

**Western Field Ornithologists
Board of Directors
Videoconference
Wednesday, January 27, 2021 1-4pm PST
(continued coronavirus pandemic)**

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: Philip Unitt, *Editor, Western Birds (WB)*; Robin Leong, *consultant.*

MINUTES

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

Jon: Approval of Minutes from 10/21/20 and the budget meeting on 12/09/20.

Motion to approve 10/21/20 minutes with corrections by Chris, made by John Harris, seconded by Karen, and passed unanimously.

Motion to approve 12/09/20 minutes made by Andy, seconded by Homer, and passed unanimously with anticipated minor correction by Chris.

1:10pm **Meetings Committee Report** (*Ed has to leave early so we will take his report first*):

Ed: Everybody should have received the Meetings Committee Report, therefore we will not be discussing it. Diane and I looked at the best case scenario for which there is going to be a huge pent up demand as people have been cooped up for so long. The roll out of the vaccines has been terribly inconsistent varying from county to county and hospital to hospital. We both feel confident as more vaccines get approved and companies gear up production, that we will have the wherewithal to schedule a meeting, at least we are hoping for that. You also have to look at the worst case scenario where we would find ourselves to still be in a situation in August where wearing masks and staying 6 feet apart is recommended. We can't have a banquet and other venues under those conditions, nor can we pack people into science sessions and workshops, nor can we have people hanging around tables without masks and we can't put them in vans. The only way we can handle fieldtrips would be to carpool. We can't have 10 or 12 cars on a fieldtrip. For all these reasons, we would not be able to have a meeting. The contract, which includes the hotel, says if we don't fill a certain number of rooms, in this case 85% of the reserved rooms, they can charge us for the difference. If we can't fill the contract and they try to hold us to the contract, we are on the hook for approximately \$70,000. If that happened, and we decided to sue them, it might cost us \$50,000 in legal fees. I want to talk about contingencies. The main thing is time. When I talked to the Board in earlier meetings, we didn't know as much as we know now. In order to try to mitigate the risks, when I

spoke with the management at end of last fall, I didn't mention the continued uncertainty and whether the meeting could go and whether we could meet our requirements. We have been dealing with the same person since the beginning who indicated that they would be willing to be flexible. We need to come up with a date that we feel really confident with, and where we will have full attendance. The plan at this point is to open Registration in June. We have to give everybody reassurance that we would give them a 100% refund, if necessary. If I am going to approach the hotel with some flexibility, the ideal would be to ask them to wait until the end of June to see if we are going to cancel or reduce the number of rooms that we have committed to. I don't think the hotel will buy that. The end of June is too close, 6-8 weeks from the date of the meeting. Last year we said if we cancel this meeting by 'X' date, then we will transfer it to 2022. There might be some negotiation to getting them to commit to a date when we can do that. The more likely scenario would be that we get some earlier dates in which they would let us cancel. We can adjust the room block down. The difference between the number of rooms used and those being block reserved will have to be paid by us. It is a substantial amount of money. That is what Diane and I have discussed as a contingency plan.

ACTION ITEM: Ed will approach the hotel now to try to get them to agree by the latest date possible to allow us to cancel or at least have a late date where we could adjust the room block down if it looks like we are not going to get as many people as we thought we would.

Jon: It seems like everybody could wear a mask except for the banquet. We basically tell folks to stay home if they are not vaccinated. They said last night that the goal was to get everybody vaccinated over age 15. Some of our most promising kids are under age 15. Maybe the youth could use zoom or some other avenue.

Ed: We could have the meeting and everything, except the banquet, with people wearing masks, but it assumes that the recommendation is that we no longer need to be 6 ft. apart. Right now the recommendation is both masks and to be 6 ft. apart. We cannot organize the meeting in ways which asks us to contradict what the recommendations are.

Ed: March 24th is a good date for the Board meeting as I will have started negotiations with the hotel.

ACTION ITEM: Ed: By late March I should be able to get back to everybody and let them know what sort of flexibility we think we can get. I would like to push the 'go/no go' date out as far as I can.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: Let's schedule a March 24th Board meeting, but if we have to decide by Feb. 15th then we need to have an earlier Board meeting and decide what we do as an organization. We need to ask them if we can postpone everything for another year rather than be forced into an early decision.

Wendy: What would be the rate on the number of rooms we commit to?

Ed: We have committed to 140 rooms per night for 4 nights, \$75. for Sunday night, and we have to get 85% of that. I don't think we will have too much trouble lowering that. The risk is if we lower it, and then things turn out really well, we will have a lot of unhappy attendees because their only choice will be a smoking casino hotel.

Wendy: If you are masking and being careful, you can prevent yourself from being sick. I don't know if we can legally enforce people to wear a mask. I think we would be okay with field trips but I don't know if I would be willing to sit with 200 people. I am also concerned with all of the variants popping up right now. There is a lot we don't know.

ACTION ITEM: Ed: If masks and social distancing are still being recommended then we can't practically hold the conference. We would be holding the conference under conditions that are not recommended, which is a key requirement in having a conference at all.

Robin: Ed, when you are negotiating with the hotel, you might request as a comeback, 'Let's reduce the penalty for the later cancellation as opposed to the more expensive penalty.' Go for reduction in the amount of the fee.

Suzanne: I have a small financial consideration regarding the possible loss of \$70,000 for the rooms. We do pay C-vent a minimum of \$2,000 per year, whether we have the conference or not, and negotiating with them is very difficult.

Chris: I realize WFO Conferences are largely field trip oriented. Have you considered a virtual WFO Conference like many of the societies organized this last year did as an alternate to having an in person conference?

ACTION ITEM: Jon: Perhaps by March, Chris, Kimball and people that have been involved in a webinar, could come up with things we could do in a virtual conference, i.e., present interesting programs, conduct the business session, conduct the equivalent of the 15 minute program, the chance for kids to present their own research, etc.

Ed: If we wind up cancelling the conference in the face of financial repercussions and if we want to have a virtual meeting instead, we have enough resources and people within WFO and friends of WFO, that we could probably organize a couple field trips in the Bay area, Central Valley, Southern California, and some other places including Reno. We could have 6-8 different locations and dates.

John Harris: The Western Section of the *Wildlife Society* is doing their conference virtually as are other organizations.

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne: If we are going to do it virtually, we need to get some financial support for our technology fund, so we don't lean on our meetings fund.

Kurt: I am signed up for the San Diego Birding Festival. They are calling it a hybrid conference and I think that's what we should do. It's mostly all online except for the field trips. In our case we could have field trips over the West with certain guidelines. I would cancel Reno now or push it off to the next year and then make this conference a hybrid one. Start working on it now. Since Jen Hajj is doing the San Diego one, she can do ours too, same format.

Ed: The San Diego conference is charging \$30 for access to all the virtual (venues) and then \$50/field trip.

Kimball: Alison Schultz, our Curator of Birds at the LA County Museum of Natural History, was one of the main people involved in figuring out how to change the AOS conference to an online one last year. She will not do that for WFO, but she is available for referencing some technical wizardry for an online conference. She can talk about the workload and how they did it. It went off very well for a huge number of people, (10 times what we typically have). My point is that if we do something virtual, Alison would be happy to offer us advice on how they made it work for AOS.

Ed: There are a few people who are thinking that we should cancel now or very soon. I would like to hold on to at least March 24th meeting. We don't have to make a decision now. We have no cancellation deadline. It was yesterday.

Jon: How about proposing these things: Should we go with Ed's recommendation waiting until he's going to call and inform us as to what the hotel is saying now? We could hold off until March 24th for a meeting unless Ed says we need to meet sooner to make decisions.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: Kimball since you know Alison, and since it was Chris's idea, maybe the three of you could exchange some e-mails and schedule a zoom meeting to get some ideas for a virtual conference and what might be entailed so that we don't just approach that issue cold in late March. Also what funds are necessary, personnel, and all those sorts of issues so we are not caught flat-footed when we cancel.

Kurt: I would say do not wait 'til March 24th, two months from now. If Ed is going to talk to the hotel next week, we should meet right after that. I don't see any other group scheduling conferences in 2021.

Suzanne: I think Kurt has a good point, if this is going south and we are going to do something hybrid or electronic, the sooner we can get to work on that the better, as it is a huge undertaking for us. I take that point very strongly. I think everyone should consider that.

Jon: It is important. Does the Board want to pull the plug now or is the Board willing to continue on for a few more weeks before making a decision?

Ed: Can I ask it in a different way? Are you willing to make that call, without knowing the hotel's position regarding rolling onto another year? I would at least like to know that before making any decisions.

ACTION ITEM: Ed: I will try to get in touch with the hotel on Friday.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: If we have to meet in a couple of weeks, that's fine.

Jon: We thank Ed and the Board for their input.

2:00pm

Treasurer's Report: Suzanne:

Year To Date: Cash is up to \$438,000 which includes \$157,000 in the Publications Fund and \$64,000 in the Scholarship Fund.

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne: We want to move \$100,000 out of a B/A checking account and find a .05% CD.

Year to Date Net Income: The year to date net income was \$49,000. The breakdown is primarily \$52,000 of Membership revenue plus \$60,000 of donations, offset by \$30,000 for the publication of **WB** and \$25,000 of operating expenses. We had 102 members take advantage of the special one-time membership rate, which brought in a revenue of \$20,000. This will cause a reduction in membership revenue in future years.

Year-end appeal: Our members responded to the year-end appeal in a big way. So far, we have received donations from 88 donors for a total of \$51,100 which includes one enormous donation of \$20,000, and it includes \$21,100 for new Patrons, and almost \$10,000 of smaller donations. Amazingly, 8-9% of our membership responded which is far above the industry average both in terms of responses and money raised. We can't say enough about their support. All donations were directed to the General Fund, with the exception of \$2,150 to the Scholarship Fund and \$750 to the Publications Fund.

Membership: The actual membership count was 1,023 which included 22 Patrons, 227 Life Members, and 17 foreign members. Life members are down because many of the Patrons came from that. Our membership is down only 17, that's another amazing statistic from 2020.

2020 Book sales: *LeConte's Thrasher* sold 16 copies; *Trends and Tradition* sold 10; *Birds of Gambell* sold 106 copies.

Finance: Kurt: No Updates.

Old Business:

Partnering: (Jon):

Colorado Field Ornithologists(CFO): No report as yet, I will follow up with Nick. Consider sharing their youth on things like zoom meetings or webinars.

LABirders(LAB): LA Birders are really kind in promoting WFO.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: Maybe we could put up their logo on our website and even though we are not officially partnering yet, it is a way of reciprocating for everything they do.

ACTION ITEM: JON: We will look for other ways to partner in the near future, particularly as we try to recruit more youth from outside our area(California). Partnering with other organizations may be one of the bests ways to recruit youth.

2:05pm

Committee Reports:

Publications: (WB): Phil: I have the page proof of **WB 52(1)**. Hopefully I can circulate this to the Board later this week and then we can go to printing on the first of February to stay on schedule. It is 92 pages which is pretty 'fat'. We have 2 articles plus book reviews all ready for **WB 52(2)**. Our submissions in the past year were 31 articles which is actually the highest by one since 2012. An increased rate of submissions means there was also an increased rate of

rejections which is to be expected. We are keeping our momentum up and for everyone who is helping to push us forward is much appreciated. Many of our articles arise from people like Dan Gibson mentioning that 'this would be a really good contribution to **WB**.' Please everyone, keep that in mind. The CBRC report has been resolved.

Jon: I sent an e-mail to Paul Tomkovich in Moscow who has done a lot of work in the Russian Far East, to encourage him along with Bob Gill, to submit articles to WFO. I think we would all be interested as to what goes on the other side of the Bering Strait. He writes and speaks English fluently, but we can get a Russian translator too if he were to speak at an event.

Birds of Inyo County: Kimball: This Special Publication is currently in the works. Jon has done an incredible amount of work reviewing the manuscript. It is basically done with the exception of the introductory items, etc. There isn't any change to the schedule we predicted.

The Pubs Committee is incredibly happy with the work Chris has done on the **Newsletter**. We all agree he needs the widest range possible as editor except running by the Board some very controversial articles. Linda Easter has offered to help with proof reading and grammar. It's a lot of hard work for Chris but it is extremely important to keep in touch with our members. The response has been excellent. We should all congratulate Chris for a job done incredibly well.

ALL: Thank you, Chris.

There are some minor things that I would like to get a sense from the Board (no vote necessary). Matt brought up the notion that going to free access was largely a good thing to do as considered by the Board. He wants to know the impact on our membership.

ACTION ITEM: Kimball: Membership has *not* been going down since we switched over to free access, in fact the opposite might be true. There is a potential financial cost, so when people access the articles online on the page with contents of **WB**, we should have a button there on the website that says 'donate' or 'join' so they can see that right away. Maybe we can have a statement there that says we are delighted to provide this free access but because there is a financial impact on our organization, please consider making a donation or joining. They can do that right on the page. I don't think we need Board approval for such a thing, but we need for that to happen on the website.

There was a long discussion about the WFO online CBRC book, *The Rare Birds of California*. There was a lot of hard work involved, including people like Dave Quady, Cat Waters and many others. It was formatted to go online as a facsimile published book, but a number of errors occurred when it was put online. The CBRC occasionally identified and agreed on these corrections.

ACTION ITEM: Kimball: The process for corrections for *The Rare Birds of California* has been that the CBRC actually needed approval from the Board to put those corrections online. There had been concern in the earlier years about unauthorized changes. The CBRC is coming up with new corrections, so we agreed that the CBRC should be able to go directly to Tim Britton or Bryce without seeking Board approval for minor corrections in the online book. The Pubs Committee

certainly recommends that the CBRC be allowed to do that. Hearing no objections, we will go ahead with that.

ACTION ITEM: Kimball: Finally, we approved in principle, the notion what the CBRC would really like to do is to put an ongoing version of *The Rare Birds of California* book that is online, with updated new records and updated text that the CBRC would manage on their website. This is not a done deal yet. The Pubs Committee agreed that it would be a good idea. The CBRC will look into how to make it work. We will make sure that WFO has the copyright and that those kind of issues be resolved, i.e., permission from the 3 editors of the book, who were Rob Hamilton, Michael Patton and Dick Erickson. Right now there is no single source to get the CBRC database updated other than *The Rare Birds of California* online. We will keep the Board posted on that.

Finally, Jon had tasked our Pubs Committee to look into honoraria because there was a discussion in the Finance Committee about one well deserved one regarding Ken Able for overseeing 3 Special Publications. There were some reservations concerning other people who had done work on previous Special Publications. We thought, while we agreed to congratulate our departed Special Publications editor for a job well done, that perhaps a nonfinancial recognition might be more appropriate. There were some reservations about our current Special Publications editor, who is not expecting any honorarium or remuneration, and if he gets it, he will donate it. We are punting it back to the Board, but we did not come up with a recommendation to go ahead with the honorarium.

Jon: All the objections raised have led to a place where we are all comfortable with it. I did send Bob Gill the recommendation of a potential monograph of *The Birds of Mendocino County*, by Robert Keifer. We are always looking for publications but not something that would be appropriate for **WB**.

Student Programs: Homer: The monthly Zoom presentations being offered for the students is quite a spectacular thing. We are adding a component to it called 'Ask the Expert' and moving from one evening/month to two. The concept is to have a presenter, Phil Unitt is going to be a presenter soon, and the following week we will have an open-ended session where the questions can go on beyond the presentation itself. Attendance is typically from 10-20 students. We have some regulars, but there are some people who only come in once or twice. This type of thing may lead to how students are going to experience the conference this year.

Jon: 'Ask the Expert' is an idea that came through LA Birders, so to give students a chance to just hang out. I think the meeting went on for 1-1/2 hours. This idea can be carried over to WFO so they can arrange in advance, i.e., Phil giving a program. Phil offered 6 programs and the student council selected the San Diego Breeding Bird Atlas, for which Phil was the author and coordinator. He will be talking about the Atlas. Students should be thinking about all of those ideas and then to have their questions in mind.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: We need to contact speakers. I contacted Peter Pyle and he is overjoyed to present at some time in the fall. We need to schedule these and do as much leg work as possible in advance.

Homer: I should mention that Justina, a youth member, has been reaching out to the students to see if they would like to present. We had one student present and it was fantastic. Susan has been keeping the website up to date and we have plans to try and make it draw in more people. The thing that is most important right now is the research grant application which is now online in the WFO website and it is downloadable. The deadline for the grant is March 2nd.

ACTION ITEM: Homer: If anyone knows mentors who might have potential candidates, have them get in touch with John Harris or myself.

ACTION ITEM: John H.: I am sending out a notice to the membership tomorrow regarding the research grant application. On the webpage the initial description of the program has the deadline which leads to an updated application. I have sent the announcement to a list of about 30 faculty and mentors, including people who had applicants last year. I continue to develop that database. So if anyone has other people that can be added, please contact me.

2:26pm

Outreach/Fundraising: Newsletter: Chris: I appreciate everybody's positive comments on the **Newsletter**. I enjoy working on it. Recognize too, that the contributors fully make the **Newsletter** what it is. So far we have had fantastic articles, human interest stories, natural history, and all kinds of great things. I want to express my gratitude to everybody who contributes. I do need contributions for the next **Newsletter**, so I am hoping that Committee Chairs will consider sending me something in the next month. There are nominations, awards, publications, etc. I was going to ask if you wanted to put in something about the Reno meeting, but maybe that it is not the right time in this next **Newsletter**. The deadline is March 5th. Paul Len is going to contribute some analysis for the upcoming **Newsletter**. Cat Waters, past newsletter editor, (when it was a very much shorter, chatty one), thought it would be nice if Board members had little things to share about their lives or significant events.

ACTION ITEM: Chris: Anything at all that folks would like to write, but it has to be of interest to our members. It doesn't have to be great literature, just some comments as to what you are up to and what you saw in the last few months.

ACTION ITEM: Chris: I have been talking with Phil, about the ways we can make the **Newsletter** relate better with **WB**. One way to do that would be if someone or someone you know, would like to write a brief summary of recent papers in **WB**. This is a thing that many associations do. They task someone to look back at the last number of years and pick a number they enjoyed and write their opinions. Maybe there is someone who would like to write about a couple of articles on behavior and photographs that appeared in **WB**. i.e., the sanderlings that were taking advantage of the crab leavings by a gull. Anything along those lines would be interesting. *The Association of Field Biologists* does that in their newsletter. We as a society need to bring more from **WB** into the discussion. What did you like in the last issue? What would you like to see in a future issue? Talk about books that might be reviewed. The door is wide open. Please consider writing something up.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: Is that something that is worth approaching the membership to get their feedback? Maybe this would go out as an e-mail blast or a note from the editor to the membership. Everybody reads your every word, Chris. Ask our members what their reaction is to the last 2 years of **WB** and then they can write a paragraph or several, on how they reacted to a particular article. It's a way of approaching our members for a feedback.

Phil: We need to be gatekeepers on that because I can easily see comments like 'it's too technical,' 'there's too much math,' and 'you use specialized jargon.' In working with an article it is always like walking a tightrope. The authors say, 'This is the way it is said in the field.' We know that jargon used in the field is not friendly to a wide audience, therefore we need to be gatekeepers on those sorts of things.

Jon: Phil why don't you volunteer to be the gatekeeper to whatever Chris writes in the **Newsletter** and also because you are directly involved as Editor. You have a right to be a gatekeeper rather than to be surprised as to what appears in the **Newsletter**.

ACTION ITEM: Phil: I am very happy to work with Chris in whatever way he wants.

Legacy Society: Report: Chris: We are making some headway on discussions on the Legacy Society for WFO. We are still at the beginning stages, but we have some key experienced people, such as Andy, Robin and Christine Dean who are helping us forge away.

ACTION ITEM: Chris: We are hoping to have something to report in the next few months on our further planning of a Legacy Society; somehow to let our members know that we are happy to receive donations of all sorts to keep us going.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: Kurt sent me a good list of things to cover, and I thought that would make a great template for us to consider first in forming our Legacy Society. Andy suggested using a ruddy duck as the emblem.

Bird-A-Thon Committee:

ACTION ITEM: Andy: The consensus of the Committee is that the Bird-A-Thon is going to happen in 2021.

Andy: It was felt that if we had to cancel the conference, the need for a Bird-A-Thon might be even more urgent. The Committee first met in November. You have already have seen this report which details our discussions. A lot of issues have already been addressed. An issue that came up was how the proceeds of a 2021 Bird-A-Thon should be split among the various funds that we have and how that split should be advertised to potential participants. The consensus was that we didn't want to be too specific. We want to say that the proceeds would be applied to all WFO programs including Publications and Youth Scholarships. If a potential donor wanted to make an issue of it and stipulate in his donation i.e., that he would like to see this go to the Scholarship Fund, we can accommodate that. We will mention all the possible funds for the money so that those who do have a particular affinity for a program can be reassured that some of their money will go to that particular program. Another issue that came up recently was who should be responsible for collecting the money and notifying the donors of their pledge amount and getting that money into the Treasurer? The basic

consensus was that the order of responsibility should be on the trip leaders that are creating a team because they are the ones that are having direct contact with those particular donors. They know the results of their particular effort and they can communicate the easiest to the particular sponsors for their team.

ACTION ITEM: Andy: There was also a question of how that money should be received. Should it be just in the form of checks? It would be nice if the money could be collected online and have that capability on the website. This would mean creating a Bird-A-Thon page on the website. Also on this page we can explain what the Bird-A-Thon is, a pledge sheet, and a donation button for them to go ahead and provide their donation in the form of PayPal or a credit/debit card. The Bird-A-Thon Committee is recommending that WFO goes ahead with the Bird-A-Thon. This would be our 50th year so we are basically suggesting that this is our 50th year celebration. It would be a recurring event once we do this first one and get it under our belt. It would be held in the fall, roughly in the September, October timeframe. We will determine the exact date. After that we would like to take a look at it and see if we should change it to a spring Bird-A-Thon.

Andy: If we did decide to do it in the spring, most likely we wouldn't like a 2023 Bird-A-Thons so quickly after a fall 2022 Bird-A-Thon, so there might be a year lapse there. We are recommending that the Board approve doing a Bird-A-Thon this year and that the proceeds be generally applied to the General Fund to be used at the Board's discretion where most needed. We are going to include the Scholarship and Publication Funds in our appeal for sponsors. We have an aspirational goal, not a projection, of \$50,000.

Robin: Some organizations have a nonprofit company that does the money collection that goes with a price. I think we can do it on the website, but you need someone to oversee that.

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne: There already is a donate button on the website. In terms of working with someone on the website to make sure there is a donate page, collecting, recording and tracking and reporting back, I am happy to do that.

ACTION ITEM: Andy: You would have the assistance of me or some other Board member volunteer to help keep track of things. Basically I am going to place that responsibility on the individual team leaders to collect all that information as well as solicit the donations and collect the checks and send them to you. In my write-up I said the Board would be expected to participate in some fashion, either as a leader or a donor. If you are looking for a team to sponsor, go ahead and sign up on my team and send in \$5.

Jon: I am thinking to have the youth pick a Board member or Officer to sponsor their team and work with them to formulate a team, 'I am sponsoring X youth team,' as a concept. It's a way of involving Board members and the youth by sponsoring through their teams.

Robin: How it works in other Bird-A-Thons: the organization itself makes an announcement that we are going to have a Bird-A-Thon and you can go to this page to sponsor whoever you want to sponsor. People will pledge there, and you hope that they will come up with their pledge at the end. Some people will get a lot of pledges, i.e., Jon, Kimball, Phil, etc.

Andy: I think Jon makes a good point in that the younger youth have fewer contacts out there in the adult world. People who have resources to sponsor a team and somehow providing a means to promote a youth might be a way to attract more donations for that particular team. We can do that in our web outreach or by brochures as well. Separately listing the youth teams and make some kind of statement , i.e., 'If you would like to support one of our youth teams, we encourage you to do that and pick a specific team to do that.' I am not anticipating that the brochure will be a very expensive publication. I am thinking of this more as a flyer that could be copied off at the Office Depot for \$100.

Suzanne: There is a minor detail. To the extent that donations come through the website, PayPal acts as our bank and they charge 1.5% of that.

Andy moves that the Bird-A-Thon Committee recommends that WFO conduct a Bird-A-Thon in the fall of 2021 and that the Committee will continue to work out the details and keep the Board informed as the Committee moves along, seconded by Diane ,and passed unanimously.

Kristie: Is this something that we would put up a page on the website so that the membership has an awareness of it, and we should sponsor a team, and get that publicity out. I am asking about the website component, when that would happen.

ACTION ITEM: Andy: The intention is that we put up a special Bird-A-Thon page on the WFO website, create this flyer/brochure, and make that available for anybody to download off the website. Perhaps write an article for the **Newsletter** announcing that we will be doing this Bird-A-Thon, etc. We will definitely be using our existing means of promotion to get the word out sometime in the next couple of months.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: It is important for the Board to support it enthusiastically, like the year-end appeal we did. Join some team or contribute in your own way, whether it is financially, time given, or supporting youth teams, etc.

Field Trip Committee: Kurt: Nothing to report at this time due to covid-19.

Conservation/Science Policy: Kristie: I also don't have anything to report right now. As always, if someone has an idea please let me know so we can explore it.

Awards Committee: Karen: We are subject to the decision made by the Board as to when we hold a meeting.

Nominations Committee: ACTION ITEM: John H.: Suggestions at this time are welcome.

Jon: Homer and Bryce are terming out. For nominations we always look for a balance of geographical, sexual, age attributes. Look at our current Board and think about things we are missing, particularly what the Board needs whether it is fundraising or our most important publications, so we never want to lose sight of those. We have competitive elections which involves the whole Board.

ACTION ITEM: Diane: I do have one comment to make regarding registration. I was planning on sending out scenarios to everybody so they can practice registering.

I want to wait until Ed lets us know what the options are. That is the only way I can test it and find out if any changes are indicated. In the next week I will be sending that to you.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: Diane if you are stepping out of registering, maybe you can find a Board member who could assist in that. We would listen very carefully to any candidate who you say has this potential. **Diane:** I'll look. It's not easy and it takes a lot of time.

Jon: Matt you are up for your second 3 year term if you want to continue, but you have to stand for election for the second 3 year term.

3:00pm

New Business:

Website Committee: Report: Bryce: We have a small committee that met before the holidays several times and started working on a workflow and how to get things taken care of. So far, it's been mostly housekeeping headed by Suzanne working with Tim. On the committee are Dan Gibson, Linda Easter, who is a volunteer, Susan Gilliland and Suzanne Carota.

Kimball: In my report I brought up the idea of putting a button on the **WB** link to the articles in the issues on donating or joining. Is there a workload request for that, or can you consider it requested or tell me how you would like that request.

Suzanne: Send an e-mail to Bryce and me about what you physically want and then one of us will work with Tim in making it happen. This procedure also applies to the Bird-A-Thon folks.

ACTION ITEM: Bryce: Agreed. Creating the Bird-A-Thon page would not be a big deal. Just send us what you want to see on the page and then we will figure out how it would all come together into a web page.

Jon: Bryce we greatly appreciate everything you have done and thanks for the card project.

ACTION ITEM: Robin: One of the comments I get when I was working on the Legacy project, is that when people renew their membership, I would like to have a button that talks about Legacy. It puts an idea in their minds that they have an option. It would list the different options in Legacy giving. I hope Bryce will be able to do that. I think it has 3 options when you go to that page.

ACTION ITEM: Suzanne: We need some specific language and/or a paragraph or sentence that they would like added. I would also suggest looking at the donate page and see if it should go there instead of the Legacy page. Please send us an e-mail with specific sentence(s).

Special Membership: Jon: Next item is a complimentary membership for John Schmitt. John has done some of the designs for WFO T-shirts, the Island Scrub Jay comes to mind, as does the Broad-tailed Hummingbird. If we ever needed an illustrator, John said to call him at any time for whatever we needed. As a way of thanking him, and this is fairly important, I would like to offer John a complimentary Life Membership to WFO to be our on point guy to whatever we needed or to just

have him on call. I think we still should pay him for whatever he does. I think we gave him \$200 before. He also jumped to the plate and did illustrations for the Board for departing officers including the Coachella Valley fringed-toed lizard recently for Kurt. As a way of thanking him if the Board approves, I want to approach him to come up with a logo for the Legacy Society. He is the workhorse for the NGS. He did more illustrations in the recent editions than any other artist. He illustrated the breeding plumage ancient murrelet which we could use for the Legacy Society. For Andy and the WFO Bird-A-Thon I was thinking he could come up with a logo. Maybe we could use a new one every year. We need to come up with one this year. I haven't said a word of this to John, because I wanted Board approval so I would like a motion that would give John Schmitt a complimentary Life Membership to WFO. I think he will be a huge asset to WFO, and it is a way of thanking him.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: John Schmitt would do whatever illustration we requested and would show the entire Board the sketch(es) before executing a painting. So think about things for a logo, whether it be the Bird-A-Thon or the Legacy Society.

Andy moves that the Board bestow a Life Membership on John Schmitt, seconded by Kimball, and passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: I will be in touch with John in the next 24 hours. For Andy and Chris, if we are going to move ahead with the Legacy Society, should I approach John Schmitt about sending you a sketch of an ancient murrelet logo, at least to get him thinking about that? And for Andy also some kind of logo.

ACTION ITEM: Andy: We could have a T-shirt associated with our conferences, and this being the 50th anniversary of WFO, instead of spelling out Reno 2021, we instead make it a little more generic and spell out 50th Anniversary WFO. That way we can order these things ahead of time and utilize them almost as a fundraiser in and of itself, even if we don't happen to have the conference.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: Chris, how about a short announcement in the *Newsletter* maybe about giving John Schmitt a Life Membership and the guy who did all these logos and other things. You may have pictures of him. He does have time to devote to these types of things and I will pass all of this onto to him. **Chris:** Of course, just send it to me.

ACTION ITEM: Chris: Send all your ideas for a Legacy and Bird-A-Thon logos to the Fundraising/Outreach Committee and we will think about it.

ACTION ITEM: Jon: Ultimately whatever bird we pick, if we put it on the web page about renewing, then that image comes up whether it is an ancient murrelet, vulture, Laysan albatross or something else that people would see and that might be more friendly than verbiage. The bird would catch their attention. If we have a meeting in March or sooner to deal with the covid-19 pandemic, it would be nice to have something cheerful for the Legacy Society after covid-19. Chris do you think you can pick something by March? (Yes). Andy, we have to come up with a T-shirt for the

Bird-A-Thon that John Schmitt can work on that as well as he is now our 'resident illustrator'.

Jon: Wendy had a good suggestion; we might be able to do small fundraising field trips. Some people may need to stay in a hotel, that would be the only issue.

Susan: Regarding Covid-19, what Ed described previously is perfect and you are going to get your food delivered to your room. You are going to drive your own car, and there won't be anybody with you, and the limit would be up to six people. I am good with that.

Jon: So Kurt, if people got ideas for fundraising trips with the protocols and going through Susan and Frank just to make sure the announcement sounds safe, given the time and circumstances we could do small fundraisers. It would be as much for morale to show that WFO is still engaged and doing what we feel is safe rather than going into our rabbit holes and waiting for all this to end.

3:30pm **Motion to adjourn made by Andy and seconded by Diane, and passed unanimously.**

'Thank you's' exchanged among the Board.