

**Western Field Ornithologists  
Board of Directors  
Special Meeting for Treasurer/Membership Secretary  
Videoconference  
July 5, 2021 PDT  
(continued coronavirus pandemic)**

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

**Board Members present (via Zoom):** Jonathan L. Dunn, *President*; John H. Harris, *Vice President*; Suzanne M. Carota, *Treasurer/Membership Secretary*; Liga L. Auzins Wurster, *Recording Secretary*; Andrew Mauro, Kristie Nelson.

**Board Members present (via email/telephone):** Wendy L. Beers, Kimball L. Garrett, Daniel D. Gibson, Diane E. Rose, Homer M. Hansen, Karen A. Havlena, Christopher W. Swarth, Susan S. Gilliland.

**Board Members Absent:** Matthew J. Baumann, Bryce W. Robinson.

**MINUTES**

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

**1:10pm** **Board nomination and vote on new Treasurer/Membership Secretary:**

**Review: Jon:** I want to thank Suzanne Carota for her 7+ years of service. She came on in 2014, and by late April of 2021, she decided that 7 years was enough and started to work on a process for finding a replacement. On May 1, 2021 this became official and I appointed Ed and Suzanne as a Search Committee. The notice went out on May 22, 2021 that WFO was looking for a potential Treasurer/Membership Secretary. Shaun Wilde applied on June 2, 2021. Ed had to drop off due to health issues with his wife, Kathleen, not only from the Search Committee but also from the Board. There were 4 of us who had interviews with Shaun Wilde over this period of time (a little more than a month) which included Ed, John Harris, Suzanne and me. Kurt Leuschner exchanged emails and texts with Shaun. He supports her nomination and wants it to move forward. We are extremely fortunate to have found such a good candidate. The things that impressed me were her resume and MBA. She has a great business acumen. She has been involved with service organizations and non-profits. She facilitates and does strategic planning, which are all background skills that will prove helpful to WFO. I emphasized that while we wanted her advice on all things financial that affect the budget, ultimately the Board makes the decisions for better or worse, which she fully understands and supports. If we need independent analysis and advice on financial matters, she can recruit the appropriate people to advise us and will take it as a responsibility. She realizes what she is doing is advising us and not determining policy. She has a history with WFO and supports our mission.

We sat in the lobby with her husband and two fraternal daughters, Fianna and Blythe at the Albuquerque meeting. One or both of whom were on an extended post-trip, with Dave Krueper.

Both Fianna and Blythe were scholarship recipients. We had a nice meeting. I fully support Shaun's nomination.

John Harris and Suzanne had extended conversations with Shaun. If we approve her via the methodology that Suzanne has suggested, we will need to appropriate \$2,250 to the budget for the training process. For 3 months Suzanne will be training Shaun and each will be paid \$750/month. Suzanne will assist with the budgeting at the end of the year. We will contract someone to fill out the IRS and State forms in January.

**Suzanne:** I would add that Shaun is a lovely person and they are a great family. She is very interested in making a contribution. Shaun was very interested in my list of potential suggestions and recommendations for long term goals for the Board to consider which shows that she is dedicated and wants to support WFO. Her facilitation skills far exceed mine. I couldn't be happier to turn the job over to someone that I know will do a good job.

**Jon:** She took an extra step and got her employer to do a company match. Suzanne, do you know how many things she will be doing in addition to her WFO job?

**Suzanne:** Basically she a self-employed consultant for a company called Red Hat and she does marketing, plans and consulting.

**Jon:** She is currently in Canada in lockdown on the border. We plan to have her official date of hire on the August 1, 2021. Much of the year she lives in the Morro Bay area.

**Suzanne:** We will do the majority of the training online which is not a problem. She needs to be physically back for signatures for the bank.

**John Harris:** Between what Jon and Suzanne have said, I would support her fully. I talked to her for about an hour. We did talk a little bit about long-term goals and things of interest to WFO. I, too, was impressed with her facilitation experience, and that's a valuable set of skills.

**Jon:** We had a great meeting where Chris took all the notes for in 2019 down in Palm Desert. I think Shaun will be invaluable if we get together for another strategic session and planning for the years ahead. Her strategic skills would be very important in taking the long view offering her advice and finding people that can help us.

**Andy:** I was very impressed with the qualifications and the comments by those who interviewed Shaun. I am very excited about welcoming her into this position.

**Kristie:** I think this was summed up well, the kind of person she will end up being as our Treasurer. I am guessing that the low number of people that are on this call reflects how everyone feels, 'This is such a no brainer.' It's really helpful hearing from everyone's perspective, especially Suzanne's, since she knows the position the best and has the confidence, that means a lot to me. It seems like a very good fit.

**Jon:** Suzanne, I am sure the Treasurer part takes up the majority of time. In your training, percentage-wise how do you see caring for the membership and those duties versus the treasurers duties with all the spread sheets, etc. You have done such a wonderful job in

keeping in touch with all of our members. I am sure you will go over that with Shaun, who seems to show all the care and attention that's necessary for that.

**Suzanne:** I don't know if I can break it down into percentages. It varies a lot and it depends on the time of the year whether I am working on financial stuff, membership stuff or conference stuff. Membership stuff is always in the back of my mind. I will tell her how I do the job, but it's up to her to do the job the way she wants to. Every time there is a conference, an activity, a renewal, or a change of address, it is important to be grateful, friendly and thankful with our membership as we wouldn't be here without them. It is an important part of the job. I've already talked to Shaun to doing the training modules. I have the job description broken down into 7 major chunks and I will do the training in the same way, the first of which will be the bookkeeping, next membership, then conference, etc. It all happens very organically. There is not a lot that can be anticipated in terms of what members are going to want or email you about. Shaun has another job. I have told her that she needs to figure out the best way to do it in her scenario and I am sure she will.

**Jon:** I sense no opposition here. Is there anything we on the Board, can do now to help her into her position? Maybe some introductory note of congratulations and tell her something about what we each do on the Board. I don't know if she is familiar with us on the Board.

**Suzanne:** I think the Board meeting in August will be a good time to introduce themselves.

**Jon:** As we bring in new Board members, we came up with the concept that we would assign a Board member to ease them into the Board. That's the hope anyway. We should do the same with the Officers so it is really beholden on all of us [to make her welcome as possible and have her time at WFO be a success.](#)

**Suzanne:** Just remember it can be horrible having a new job, training is tough, and learning everybody is tough, so I tell her to take her time and be patient, calm down and relax. She's very mature, very thoughtful, and extremely bright. I am not concerned about leaving at this point as I was previously, because I am so confident that she will do a good job for WFO.

**Jon:** Suzanne, your schedule is 3 months of training, and then you are there to deal with the budget.

**Suzanne:** I told Shaun I'll help with whatever she needs. I know there will be questions. The training is basically August, September and maybe into October, and then budget stuff will be coming up in November and then in December year end bills come in. I will walk her through the coordinating of **Western Birds**. I will be available as long as she needs me. I anticipate questions well into next year and I am not going to turn that spigot off. We have already forged a pretty comfortable relationship.

**Jon:** Suzanne, you are not there 24/7 but are available 10am-5pm to be contacted with any questions. We are going to need 2 motions.

**Motion: Andy makes the motion, seconded by Kristie to make Shaun Wilde our next Treasurer/Membership Secretary beginning officially on August, 1, 2021 and passes unanimously including electronic votes.**

Zoom votes: Yes for all present: John Harris, Jon Dunn, Andy, and Kristie.

Electronic votes: Yes for: Dan Gibson, Diane Rose, Homer Hanson, Karen Havlena, Chris Swarth, Kimball Garrett, Wendy Beers, Susan Gilliland.

Absent: Matt, and Bryce.

**Jon:** The second motion will be to facilitate the training of Shaun Wilde and we need a quorum present so we will defer that motion until August 1, 2021 or perhaps do it electronically.

**Suzanne:** I am very pleased with this meeting. Jon, you should send to or give a call to Shaun that she has been elected. I will send a follow-up email after yours is sent out and copy me and whoever else you want and also an email to Shaun saying we are so pleased that you are elected. We will get together and set up a training schedule and then we are going start training module by module depending on her availability and depending on her other responsibilities. I will train her on her schedule.

**Jon:** About half-way through the training can you send us a progress report?

**Suzanne:** I will be half-way through by August 23<sup>rd</sup> so I will definitely give a progress report. I will train Shaun on how to do the Treasurer's Report for the Board meeting. She will be inherently involved in that. You could also send an email to the Board saying this has happened and Shaun is going to be the Treasurer and the training will start and if anyone has any suggestions for Suzanne on training or Shaun as a new employee feel free to reach out.

1:35pm

**Motion to adjourn made by Andy seconded by Kristie, and passed unanimously.**

'Thank yous' exchanged among the Board.