal Change Volume to present to sponsors.

1:48pm Rare Birds of California (eRBC):

Status: Everything is ready except for 6 recent changes from the CBRC. At this point in time the Publications Committee would like to wait until of another year in December when we can address anything that needs to be done. The motion that was approved some meetings back was that the Publications Committee would work with the CBRC to agree on the product that would be put on the web. The mandate was that we incorporate the corrigenda into the e-book, Ken Able would review it and then the CBRC would review it on their own.

Potential Publications

Proposal: The WFO archive contains a proposal for an Atlas of the Breeding Birds of California which never went further. There are breeding bird projects throughout the West and maybe there is an opportunity to compile something that is larger as an e-publication. Also most of the western states have done their own breeding bird atlases, but California as a state has not done that.

Birds of New Mexico: Status: According to Sandy Williams and there is no forward progress at this time.

Birds of Montana: Status: The *Birds of Montana* will not require help from us. It is a different type of a book than what WFO would envision, i.e., a general book for a very general birding population.

Birds of Inyo: Status: The Heindels say there is no progress and they would contact us when there is.

1:56pm Western Birds (WB)

Report: Volume 45(4) is in page proof and ready for printing. We have the maximum 96 pages that we can staple and fit into our envelope. Ginger is working on the color layout. We will have two color signatures in this issue. The Institute for Bird Populations agreed to send money for an extra color page. All the material for 46(1) has been copy edited for another very full issue that Phil will give to Tim as soon as he is done with 45(4). For 46(2) we have the revision of and expansion of Dan Gibson's and Jack Withrow's inventory of Alaska birds. We are also half way through that issue. The amount that we budget for printing and mailing should be based on close to 96 pages for awhile.

2:06pm CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Eureka, CA Conference 2016

Report: Tom and Susan have been considering Eureka, Ca for the 2016 conference. We have not been in the northern reaches of CA for 20 years. Possible dates are 9/28-10/2 2016 as this is the best birding and weather window. There appear to be no conflicts with other major ornithological events. Rob Fowler has volunteered to help out locally with getting guides and coming up with field trips, etc. Eureka does not have many suitable accommodations other than the Red Lion. The Visitor/Convention Bureau of Humboldt Co. is looking into finding other suitable venues. Currently we want to pin down the venue, get preliminary costs and then put together a timeline.

Discussion: Eureka is a long travel distance and not close to airports, although it is more convenient to people in Oregon and Washington. There should be an effort made to carpool or bus people from San Francisco or even Oregon. It is a 5 hour drive from SF. Are there alternatives to Eureka? We have been to San Mateo and Petaluma recently so it might be okay this time to have a location that may offer some challenges. We should not restrict our locations as it would then restrict places we could go to in the future; therefore we will definitely go to Eureka in 2016.

2:15pm Billings, Montana Conference 10-14 June 2015

Report: Ed H. was in MT in Nov and will be returning soon. Dorothy Bartlett, who is on the Board of Yellowstone Valley Audubon volunteered to help locally as have the people from Bozeman who will help with field trip leaders. At this time we do not want to partner with any group. Glen Harris, who ran the successful Montana Birding Festival, (125 people) has offered to help. Perhaps we should provide them a room in Billings. John Carlson, an excellent speaker, will do the introduction to the science sessions. As a BLM biologist, he can set the tone for the conference. We are still waiting to hear from Nathan Pieplow, Denver Holt and/or Kathleen Cameron (on owls). The workshops are on sparrows, flycatchers, and Steve Hoffman, a raptor specialist, who will do raptors. Cat may possibly arrange a workshop on electronic birding and we add a photo workshop. We have two reliable people, Constance Stevens from Tupac, AZ and my wife, Susan Scott, to wrangle vans. We will need help in sending out notices to Audubon Chapters regarding the conference.

Discussion: We can use the list Frances put together of Audubon newsletter editors to send out notices. A post conference trip to Yellowstone was considered but ultimately cancelled due to possible site restrictions and although an expert professional, Forrest Roland of Rockjumpers, was available, financial considerations were not clear.

Action Item: Send out conference notices to Audubon Newsletter editors (Outreach Committee and Meeting Committee).

2:27 pm Conference Science Sessions

Note: Raymond and Cat volunteer to help Steve and Dave Q. with the conference science session in Billings, MT.

Announcement: The call for papers will be posted on the website before the end of this week. We will be sending out a list of places to post this information if Board members would volunteer to do this. Ed P. will send it out in the WFO e-mail. Bob has already agreed to post it in the OSNA newsletter.

Action Item: Post 'call for papers' on appropriate websites.

2:30pm SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Report: Billings scholarships: The four youth scholarships announcement that will open up the application process is going online Dec 29th so that the recipients will have advance notice for registration for the conference. The scholarship covers four nights and four days of registration for which \$575. has been budgeted. The Treasurer will reserve four double accommodations rooms for the recipients.

Action Item: Post scholarship announcement in appropriate list serves and/or Facebook.

2:34pm OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Partnership with Colorado Field Ornithologists (CFO):

Update: The representatives from each organization, Jon from WFO and Larry Modesitt from CFO, are communicating as are the Finance Committees in each organization. Both WFO and CFO web pages reflect our partnership. The CFO 'mini-website' is accessible from the WFO homepage.

WFO Webmaster:

Update: Tim is working out well as our permanent webmaster. To help Tim with discerning levels of rarities to post on the website, Phil, Dave Q. and Ed P. have offered their assistance.

Action Item: Assign 'housekeeper' for WFO website.

2:39pm WFO Wikipedia Entry:

Status: A decision had been made to do a simple history and explanation of who we are today for our Wikipedia entry. This would not only increase our visibility but it would link to the WFO webpage, the CBRC and our publications. Cat volunteers to create the initial outline, Ed P. to help with the history and Phil to develop the outline.

Action Item: Create Wikipedia entry (Cat, Phil and Ed P.).

2:47pm CONSERVATION AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Report: We did a request for possible WFO policy statement or action regarding the use of tape lures. We decided this is not something we want to get into in terms of an official WFO policy or statement other than letting the people who brought it to our attention know that we would publish an accepted peer-reviewed manuscript about the impacts of tape luring. A possible item for future consideration is the de-listing of the California gnatcatcher after reviewing peer-reviewed papers that are currently in process. Another item for consideration is the newly listed tricolored blackbird whose numbers are crashing very quickly.

2:51pm Possible Birdathon Fundraiser

Announcement: The idea for a birdathon fundraiser was turned down. A possible consideration for the future was to have a young birders birdathon as a kind of outreach was mentioned.

2:54pm Financial Assistance to Attend Annual Conference.

SUMMARY: An issue was brought forth as to whether we should selectively provide financial assistance to attend out annual conference. In years past some financial assistance (low hundreds) had been provided to some individuals. Out of a discussion two years ago a document arose called "Policies on Spending Limits," a copy of which was sent out to the Board on Nov 7th. In part the document reads, "Such reimbursement will be billed into the conference budget and transparent to all." "Transparent to all" might mean the amount will be acknowledged but not the name of the individuals who receive defrayal of expenses.

DISCUSSION: It should not be a secret that we contributed to help someone or who that someone is. As an organization we cannot keep secret the way we spend our money. The information should be available to all Board members. It is a prerequisite by accepting a Board position that the person can then cover their own costs to meetings. The question is under certain circumstances. The

policy does not require that the Board vote on something like this. It is up to the conference chair and the people who are putting the conference budget together who have anything to do with this. The understanding is that a Board member is expected to pay their own way, but under extenuating circumstances we should have something available to assist others to attend.

Maybe this is better expressed through e-mails and we can get a sense of how the Board stands on the various questions posed. Dave Q. will review those e-mails and then summarize the opinions, including his own view, on what these opinions suggest with respect to retaining or altering or interpreting this policy.

Action Item: Get consensus of Board regarding financial assistance to conferences in certain cases.

3:10pm Desert Studies Center, Zzyzx, Ca event Oct. 9-11, 2015

Summary: Kurt has arranged for this event so far. Attendance will not be required but it is an opportunity to get together and talk about the future of the organization in an informal and non-official way. The predominantly dormitory style accommodations for the weekend would be \$150/person, \$40 of which would be a contribution to WFO and the remainder goes to Cal State Fullerton. The plan is to accommodate 40 people but this number can be increased. The issue is who to invite: Board and staff, i.e., committee members, including **WB** staff, i.e., Associate Editors, a significant other, recipients of the volunteer award, and Life Members.

Discussion: We should definitely invite Board and Committee members and staff, i.e., **WB** Associate Editors. If Life Members are included this implies creating a package-like tour which we do not want to do, so that aspect was tabled. Inviting people who have won volunteer service awards was considered. We will review the potential invitees with Kurt, with the possibility of inviting a significant other, and even ex-Board members, depending on the acceptance rate. Cat and Jon volunteer to shuttle people from airports if need be. These details will be discussed at the March BOD meeting.

Action Item: Generate potential invitee list for Zzyzx event.

3:22pm AWARDS COMMITTEE

Update: The Committee will discuss a possible recipient for the Swarth Award prior to the next Board meeting. We had a volunteer award approved for earlier this year but a recipient wasn't present so we will make that award in Billings.

3:24pm FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

Summary: According to Kurt's notes, (who is in New Zealand at the moment), trips currently under consideration are 1) a possible Central Sierra trip 2016, 2) a possible shorebird workshop, 3) a possible Cuba 2016, and a call on Board members for conceiving, proposing and leading future field trips.

Action Item: Input as to conceiving and leading future field trips.

2016 Central Sierra trip: Tabled until next Board meeting.

2015 November Cuba Trip: The dates are actually set and Gary Markowski is costing it out but we are waiting for a few additional details. Hopefully we will get the announcement and specifics out by the first of the year since the trip would be in early November.

2016 Cuba Trip: Gary Markowski is willing to do a spring trip in 2016 but we need to work out who the WFO escort would be. The selection process for future leaders needs to be worked out with the whole Board as does the underlying WFO support system for this type of trip.

Action Item: Process of how to choose WFO trip escort and the underlying support structure in WFO.

2016 New Mexico: Raymond VanBuskirk is in the process of planning a trip to New Mexico in Jan/Feb 2016 to see rosy finches and his study area with Dave Kreuper as co-leader.

3:33pm **Motion made to adjourn by Raymond and seconded by Kimball and passed unanimously.**