

**Western Field Ornithologists
Board of Directors
Videoconference
Wednesday, October 21, 2020 1-4pm PST
(continued coronavirus pandemic)**

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

Board Members present: Jonathan L. Dunn, *President*; Kurt M. Leuschner, *Past President*; John H. Harris, *Vice President.*; Suzanne M. Carota, *Treasurer/Membership Sec'y.*; Liga L. Auzins-Wurster, *Recording Secretary*; Matthew J. Baumann, Wendy L. Beers, Kimball L. Garrett, Susan S. Gilliland, Homer M. Hansen, Karen A. Havlena, Andrew Mauro, Kristie Nelson, Edward R. Pandolfino, Bryce W. Robinson, Diane E. Rose, Christopher W. Swarth.

Guests: Thomas O. Blackman, Past Financial Committee Chair, Philip Unitt, *Editor, Western Birds (WB).*

MINUTES

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

Introduction of new Boards Members: Jon, President: I would like to introduce our new Board members, Kristie, Andy and Susan. All three respond that they are honored to be working on the Board.

1:10pm **OLD BUSINESS**

Finance Committee Report:

Jon: Tom, thank you so much for your years of service, you have had lots of great ideas and some very important contributions. I am sure you will be consulted quite frequently and acknowledged for everything you have given WFO. You are going to present us now with items on the Financial Review for the Board to consider.

Tom: At last Board meeting, we presented the Financial Review Report done by Wade and Howard. There were 6 recommendations regarding financial controls. We also went over the Form 990 (IRS Form) which has approximately 270 questions. Organizations go through various phases as they grow. We are at an awkward stage as we don't have the personnel, but we do have separation. We are going to do the best we can with what we've got and make some of changes if the Board agrees. I would like the Vice President to become more active in the process as he will become President in 2 years. In paragraph 5 of my report I say the President and Vice President are signatories on the bank accounts along with the Treasurer plus they all should have access to the passwords if something happened.

Recommendation 1 is to require 2 signatures on all checks over \$5,000. The banks will not do that. My recommendation is to incorporate a check request voucher or e-mail notification with the Vice President. The e-mail would come back to the Treasurer who keeps a record and then they issue the check.

Recommendation 2 is to set parameters for bank initiation of electronic payments. These are known as wire transfers. The problem with that is, once that wire goes out you can never ever get it back. The banks will not do that. The Treasurer would request a wire transfer to a certain party from the bank, and the bank would call the Vice President and ask if they had authorized it. Since that cannot be done, I would recommend the same procedure as in

Recommendation 1, that we have a voucher or e-mail notification system with the Vice President.

Recommendation 3 is to make copies of checks received and that are deposited. The recommendation here is that to make sure that the website contains the message that the checks should be made out to Western Field Ornithologists, all spelled out and not the initials, WFO. If somebody wanted to, they could set up an organization with the same initials and those checks could be deposited in that account. WFO spelled out makes it more difficult for that to happen. That's a recommendation for the website.

ACTION ITEM: On the website, notification that all checks have WFO, Western Field Ornithologists, spelled out for people that are sending us money and not initials of WFO.

Recommendation 4 requires online payment of membership dues when possible.

Recommendation 5 is reconciling the membership log and roster with cash received from members. In other words if you have 1,000 members and dues are \$10, that would be \$10,000. The problem is that WFO has all these categories of membership: people paying in multiple years, Life members and Patrons. So that plan is impractical.

Recommendation 6 is to consider having someone independent from the Treasurer and the Vice President reconcile the bank account. The Finance Chair, who is the immediate Past President, receives a copy of the bank reconciliations and also a copy goes to the Vice President. They need 2 sign-offs, a Vice President and the immediate Past President.

Additional comments: We need to set up a system for immediate storage back up by backing up Suzanne's information on a thumb drive and putting it in a safe deposit box monthly and/or sending another thumb drive to the Vice President in case we have a disaster.

A bond: It would be an expense to WFO if there were an arrest and conviction for embezzlement problems.

Record keeping: For speeding up Suzanne's record keeping, it would be good to procure a scanner for her.

Suzanne: For space reasons maybe we could get a new printer that has a scanner. That is my only request on the recommendations. Also, the President and Vice President might also like to have a scanner because sometimes we do exchange documents.

ACTION ITEM: What if we handle the scanner issue separately and deal with it for budget 2021?

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne can share all the passwords. She likes the idea that with the password sharing somebody can randomly check on all the bank accounts.

Ed makes a motion that we accept the recommendations that Tom and Suzanne put together, seconded by Karen, and passed unanimously.

Jon: Thanks Tom for the great job on the conducting and organizing the Financial Review and for your other suggestions from personnel on down the line.

Motion: Minutes with corrections from September 2, 2020 accepted unanimously via motion to approve by Kimball and seconded by Karen, and passed unanimously.

1:29pm FINANCE:

Treasurer's Report: (Suzanne): Suzanne sent the Board the Treasurer's Report plus some other files. Our cash balance as of the end of September is \$361,000, \$150,000 both in the Publications Fund and the General Fund, and \$60,000 in the Scholarship Fund. Our income to date is a loss of \$28,000. Basically the loss is for \$20,000 of operating expenses, \$28,000 for publication of **WB** which is offset by income from membership dues of \$19,000. Those are our big activities for 2020. The current projection for 2020 is a loss of approximately \$30,000. We have another issue of **WB** coming out soon but that will be somewhat offset by early membership dues. We start requesting renewals on December 1st, and we will get some membership revenue for next year. This is our first annual loss in 12 years (since 2009). I am looking at a loss of \$45,000 next year as well, mostly due to the plan to publish *Birds of Inyo County* with the obvious coronavirus issues, our inability to offer fundraising tours, and our reduced donations in general. Assuming the conference will go, it's estimated to be roughly \$6,000. We are looking at another significant loss for 2020-21. The General Fund balance is \$150,000 as mentioned, and if we look at 1 year of our operating budget, **WB** publication, and operating expenses, they amount to about \$50,000 per year. If you look at the General Fund which has \$150,000 and it costs \$50,000 just to keep the organization functioning, we project 2-3 years. In book sales this year we have sold 12 of the *LeConte's Thrasher: A Desert Apparition* book, 5 of the *Trends and Traditions* book and 91 of the *Birds of Gambell and Saint Lawrence Island, Alaska* book. We have 300 left of the *Gambell* book due to a second printing. To date, the Publications Fund has been charged \$11,000 for the *Thrasher* book, \$5,000 for *Trends*, and \$9,000 for *Gambell*. So *Trends* is a winner from a financial perspective.

Membership: Currently we have 998 members. We added 11 new Patrons this month. We have 237 Life Members and 17 members who are outside the country. This year we had a net loss of 50 members which is pretty consistent with the last 5 years. At that point we had a high of about 1200 members. Over 5 years it has been about a 15% loss to membership.

ACTION ITEM: ALL: We need to consider how to attract and maintain members.

2021 Budget: We are working ahead on some issues, i.e., the conference and the *Inyo* publication. You won't have anything formal for the budget from me until November 4th.

Membership dues: I am hoping to have some discussion of possibly increasing membership dues this year. Our last increase was 5 years ago, January 2016th which was a \$5 increase to \$40 a year. We could increase the membership by \$5/yr. or \$10/yr. We don't want to discourage our

membership, but we do want to increase our General Fund, so there's a tradeoff there. An idea was to add a discount for some people who want to join for 5 years for the purpose of helping to retain our membership.

ACTION ITEM: Ed and Suzanne are working on the ability for people to sign up with a recurring charge on an annual basis to their credit card so once they sign up, they are automatically charged for 5 years or 10 years.

Recurring charge accounts would save a lot of work that Ed and I do at the end of the year to remind people, at least 3 times, to renew. I am in the process of working with PayPal to handle the situation. It may cost us something, as we may have to upgrade our PayPal processing fees. I might present that to Kurt on the Finance Committee before the budget if there is a cost associated with it.

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne will look to engage PayPal to assist with renewals.

Jon: We must alert the membership now that the dues on January 1st will go up to \$50, and then we up the years, say up to 5 years that they can sign up for and pay at the existing rate of \$40 per year. So they can send \$200 and be signed up for 5 years. That would give us an infusion of cash now and allow a member to maintain the rate at \$40. I suspect there are a lot of members where going up to \$50 will not be a huge item. Keep in mind that at our current rate of \$40, we are paying for the publication costs of **WB** and the honoraria that we give out. Without the extra income coming from tours or the conferences due to covid-19, we need to do not only something innovative, but also something major. We need to deal with it now because if we are going to raise dues, we have to let the membership know as soon as possible.

Jon: In the year-end appeal letter, we need to spell out the situation that we are in so the members can read about the financial dilemma we are in and why we are raising dues and why we are appealing to the membership for their contributions.

ACTION ITEM: There will be a 5 year package of some sort once Suzanne and the Board come up with something along the lines of what we are discussing.

Suzanne: That would be a \$50 increase (25%), and that would be \$29,000, an additional \$7,000 to our forecast, but it still would only cover 50% of the costs of **WB**.

Jon: I make a proposal that January 1st the dues go up to \$50 annually, but before that, you can sign up for 5 years membership for \$40 per year for 5 years or for 3 years membership for \$120.

ACTION ITEM: Ed will notify the membership regarding the new membership rates.

Kimball moves that the annual dues be raised to \$50 beginning January 1, 2021, seconded by Diane and is passed unanimously.

Jon: Life Membership currently stays the same.

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne, Ed, John H. and Jon will come up with the dollar amounts for Life Membership and present it to the Board.

Year-end appeal letter: Jon: I would want all Board members to think about both the tone and content measures for this letter. I do expect a loss for this year and anticipate a loss for the next year

too. That is why we have an appeal letter. The things we need to talk about, 1) buying our books, 2) maybe make a Christmas reference to it; 3) push our publications; 4) push any merchandise we might have, etc. You will all see a draft before it will go out to the members. It will be in the Newsletter. Whether it goes in **WB** as a separate enclosure is being considered. We don't want to have a lot of expense. I'll talk to Chris about where it goes in the Newsletter.

ACTION ITEM: Draft and send out appeal letter to membership.

Jon: The appeal letter will be signed and composed by both John Harris and myself. Is there any opposition to that? **All:** No. We will have an e-mail blast and a postal mailout of approximately 10.

Jon: Obviously Chris is going to need to see a draft of the appeal letter by the 10th of November.

I think it's important to ask Board members to give money whether it be for a special project, a particular fund, or the General Fund which this would be. Whether you send a check to Suzanne for \$5 or \$100, I just want participation. That recommendation comes from both Robin Leong who will become very involved shortly and also Chris Dean from the retreat. It's important that every Board member support this fundraising effort to the best of their abilities.

Suzanne: It's more a philosophy than an official policy, we have never kept count of who contributes what. It would be good to say in a letter that all Board members are expected to contribute.

2:07pm

New Business:

Jon: We sent out 7 Items to the Board in advance.

Item 1. Partnerships:

LABirders(LAB): LAB is really advantageous to WFO and is a new organization that's providing webinars, zoom meetings, working with LA Students. Susan is on the Board. At their meetings and their website they say very nice things about WFO. The partnership has developed in steady increments. On the WFO website all of the programs that have been given through LAB, are available for all WFO members to look at and to learn from. I think it is, particularly in these Covid-19 times, one of the brighter things that has happened this year.

Kimball: LAB was born in part because we used to have a group that met regularly in LA physically and *that* obviously became impossible. It spurred on people who are savvy about such things to start these zoom meetings. It's the way of the future. I don't think we are talking about any formal chapter level relationship with WFO, but just mutual benefit.

Jon: The meetings are open to all. You don't have to be an LA Birder to attend these.

Jon: There are other partnerships down the road I would like to develop, i.e., Central Valley Bird Club. Pat Bacchetti is the new President. Somewhere down the road when we have in person meetings, we might have a desk at their conference to promote **WB**.

I signed up for a 3 year membership with The Colorado Field Ornithologists (CFO) and didn't get issues because you have to *request* to get issues. I wrote their President, and I haven't heard anything from him. We have Walter Wehtje as the contact person, but I am not even sure that he is a

member of the organization. I came up with a list of 7 people I knew who could work with both organizations, but I haven't had a response. So that relationship needs work.

ACTION ITEM: Work on CFO partnership

Item 2. Conflict of Interest Policy: Jon: I think all organizations should have a Conflict of Interest Policy. It is mainly a list of itemized groups you belong to and if you are on a Board, that could be in conflict, you just indicate that and have a signed statement. It doesn't mean that there will be a potential conflict of interest, but rather an advantage to WFO, i.e., Susan Gilliland is on the Board of LABirders. I think transparency is always good in an organization..

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne: We need the Board to approve the policy. This is your opportunity to make any comments. I will fill in the date if it gets approved by the Board and send out the document to the Board members and have them send back the signed document by the 9th of Dec.

Andy moves to adopt the Conflict of Interest Policy, Item 3, and for the Board to submit a signed statement by the 9th of December 2020, seconded by Kimball and passes unanimously.

Item 3. Whistleblower Policy: Jon: The policy seems self-explanatory. We don't have the problem. If there does develop a problem, there is a protocol to follow.

Suzanne: Jon would like to adopt the Whistleblower Policy with two minor changes. I can send out the revision to the Board. The last part says, "a person who retaliates is subject to discipline." Jon wants to change the word "discipline" to "review." We don't really have a disciplinary ability or desire. On paragraph 6, "acting in good faith," the last part of it says, "any allegations proved not to be substantial should be reviewed as a serious offense." Jon wants to change the word "offense" to "matter." Jon would like to have comments and adopt it with those two changes.

Item 4. Jon: The Ombud, a Swedish word, is someone that people in the organization could go to but the Ombud is outside the organization. I have already gotten two people who are willing to volunteer, a husband and wife, one of whom is an ex-Board member of WFO and involved in WFO activities but not part of the Board and is very well respected, Ed Harper. He is very willing to do that out of his devotion to WFO. Just in case there is a sexual harassment issue, and someone is uncomfortable approaching Ed, his wife, Susan Scott, is willing to be an Ombud too. Both were in academia. If somebody goes to Ed or Susan, we trust them as to what to consider and what to do next. They have a lot of latitude on how to solve the problem including calling someone on the Board or an Officer.

Ed moves to adopt the Whistleblower Policy and the WFO Ombud Recommendation, Item 4, seconded by Chris and passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne: I will send out the revised policy at the end of the day and again, everyone needs to sign it by Dec. 9th and return it to me.

Item 5. Pro-bono Attorney: Jon: We have talked about this for some time. We needed a Jerry Johnson type, someone who setup and did the articles of incorporation and also the Bylaws for the California Field Ornithologists (CFO) which became WFO. I thought of having an appropriate *pro*

bono attorney in case we get in trouble on a 5013.c or anything else that we are uneasy about. They might know a firm or an individual for us to approach to give us legal advice. There is no financial implication in this. For the individual I have selected, perhaps we can give them a free conference, or maybe bring them to Reno. This person signed up for a 3 year membership right away. He has been a WFO member. He said cost is not an issue at all. He is a very good birder down in San Diego. His name is Dan King. We thank Tom Blackman for coming up with his name. I talked to Tom at length in early July about this and what we needed. Maybe we can develop an MOU (Memo of Understanding). I did send Dan an e-mail on this just so he is comfortable with the language.

Kimball moves to proceed with retaining a *pro bono* attorney, Dan King and Andy seconds that we authorize Jon to continue to pursue this particular topic of bringing a *pro bono* attorney into the organization to help provide us with legal guidance as necessary in the future passed unanimously.

Item 6. Mentoring new Board members: Jon: We did adopt an official policy of assigning mentors to the incoming new Board members. John Harris is mentoring Kristie; Wendy is mentoring Andy; Jon Dunn is mentoring Susan. The basic idea is for us to be in communication with each other, i.e., if there is anything about the history of the organization, particularly traditions, or advice the new member might need. I would like to ask Andy, Kristie, Susan, without embarrassing anyone, is this working out?

Andy: Wendy has reached out to me several different times, including warning me about possible spamming from Jon's account. I highly endorse the whole program of mentoring.

Kristie: I think it's great.

Susan: I think it's really helpful to have a mentor person to contact like Jon.

Item 7. Website Committee: Jon: This one needs a Board vote. Jon wrote a justification statement and sent it to the Board. This is going to be a small committee chaired by Bryce and Suzanne. Other members are Linda Eastman, who works with the registration desk, and will be looking for typos and grammatical issues on the website. Susan Gilliland is on it because she will be screening the website to make sure we are accurate and not missing information. Dan Gibson, who has always had an interest in the website, will be looking at the website for scientific accuracy as it relates to birds.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: The small number of people who will be in direct communication with Tim is 1. Bryce and Suzanne will work on this, but the actual changes will be communicated to Tim only through Suzanne.

Suzanne: We are certainly accepting requests for any changes on the website immediately. If anyone has anything you can send it to Bryce or me.

Bryce: I think it would be better to have more transparency in our committee on things that go before Tim. Having everybody that is on the website committee copied on the e-mail when those things get sent to Tim would work well in my mind.

Jon: Bryce did so much work on the website, let's make sure that it stays up to date and it looks even better.

Suzanne: We certainly don't want to stop any progress or slow things down, we want to expedite things, so keep doing what you are doing until you hear otherwise.

Kimball moves that the Board adopt the new Website Committee chaired by Bryce and Suzanne, Karen seconds and passed unanimously.

2:35pm **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Finance Committee Report: (See report given at 1:10pm.)

Publications Committee: Report: Kimball sent out a Publications Committee Report. There are a few things he would like to highlight. Relating to the *Inyo* book, Bob Gill has requested an updated cost analysis from Allen Press, and he will pass it along to Suzanne as soon as he gets the updated information. Essentially what is happening is the pace of the book, the production, the review and all the 2020 expenses will have to be shifted over to the 2021 fiscal year, as we suspected. There is no guarantee that all those expenses will be incurred in 2021. Jon is reviewing the text. It is going to be the usual series of editing, copy editing and revisions, and so on, and then Tim Brittain has to work on it. The book is moving along, but it is not happening this year. Kimball mentioned in his report that Bob Gill has a couple of potential manuscripts from Alaskan ornithologists that the Board might be hearing about later. Finally, there is this topic which is not going to be discussed today but it's a topic that Dan Gibson and Jon Dunn have brought up regarding free access to the most recent editions, volumes and numbers of **WB**. We opted to do that before we could have foreseen the financial hit from covid. I don't think the drop in membership is that concerning, considering it was going down before we offered that, so I don't think that is the sole reason for loss of membership. We will discuss if it really is wise to be giving immediate access and is that impacting membership, etc. Otherwise, Bob Gill is working away on *Studies in Western Birds* which is the big project at the moment.

Jon: I am a little over half-way through the manuscript for the *Inyo* book. And I am going to ask Suzanne when we talked about password protection, is it appropriate here or elsewhere? We are trying to have the budget meeting in December free and clear, but there might be one or two items we may need to discuss, and that being one of them. You sent out Dan Gibson's letter, which we can consider at the budget meeting. If we are going to decide on the password protection, you want to probably start it by January 2021. Basically the issue is to not allow access to nonmembers to **WB** in the current volume. It used to be two years. Maybe we should just have one year that is denied.

ACTION ITEM: Discuss access for nonmembers to **WB** in December 9th meeting and Dan Gibson's letter.

Western Birds: Phil: We are on track for publication of **WB**: 51(4) and just in the few hours that I circulated our report we have moved further ahead, so maybe we will get it out by the 31st of October. The trend in the number of submissions is on a pretty even keel for this year. *Remember, we can never be complacent.* I am encouraged to hear about the European Golden Plover in New Mexico. That kind of thing is going to keep our membership involved and contributing and keep **WB** alive. Although the Oregon Bird Records Committee(OBRC) says their manuscript is coming, I have not received it as yet.

ACTION ITEM: Please encourage your colleagues who are doing interesting things to submit to **WB**.

Phil: It has been a couple years since we published the Washington BRC report. Now would be a good time to check in with Ryan Merrill.

ACTION ITEM: Phil: Check with Ryan Merrill on Washington BRC

Phil: We are now in a position where we try to link all four cover positions to an article, so the concept of a Featured Photo becomes less critical. Really, any article can be moved into that position. I have not said to discontinue that, but the Featured Photo is something that perhaps can be de-emphasized a little.

Jon: Matt Baumann, since you won't be writing the Golden Plover article, maybe that could be the back cover for Phil's planning. Larry Sansone of course would like to have his pictures used.

Matt: We can shoot for two issues from now to have a draft. Jesse Williamson and I submitted an article that we slated for the Featured Photo. We are headed to final edit. At least there are a couple of articles headed your way. I can fill that slot, unless you want to de-emphasize it and it can be a standard article where there is a photo available for the covers. It is for two separate articles. One is an Olive Warbler that was brood parasitized by a Brown-headed Cowbird and the other is a Golden Plover that we can finalize. We are really close to resubmitting a revised manuscript on the Olive Warbler.

Phil: Fantastic. We can plan that for 52(1).

Meetings Committee Report:

Ed: There is not much to report on the Reno meeting. We are trying to put together a budget right now with a lot of uncertainty. It could range anywhere from 300+ attendance and gain \$10,000-15,000, or we have low attendance and break even or even lose a little money. We will try to come up with a conservative budget. We will know a lot more in the next couple of months because everything hinges on the covid vaccine. Anything that we can do to prepare has been done at this point. In the meeting with Jen Hajj, I asked her if she would be willing to come to Reno, with Diane looking over her shoulder, and see exactly what is entailed in managing the registration process for WFO. Based on that, Jen will give us a much more realistic bid for what it would cost if we wanted to hire her and have her take over registration for future meetings. She is willing to do that for nothing more than just registration costs. She would come and help Diane and we can get a good idea what it would cost to hire somebody for registration in the future.

Diane: Jen Hajj is willing to help me in Reno. I have never launched an event, which she has, so she is willing to be my backup person this year. It would not be until next year when she sees what's involved. To be honest, what she has done with San Diego Audubon, is that she stays in the same place, we move every year. For WFO, everything is new every year and everything has to be changed. It's a much bigger job so we'll have to see what the charges are once she see the requirements of the job.

Ed: I remember her requested rate (\$20-25) was quite reasonable, but it will be interesting to see how many hours it will take.

Suzanne: Jon, basically the plan forward does not really help us with the hotel, the only thing we can do is postpone for another year. The cancellation dates have already long passed. If we cancel

at this point we are on the hook for a significant amount of money, maybe in the \$20,000 range. The only thing we can do is to postpone again.

Diane: June 6th 2021, is the first day of registration.

Jon: I got a call from Paul Lehman as to whether we are considering Palm Desert or San Diego for our next conference. We are not going out of state after Reno, because of revenue issues. Paul suggested if we do San Diego, we should do it in the winter as it is the better time. In January we could do a boat trip. What if we do two conferences one, where we hopefully have a robust income in Palm Desert, which would be the business conference where we elect Board members and officers in the fall, maybe October, and then maybe do a smaller meeting in 2022 in January in San Diego, it would be ten months apart.

Diane: Sounds like a lot to take on.

Jon: The San Diego one might be small, but on the other hand if we hire Jen, we'd pay her, but she would take on more work.

Suzanne: That would be her first conference. We wouldn't even know how she does. That's pretty hard. Tom Blackman could help.

Diane: Let us digest this a little bit. That's a new one

ACTION ITEM: A possible future plan would include two conferences, 10 mos. apart in the same year so as to include a boat trip for the conference year.

Student Programs Committee Report:

Homer: We sent out reports on what the kids are doing in place of the Conference this year, i.e., participation in the Newsletter, having Zoom meetings of which there have been 6-8 meetings. Susan and Lena have put together a lot of comments, and we have been working with Tim to put them on the website. As to the budget, we had a committee meeting, and we are pretty much there. The last item is about the Diversity and Inclusivity aspect. At our last Board meeting we discussed outreach and how to enhance opportunities for under-represented groups. We have a motion for the free introductory student memberships. It's been adopted by the Committee, it's on the first page. It states, following the WFO D&I Committee 2020 guidelines, the Student Programs Committee moves to offer a one year pilot run membership to evaluate the viability of offering free introductory student memberships on an as-needed basis, in an effort to reduce the economic challenges to under-represented groups. This would be listed on our monthly webinars and also with the Conference. This is something we wanted to put before the Board today for a vote.

Jon: That is not the Diversity one. That's a separate issue.

Homer: This is solely for students.

Jon: Do you have the motion written?

Homer: We already had the stipulation that any youth under 18 could come in free to the Conference. That's a long-standing policy for WFO. This is separate. This is for year round. The motion reads, *"Following the WFO Diversity & Inclusivity Committee 2020 guidelines, the Student*

Programs Committee moves to offer a one year pilot run membership to evaluate the viability of offering free introductory student memberships on an as-needed basis, in an effort to reduce the economic challenges to under-represented groups.” If the motion gets approved, we will put it on the website. Students with financial hardship may request an introductory membership. If somebody came in we can look at it through the Committee and send the information to Suzanne. For next year we will look how many applicants came through and look at the policy for next year.

Jon: I prefer the motion gets re-written. If students can't afford the \$10, they get a one year free membership. The next year if they don't pay the \$10, they don't get included.

Susan: There were some people in the Student Programs that felt pretty strongly about offering this and especially with the fact that the LABirders are doing these webinars through Zoom. They want to get more and more kids to say, “Hey, come to the Zoom thing.” Yet right now they need to be a member. It was a way of getting more kids to participate on Zoom. I hear you now say, let's separate that from the diversity.

Jon: I am not arguing any of the merits, but it is separate. I will support both, but I don't want to support a motion that is inaccurate in terms of the origin. They are two separate things. We are going to be dealing with Chris and the collection of minorities or diversity. Could someone write the first motion and get it approved? The only thing I oppose is for one year. The Student Program gets continued but that kid in a year needs to save their money for the next year in order to continue their membership.

Ed: So if we just look at the motion that was in the Report that Homer sent, and if we leave out the first sentence, the motion just says, “*The Student Committee will offer a one year pilot program to evaluate the viability of offering free introductory student memberships on an as-needed basis, in an effort to reduce the economic challenges to those students that would benefit.*” If we take out the word diverse we are done, and we can use that language verbatim.

Jon: I want it made clear that each individual who gets a one year free introductory membership will be re-evaluated in one year.

Kimball: Introductory implies one year. I agree with Ed you could remove that first phrase and it doesn't tie it in to the Diversity and Inclusivity efforts. I don't at all object to encouraging diverse student memberships in that last line because diversity is also obtained through having people of different economic backgrounds. In fact that's somewhat the basis for so many problems is the economic disparity, so that kind of diversity is something we are looking forward to as well. My only question would be how do you define student? Are we talking about a 30 year old graduate student? What's the upper limit here?

Suzanne: That's a problem. We don't have an age limit for undergraduates. We have 40 and 50 year-olds who try to get student memberships. The Board is asking what your criteria is going to be.

Jon: Homer, let's keep it at high school and under. Are you willing to put that in? **Homer:** OK

Suzanne: Diane, that solves your problem of the conference registration issue because high school and under is free registration.

Diane: That will help a lot. No problem if you do it that way.

Ed moves that the Student Committee offer a one year pilot program to evaluate the viability of offering free introductory student memberships on an as-needed basis, in an effort to reduce the economic challenges to those students that would benefit, seconded by Karen and passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM: Jon brings up the issue of engagement. Homer, has been tasked, partly from Susan's memorandum and Jon's memorandum. Is it possible next month you could engage as a committee maybe through Zoom (The youth have a high dropout rate.) to keep our students involved and that budgetary items that you as a committee develop that could be acted on and maybe voted on but that is something you will need to move on quickly? Susan worked a lot on this with the Pasadena Audubon with great success. I would like you to move on this quickly if you could.

Homer: I have an e-mail started and there are a couple of items to discuss in a Committee meeting. We want to talk about that, and we also want to talk about fundraising for next year. We can meet in the beginning of November.

Susan: Our topic is going to be retaining students. Homer and I have been exchanging e-mails on that. We are all pretty much ready to go on the budget. This is just going after the new topic that came up after we had our last Committee meeting. They are already working on it.

Jon: Do we have an approximate amount of money you might suggest if there is an issue. If it's \$100 that could only be approached in December.

Susan: It does not cost much money at all. We talked about an assessment, we talked about some recruiting activities, and some retaining activities which shouldn't cost anything or very little. We can talk about it with Homer and the Committee. It should be very cheap.

Suzanne: That's fine. Budgets are due November 14th. Homer, if there are budget items that would be ideal.

Graduate Research Grants: Report: John Harris: On one of the two graduate students we have already processed all the reimbursements and the have given other student a deadline to submit their reimbursements. We are going to decide what to do about holding one of the graduate grants for a minority, if one were to apply, before it comes time to advertise the grant.

ACTION ITEM: If possible include a minority when seeking a graduate grantee.

Outreach/Fundraising: Report: Chris: I sent out the Outreach/Fundraising Report. We have two new members, Andy Baumann, and Robin Leong. We thank them both for being on the Committee. Some people have stepped off. I am in regular touch with Christine Dean who wants to continue to give us advice and opinions but prefers to do that off the Committee.

Bird-A-Thon: Report: Chris: Dave Shuford held a second annual Bird-A-Thon fundraiser specifically for WFO. This was one of our major fundraising events of the year. We thank Dave. He suggested that WFO consider holding their own Bird-A-Thon. Donors and sponsors pay either on a per species basis or simply for your 24 hour day of birding. It is something that the Board as birders can participate in and we could get our membership across the West involved in this. Dave and I think there are several advantages to holding it in the fall. We need Board members to participate

not only in getting donors and supporters, but also 2-3 people to participate in organizing the event. Dave is willing to be involved as an advisor, but we need somebody on the Board, or off, like Robin Leong. Robin does not know this as yet. I am not looking for a vote right now, but just that the board agrees that this is a good idea.

ACTION ITEM: Dave Shuford and Chris would continue working on the Bird-A-Thon project and give a preliminary plan probably in the next 3-4 weeks.

Ed: The fall is problematic because we would be in direct competition with two huge, well organized, and well established Bird-A-Thons, the Point Blue and San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory Bird-A-Thons. That involves a lot of our members. I would encourage considering spring. I think 2021 is probably too early to try to organize one.

Kimball: I would suggest considering an alternative Bird-A-Thon idea. The notion of WFO sending all these parties out to the atmosphere by driving 800 miles today all over the place is pretty archaic and not defensible as far as I am concerned. There may be ways to encourage participation by foot or bicycle or some other thing.

Jon: The General Fund needs the money. I would like to do this the way we run the tours, so that half of the money goes to the General Fund and then the other half can go to whatever program the donator indicates. Secondly, maybe there is a way to run a small pilot program this spring if the young birders are eager to do something and are happy to go out and raise money soon.

ACTION ITEM: Maybe Susan can organize the youth Bird-A-Thon in 2021 and also get ideas on how to effectively run a Bird-A-Thon for WFO in the future.

Jon: Maybe we should have prizes, like the Point Blue Bird-A-Thon. Robin's an expert at that. Let me ask Andy if this is something that is of interest to him, perhaps to work with Robin Leong? We have been missing Bird-A-Thon opportunities to raise money for a number of years.

Andy: I would be interested in getting involved but like Kimball, I would like to see a different take on the traditional Bird-A-Thon. How about doing something like making it like a Breeding Bird Bird-A-Thon or something similar where we are going out there attempting to confirm nesting as opposed to just counting species; just to make it little bit more WFO. This is something different.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: Chris, is there a possibility to have a Zoom call with Robin, Andy and maybe Dave Shuford where you might have a pilot program to announce by the January meeting as to how we proceed for a Bird-A-Thon?

Jon: I apologize for volunteering people.

Phil: Jon, that is your responsibility as President.

Diversity and Inclusivity Subcommittee: Chris: In June we formed a new subcommittee, the Diversity and Inclusivity Subcommittee, that sits within the Fundraising and Outreach Committee. We want to present two motions. One motion is to offer a free membership for someone who is in an under-represented group. The second motion involves the Racial Justice Statement that we have on the website.

Chris moves that the WFO Board support a one year free membership for blacks, Latinos, Native Americans or others in under-represented groups, seconded by Homer, and passed unanimously.

Chris: The second motion concerns two statements. (*See Addendum at end of Minutes*) Last June the Board approved the statement that is on the website. The Subcommittee drafted a revised statement. What we would like to present to the Board today, is for the Board to choose and vote for either the original statement (A) or the revision (B).

Jon: Let's see how the vote goes for A or B and then pose the question again and if you agree that it is worthy, Chris.

Chris: If you want to keep wordsmithing the statements, we can continue.

Jon: Let's have a vote right now for A or B. Liga calls the roster. Let me run through the Board. A's: 2; B's:11, Abstentions: 1. It's 11 to 2 favoring the revision statement.

NOTE: The revised statement (B) for the Racial Justice Statement is adopted by the Board.

Newsletter: Report: Chris: The Newsletter is the Board's effort to reach out to the membership. Thanks for those of you who have provided biographies for the upcoming issue. Hopefully the Newsletter will be posted on the website at least by the 10th of December. We have some good articles coming out.

ACTION ITEM: ALL: It would be great if you have an event or an announcement, a story or something you would like to contribute, this is your opportunity to do so. Again, the deadline is December 5th.

Susan: I want to thank you Chris for your very hard work on that. It is outstanding.

Ed: Every time the Newsletter goes out, we get swamped with kudos for the publication. People really enjoy it.

Jon: Susan, Lena and Homer, working with Chris, recruited a certain number of student contributions which I think shows our age diversity and our up and coming younger members. So kudos to them for doing that. Just be aware that it is a separate recruiting effort which I am very grateful for. **Susan:** Kudos to the students.

Donations: Report: Suzanne: Dave Shuford received \$5,000 for the Bird-a-hon and \$2,000 of that came from one donor who became a Patron via that donation. This is the biggest source of donations this year. I want to make sure everyone is aware of that. This is not reflected in the Financial Statement as it has not been deposited as yet.

Jon: First, regarding the Bird-A-Thon, if you get together a pilot program Chris, I think it's fair game for all the people that are in our Bird-A-Thon, to approach Board members to support their Bird-A-Thon efforts as it is a Board supported activity. Secondly, Chris, this regards fundraising for the future Legacies. I hear from Robin Leong, who was on the Point Blue Board for years and on the ABA Board for 9 years. He says he agrees with all that Christine Dean brought up. It seems like they are operating independently with the same ideas. Is that something you can facilitate?

Chris: I am happy to do that. We have been already sharing e-mails, so they know of each other. I'll set something up, a face to face.

Action Item: Chris can facilitate a face to face (Zoom) meeting with Christine Dean and Robin Leong.

Jon: Robin is going to move to Hawaii, so let's utilize Robin's talents ASAP in working with Christine Dean. Lastly, I write handwritten thank you notes on contributions for \$100. Jonathan Alderfer is willing to contribute a rendition of a Sabine's Gull that we would like to make into a card. I am hoping that Bryce and Jonathan can work together with Suzanne and a printer to make a nice note card with a run of 500. How about you three with Jonathan work on this in one capacity or another, and we present this to the Board in December?

Bryce: It doesn't take much work at all. I need to know what we want on the back of the card. I am willing to take it on.

ACTION ITEM: Bryce and Jonathan can work together with Suzanne and a printer to make a nice note card with a run of 500 with the back of the card having: the logo, the website and the artist's name, Jonathan Alderfer. Can you three present this to the Board in December?

Jon: It's important to thank people and this is a way of showing gratitude.

Field Trips: Kurt: Nothing to report at this time due to covid.

Other Field Trips: Wendy: I'd like to ask if the Board thinks that people are ready to participate in Field Trips. I really think that people are. I mentioned to Jon that perhaps there were opportunities for small WFO group trips and some fundraising. I personally feel ready to be outside birding. Is it too soon to be talking about it or do other people think it's time for a group of 10 or 15 to go on a field trip? I think most people would show up independently. It would be a one day event. I would pay \$75-100 to go on something led by Kurt or if Ed was doing something in the Sierras. My comfort level might be different from what other people's levels are.

Jon: Whether it is Kurt who does it, or if you were to volunteer, or I could do something here in the Owens Valley, we put it out on the website and the Newsletter. We could work on an announcement together and say, "Here's some small trips, maybe \$50 apiece, for the day or \$100. It helps to raise money for WFO. Transportation can't be with vans due to covid, and anything over 5 cars starts to be really cumbersome. 15 people in 15 cars is a lot.

ACTION ITEM: Jon will work with Wendy, Ed and Kurt on an announcement in the Newsletter and coordinating the mechanics of 5-6 small fundraising trips.

Ed: I think it pretty much has to be one place that people can walk around in. There are places that can accommodate most of the day and people can just show up and walk the area, i.e., the Tahoe Marsh or the Yolo Bypass. We could caravan in 6 cars.

Susan: Do you require people to sign a waiver? You have to think about a WFO sanctioned trip, insurance, etc. **Wendy:** Yes

ACTION ITEM: Wendy: Maybe the leader collects the money and sends it to Suzanne, perhaps \$100, \$50 each. **Suzanne** volunteer's to keep track of people who sign up.

Conservation/Science Policy:

Report: Kristie: Nothing new to report. I am available if something comes up.

Nominations: John Harris

ACTION ITEM: Jon: Send your nominations to John Harris, who is the Chair of the Committee.

Awards: Report: Karen: We are going to be working on the budget and we are going to have 2 nominations that are excellent for Reno. We have more people in the pipeline.

Jon: Was there anything that was held over that we didn't get to?

ACTION ITEM: Consider the above stated issue in our December 9th meeting.

Jon: I am ready to close the meeting. I want to thank everyone for attending.

Motion to adjourn made by Chris and seconded by Kristie and passed unanimously.

ADDENDUM:

Attachment for Statement A and Statement B

Outreach and Fundraising Committee Chris Swarth.

October 2020

STATEMENT A:

Original Racial Justice Statement

The recent weeks of on-going protest have made it plain that injustice and police brutality aimed particularly at African-Americans are pervasive in our country. The recent killings of Black Americans by police have been unjustified and have had tragic consequences for our entire society. In addition to the men and women who have been tragically and needlessly killed by the police, the interaction involving Christian Cooper, a black birdwatcher in New York's Central Park, revealed that implicit as well as explicit forms of racism are much more widespread than many of us have recognized. We support the Black Lives Matter movement. We sympathize with the pain that the Black Community experiences. We support a fundamental reform of police policies to hold offenders accountable and eliminate these tragedies.

Equally important is a fundamental change of heart and a willingness to understand these issues from the perspective of the Black Community. When society works to understand the longstanding forms of racism from the Black American perspective, we can make more effective long-term changes for many who suffer racial discrimination. These turbulent times require all of us to comprehend, speak out, and work for societal change

The WFO Board of Directors condemns all acts of individual and institutional racism, harassment, and discrimination. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the families recently affected by these horrible acts of violence. All of us have an obligation to make our world a safer and more inclusive place. The American Ornithological Society has articulated important ideas and paths forward, and they've assembled resources and actions that are useful for all of us. We urge you to avail yourselves of these resources.

The primary goal of the WFO is to promote knowledge and education about the birds of western North America. We work to provide opportunities for all people to study and observe birds. Our community of field ornithologists benefits tremendously from racial and cultural diversity. Now, at this critical time in our society, we all should reflect on how individual actions, perceptions, and words can contribute to diversity and inclusion. WFO will continue to develop, maintain, and foster a culture of inclusion and awareness. The WFO board will take specific actions to encourage fuller racial inclusion in field ornithology. Achieving this goal is a priority for WFO now and in the months and years ahead. All suggestions in accomplishing this are encouraged and welcome.

STATEMENT B:

Revised Statement on Racial Injustice

Protests have made it plain that injustice aimed particularly at Blacks is pervasive in our country. The recent killings of Black Americans by police have had tragic consequences for our society. The interaction involving Christian Cooper, a Black birdwatcher in New York's Central Park, revealed that implicit as well as explicit forms of racism are much more widespread than many of us have recognized.

Equally important is a fundamental change of heart and a willingness to understand these issues. When society works to understand the longstanding forms of racism, we can make more effective long-term changes for many who suffer discrimination. These turbulent times require all of us to comprehend, speak out, and work for societal change.

The WFO Board of Directors condemns all acts of individual and institutional racism, harassment, and discrimination. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the families recently affected by these acts of violence. We have an obligation to make our world a safer and more inclusive place. The American Ornithological Society, as well as other ornithological, birding and conservation groups have articulated important ideas and paths forward.

The primary goal of WFO is to promote knowledge and education about the birds of western North America. We work to provide opportunities for all people to study and observe birds. Our community of field ornithologists benefits tremendously from racial and cultural diversity. We should reflect on how individual actions, perceptions, and words can contribute to diversity and inclusion. WFO will continue to develop, maintain and foster a culture of inclusion and awareness. The WFO board will take specific actions to encourage fuller inclusion in field ornithology. Achieving this goal is a priority for WFO now and in the months and years ahead. All suggestions in accomplishing this are encouraged and welcome.