

**Western Field Ornithologists  
Board of Directors  
Monday June 5, 2023, 3:00-5:15PM  
Virtual Meeting**

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

**Board Members and Officers present:** John H. Harris, *President*; Kimball L. Garrett, *Vice President*, Jonathan L. Dunn, *Past President*; Shaun F. Wilde, *Treasurer/Membership Secretary*; Liga L. Auzins Wurster, *Recording Secretary*; Elisabeth Ammon, Robert Gill, Daniel King, Robin Leong, Don Marsh, Andrew Mauro, Kristie Nelson.

**Board Members absent:** Matthew Baumann, Wendy L. Beers, Teresa Connell, Susan Gilliland, Daniel Ruthrauff.

**Guests:** Philip Unitt, *Editor, Western Birds (WB)*; Judith Dunham, *Editor, WFO News*; Maci MacPherson, *Administrator*.

**MINUTES**

**3:04pm** Meeting called to order, welcome and roll.

**Motion to approve the January 29, 2023, minutes made by Dan K., seconded by Andy, and passed with one abstention.**

**3:06pm** **Treasurer's Report: Shaun**

**Update:** Each time we have a Board meeting I like to talk about our past, what we are accomplishing and where we are going. We've made a lot of accomplishments in the last year and a half since I have been here. We are working on the Summer/Fall Planned Giving, the marketing of the Legacy Society, and we are going to update our Record and Retention processes. We are on a trajectory to have a strategic plan to update the Bylaws, to work on a fund raising strategy and ultimately to an investment strategy. There has been a lot of work in the Finance Committee from Kristie and Robin. As of the end of April, our general fund has 278K, our pubs fund has 206K and our scholarship fund 69K, giving a balance 554K. Year to date our income is trending a bit ahead of expenses. Income from the Costa Rica trip generated about 10K and the Birdathon has generated 12K to date. Membership income is a little lower than expected. This year we hit a milestone in our taxes, we have \$500,000 for the IRS which means we must have more rigor. We went from a 15 pg. document to a 35 pg. document. With this amount, one of the requirements from the IRS is that we have a Records and Retention Policy. We reviewed this with Dan King, the State of California, and other non-profits. Every person on the Board has fiduciary responsibility, even though I am the Treasurer and take full responsibility and manage finances. The IRS looks at it as such. Therefore, we should all look at these documents and ask questions. We have liability insurance for Board fiduciary responsibility.

**Dan K.:** Any non-profit should have DNO insurance. We are all volunteers here and if something happened, i.e., at a conference, that insurance becomes very important. Look at it and make sure it is up to date and that the level of coverage is appropriate.

**Kimball:** From a practical point of view how and where do these records get to be stored since we don't have a permanent office?

**Shaun:** The next step is getting all of that in order. What Maci and I would like to do to put all the documents that are required by the IRS on our Drop Box in addition to the hard copies that we have. **ACTION ITEM:** We would have records in a place that the officers would have access to. All our tax records are electronic, so we would put all of them there. Anyone could go online and look at them because they are all required by law to be accessible. This is work we must do.

**John H.:** The state website also has records of our articles of incorporation and bylaws.

**Motion made by Robin and seconded by Don M., to approve the Document Retention Policy as discussed, passes unanimously.**

**Operations Manual: Overview: Maci:** The operations manual is a way for us to have a repository in one place of the different ways that we do business. The updated (06/01/23) manual will be kept in Drop Box, our virtual repository, for access to everyone. There will be a lot of important information in there and important links like Ed's WFO Conference Manual. Everything is in one place for everybody to find.

**Shaun: ACTION ITEM:** After this meeting Maci and I will update the manual, i.e., Document Retention Policy, and send everyone a link to Drop Box for inspection. We can do some direct links to documents for easy access.

3:26pm

**Membership Report: Shaun**

**Update:** Since November we are using APLOS software as our CRM. Since renewals are at the end of the year, we sent out emails (thank you Judith) for this. We received 304 renewals by the new process. This is quite fantastic. Also, the credit card fee was covered by 47% of our members. We are lagging a little bit in renewals. We had 160 non-renewals for 2022. We sent a first class reminder. As of May 1<sup>st</sup>, we have had about 40 (25%) individuals renew by check, bringing in a total of approximately \$3,000. (Typical response is 7%.) The cost of printing and mail was about \$600. Note that when we sent an envelope, we not only got the membership, but also a donation from 6 of those members. We have seen an uptick in student members. Robin asked to see the list of non-renewals so he could send out emails. Our membership is at 890. We continue to see a downward trend.

**John H.:** Can we put the spreadsheet of lapsed members on Google Doc with a link?

**Shaun: ACTION ITEM:** I'll put the spreadsheet on Google Doc right after the meeting and I will send out a link. Jon D., you can tell me who you contacted, and I will put that up on Google Doc.

**Jon:** I bet 95% of our membership don't know that they can give out gift memberships.

3:36pm

**Finance:**

**Update: Kristie:** The agenda lists the CD proposal which we want to present to the Board at this meeting. It is about risk mitigation. We currently have \$450,000 sitting in the Bank of America. The FDIC insurance is guaranteed to only \$250,000. It would be in our interest to keep the account within the insured amount. Shaun was able to find an 18 month CD offered at 4.5%, which is excellent compared to our current rate with our CD of \$100,000. This is an insured bank. Shaun

has done research on this. We need to agree to go ahead with this CD, that way we will have our accounts guaranteed, besides it being a pretty good rate.

**Andy:** We have \$450,000 in cash assets and we have \$250,000 of it in a new CD, leaving \$200,000 dollars. Is that basically what the Finance Committee feels it would like to leave in a non-invested cash asset or consider allocating that into another CD?

**Shaun:** I feel we should never have \$450,000 of cash in the bank. We need the FDIC insurance. That is foremost. I checked and maybe we want to close the current CD and reinvest in something else. We want to make sure we have enough for operating expenses. We also want to be cautious around the fact that we know that we would eventually like to have a more rigorous investment process, and we don't want all our money sitting in CDs.

**John H.:** I think a couple \$100,000s would amount to roughly 2 years of operating expenses if you don't include the conference.

**Shaun:** I can tell you that the \$450,000 next week will be \$20,000 less as we have a \$10,000 bill from the *Inyo* book, and we have another \$10,000 due to Copper Mountain for the conference. These are the 2 biggest expenses. Printing the book is another cost.

**Dan K.:** Looking at the way the numbers work, when the TIAA CD matures in a little bit more than a year from now, in theory, we would be roughly at \$300,000 in cash. There is only \$50,000 at risk from the standpoint of FDIC. If we just left that, rather than immediately renewing what was formally the TIAA CD and something else, it gives us time to possibly consider ESG type of investments. It gives us something to work with in that regard.

**Shaun:** In my Step Plan the next piece is a need to have a Strategic Planning Process. We do need to figure out: 1) How we want to handle our monies and 2) How the money should be allocated. If an organization ages out and you do not decide how you allocate your money, then the IRS decides for you. **ACTION ITEM:** I don't want to discuss this here, but I do think part of the Strategic Planning Process is very critical for the Board to discuss.

**Dan K.:** We have a lot of money to go multiple years without doing more fundraising. It's a nice position to be in. I'm saying it is not in good taste, but the Birdathon where we raised \$27,000 and we are going to give \$5,000 (20%) away to tricolored blackbird research, if I told people that, they may not want to contribute and might want to give money to something else. That's my concern.

**Robin:** Don, the IRS will come after you if you are a nonprofit and show profits.

**Shaun:** We have multiple accounts at B/A. At 4.5% it is approximately \$11,000 from the \$250,000.

**Kristie:** We should plan. If we did withdraw that smaller CD early, we could then pad it with an extra bit from B/A. We probably want to run some numbers and see what those options would look like and how much we want to make and how much we keep as cash on hand. It was a good idea that was brought up with that and maybe that CD does not even need to mature. The \$250,000 one is something we could do easily.

**Jon D.:** Take the penalty and the increased interest will more than make up for it.

**Shaun:** We should have one proposal for the current CD request, and we should go back and with due diligence do the numbers on the other CD that doesn't come due 'til next year and bring the recommendation forward. It's a very straightforward process.

**MOTION: Kristie makes a motion that we put \$250,000, as originally proposed, into a 4.5% CD for 18 mos. from the B/A account, Andy seconds, and it passes unanimously.**

3:52pm

**Outreach/Fundraising: Robin**

**Update:** We are getting ready to market the Xema Society. We are currently on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Step of our draft Plan.

**John H.:** It is worth reporting that the response to the newsletter article on the Xema Society was amazing. Thanks to Judith we got our first member, who wants to keep their name private. In the next step we plan to write about it in the newsletter. There were many suggestions in the Finance Committee regarding the web page. Most of the 'errors' have been corrected. **ACTION ITEM:** We have a plan for those that are members of the Xema Society to give testimonies if possible. We are also thinking of having a page dedicated in **WB** for announcements besides the newsletter. **Phil:** Just send it to me.

**John H.:** **ACTION ITEM:** Since the new web pages are not active yet, can we have the Website Committee review them?

**Shaun:** That's why those pages are not active. I can share them with the Website Committee for any feedback and then they can go live.

**Robin:** We are looking towards the 3<sup>rd</sup> Step. Jon D. is going to write a letter to all. I would also like to have a pin or some other commemorative item. We thought we might create a competition between members on the artwork for the pin. It would be more inclusive than exclusive.

**Jon D.:** What's the timing of the letter? **Shaun:** After the conference, early Fall.

**Robin:** I was impressed that we had 39 student members.

**Shaun:** That is actually *new* student members, not the total number of student members.

**Robin:** We also talked about keeping in touch with alumni student members too. This may lead to the youth coming up together and knowing each other as they go through their careers; they can stay friends and maybe contribute to WFO.

4:00pm

**Birdathon: Andy**

**Report:** The Spring Birdathon was a qualified success. There wasn't quite as much participation as there was in 2021, our inaugural year. We raised \$27,567 this year (2023). The BlueSky software worked okay, and Jen Hajj was very happy with it and thought it had a lot of potential. There is a learning curve. Since it was spring, we did lose a little bit from the competition we had with other Birdathons. For the next Birdathon we might consider going back to the fall date. Dave Shuford did his Birdathon effort in September. We credited his \$5,100 to the Spring Birdathon at his request. All the teams were either led by Board members or substantially populated by them. It begs the question as to why we are not inspiring some of our membership to step forward and lead teams. We also have the \$5,000 grant that the board approved for the Tricolored Blackbird Conservation Program. Jon D. will contact Dan Airola to ask him how they wanted the money to be

delivered. I would be happy to draft the cover letter. California again led the way in the number of teams and the number of birds seen, although the Costa Rica team saw more birds. Kristie did a wonderful job in Missouri including 17 species of warblers on what turned out to be a terrible day for MO. I recommend that we continue to do Birdathons. It's a way of bringing in \$25,000 each year. It's an easy program to administer. I plan to retire.

**John H.:** **ACTION ITEM:** The next step is to appoint a Chair for the Committee soon.

**Robin:** We need a picture of the \$5,000 check that we are donating and a picture of you John H. giving it to the appropriate person for the Tricolor Blackbird Conservation Program. For the next Birdathon we should choose another bird to support in this fashion. Remember, it's not the numbers of birds seen, it's the money raised.

**John H.:** We need to decide dates for the San Diego Conference which might help us decide exactly when we want to do the Birdathon.

**Jon D.:** Let's go with the less competitive fall Birdathon, it gives you more time to pick someone.

4:00pm

**Publications: John H.**

**Report:** Dan Ruthrauff is not here today but Bob will be able to give an update on *Studies in Western Birds* and perhaps the *Inyo* book as well. Having communicated with Ken Able, the editor for the *Inyo* book quite often, I can also report on it. Then we have **WB** and the updated newsletter.

**Phil: Update:** I circulated the progress report earlier this morning about the 2 articles we have accepted for 54(3). There is another important paper on the biology of the tricolored blackbird. We are awaiting the revision of 7 manuscripts for which the reviews were sent to the authors in Nov. 2022. Among those is a report of the New Mexico Bird Records Committee. I talked to Matt Baumann about this report last year, but I haven't heard anything since. I would like very much to get that for 54(3), so I sent him a reminder this morning, but if any of you are in touch with Matt, you could give him another nudge. So far for 2023, we have received 14 manuscripts which is a little bit behind pace. I always encourage everyone to talk to your colleagues and encourage contributions to **WB**. I sent Todd Benton a message for an update on the Search Engine Optimization(SEO) through this meeting and didn't receive any back, but with the last communication with Todd we made progress. One thing that is outstanding, is that the titles and authors need to have this coding, so I told him we have whatever money is necessary to get this done which could be crowd sourced among the membership and/or the Board. I am willing to do whatever work is necessary to push this over the line. The longer that this drags on, the longer the shadow is and can depress the rate of submissions. If anyone else is in contact with Todd Benton, say we need to spend whatever it takes to get all the things done that Google requires.

**Jon D.:** While you were in Alaska, and maybe Bob Gill can comment on this, you had a plea from a reporter on the *Inyo* book?

**Phil:** That's right. It does bring up the question of good PR. I did send a message to Tim after you Bob, or Ken said it was in Tim's hands. So, I asked Tim how long this is going to take, and he was unclear as it is a big project with a lot of work, and he didn't give me a date.

**Bob Gill:** I was contacted twice this morning by that reporter, but I punted and sent him onto Ken because I really had nothing to do with this volume other than get some paper quotes from Allen

Press a few years ago. He said he was going to visit them tomorrow, going up for a personal interview with the Heindels.

**John H.:** I don't have the exact numbers in front of me, but Ken sent me some information and the book is going to be over 500 pages, that's why it is going to take Tim a while to get the layout done. The copyeditor made over 57,000 corrections and revisions. There are 100's of photographs. If you think of the book as a database, it has over ½ million records in it. As Ken put it, nobody is going to do this again. The amount of work that went into it is just unbelievable. We've had some success in fundraising for it, i.e., Eastern Sierra Audubon, L.A. Dept. of Water and Power. Barbara Kelley did fundraise during the time of Ron Mallory's matching grant. It will be good to see this come to fruition. **ACTION ITEM:** I assume since it is in Tim's hands now, we really aren't able to evaluate the costs and how many to print. That will have to wait until a fall meeting.

**Bob: Report:** We have 3 manuscripts which are looking for a home and a publisher. I have prepared a prospectus for each one, which I was going to run before the Publications Committee. We also need to run these before the full Board for their approval. I am happy to give a synopsis of each one right now, but I can also mail around the copies of the prospectus of each.

**Bob:** First, we have *Birds of the Pribilof Islands*, which is a manuscript in hand of 350 taxa with 200+ photos. It was decided today that Daniel D. Gibson, Theodore G. Tobish Jr., and Robert E. Gill Jr. will act as editors for the authors, Scott C. Schuette and W. Sullivan Gibson. We will have to do a lot of ghost writing as the authors intended it for the birding community as a handout as they stepped off the plane in St. Paul. We agreed to put it in scientific format. D. Gibson and Tobish agreed to do the accounts and I will write the introduction, setting, weather, oceanography, etc.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> book is *Birds of the Channel Islands* from Paul Collins. It's looking for a co-publisher. It's done, which I haven't seen, but I have a very thorough outline of it. Right now, he is trying to put it in *Studies in Western Birds* format. He alluded it was out for peer review.

**Kimball:** This has been on a shared site for a bunch of people to review for a few months. I have seen it; it is very thorough.

**Bob:** The 3<sup>rd</sup> book is a compendium of essays by David Leatherman, which appeared for the last 2 decades in *Colorado Birds*. Catherine (Cat) Waters put me onto these. I love his writing style; it crosses over from the popular to the scientific. I have .pdfs of about 60 of them. We will whittle this down to about 40.

All of this is explained in the prospectus pieces I have prepared. I am trying to keep these within the 300-400 page range, similar to the *Gamble and St. Lawrence* book and the *Status and Trends* book. Costs should be similar, but inflation has crept in over the last few years. It is premature to prepare budgets. These are scholarly endeavors and will bode well for the organization.

**John H.:** Those of you who have been involved in this before, I ask if the process would be that the Pubs Committee works with the prospectus and budgets and then presents them to the Board for approval?

**Kimball:** In the past the Board wouldn't weigh in until there are some actual expenses, at least an estimate, so that we can commit to going forward, recognizing that we will have to make the commitment before we know exactly what the expenses are going to be. The Board doesn't have any role in deciding which manuscripts will go forward.

**John H.:** That makes sense to me. **ACTION ITEM:** I would ask that the Pubs Committee think about that, before any of these come to the Board as a budget request, that you have some kind of plan for when the volumes would appear, so we have a sense of thinking ahead about it, i.e., these 2 will be in 2024, and the next one will be in 2025, etc.

**Bob:** Right now, all 3 could come up at the same time. It would be nice to stagger them just for the workload. We talked about the *Birds of the Pribilof Islands* coming in 2025.

**Shaun:** How would we promote these books? I worry that we don't want to have an inventory of a book, or not enough inventory of a book. Has the Committee explored Print on Demand and how that might work. For example, we are storing many copies of our books right now in a warehouse in Kansas.

**Bob:** I am of the demographic where I like to have something in my hands, but I realize I am an outlier. Print on Demand might be nice. We will have to make these decisions down the road based on cost. **ACTION ITEM:** I think more importantly, whatever format it appears in, we need to do a better job of making it available to an audience, just the fact that the titles are out there, including Google Scholar. We need to get these books reviewed and get these reviews out there in the mainstream literature.

**Shaun:** We have many institutions that are members. Could we offer books at a discount? I am curious how we promote the books. i.e., I am having Maci bring several copies of each of the books to the WFO/CFO meeting, so we are showing that we have the books and that they are available. I think we have these flurries of activity where someone bought 10 books, but it is hit or miss. I'm not sure we have a way of promoting them in a way that gets the word out.

**Robin:** I agree with Shaun. It's very hard to determine how many copies to print, but if you have Print on Demand it takes away that dilemma. It gives people the opportunity to buy a book like Bob was talking about, yet you don't have to have a space where to store all these books. Financially it's a plus too.

#### **Newsletter: Judith Dunham**

**Report:** The next newsletter is Summer, and I sent out an email last week. We will have a report from Andy on the Birdathon with photos. We will have a report on the Tricolored Blackbird Conservation Program from the Dan Airola who received funding from the Birdathon.

**Jon D. ACTION ITEM:** I will contact Dan Airola and I will copy John H., Judith, Andy, and Shaun and tell him we are ready to give him the \$5,000.

**Judith:** We wanted an article in the newsletter and the companion piece, the Birdathon, to give some notice to all the members and all the people who donated, i.e., this is where the money is going and how it will be used. Dan Airola will have to write it. The deadline is June 16<sup>th</sup>. so it is coming right up. There will be an announcement of the new grant recipients, and 2 reports from past grant recipients. John Harris and I are going to trade back and forth a draft about the Xema Society, after which it will go to Shaun and Robin to review. It will have 2 bylines, John H., and Robin. I am doing a short piece on WFO's logo, the Sabine's gull. I talked to Guy McCaskie about that. Teresa Connell is doing 2 interviews with young birders. The interviews have been fabulous. She will continue them in the next issue. We will also have a reminder of the podcast that Teresa was instrumental in producing.

**Robin:** It would be nice to have a picture of the big \$5,000 check, but I don't think we can do that by the 16<sup>th</sup>. We should wait until the presentation.

**Judith:** We can do a blast and tell everybody.

**Jon:** How do you envision the Summer issue as to what is said about Xema by Robin and John H. compared to what I would write in the Fall? How would I spin it differently?

**Judith:** Jon D., yours would be personal. (Why you decided to join, why are you giving a bequest.) We decided (John H. and I) that we really needed the big announcement from the organization. The reason we have somebody who has a bequest for WFO is because of the very brief mention at the end of the last newsletter. So, this is going to be the big announcement from the organization.

4:40pm

**Meetings: John H.**

**Colorado:**

**John H.** Attendance is over 200 already for the joint CFO and WFO conference.

**Maci:** We are still doing the pre-convention camping trip July 17-19 for 20 participants which include students, parents and some Board members and me. We will be hiking and birding in the mornings on Tuesday and Wednesday before the conference starts. We also have arts and crafts in the afternoon, or they can do whatever they want. Graciously WFO is paying for meals and the campsite for 2 nights. We are also working on logistics for people shuttling in from Denver airport. I will be taking videos of this event.

**Don M.:** We have limited field trip leaders as of now. We are getting feedback from people who try to get on trips which are already booked. **ACTION ITEM:** Anybody have any ideas for field trip leaders even if it is a secondary leader? We have a CFO leader on these trips right now, maybe we can increase the participants with more leaders. If anyone is willing to volunteer let me know.

**San Diego:**

**John H.:** We talked about doing our next conference in San Diego in the fall of 2024. I am working on setting up a planning committee. The end of September (28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>) or beginning of October (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>) seems like a good time.

**Dan King:** It's a great time to be in San Diego bird-wise. We will start looking for venues and hotels and availability of folks to volunteer.

**Phil:** Any of those weekends is fine but we should decide because if we are going to have a reception at the Museum, as we did in 2014, we need to make the reservation as soon as possible as groups reserve the museum way in advance. In 2014 we had the reception on a Thursday night.

**Jon D.:** Usually Sea and Sage Audubon has a boat trip on that Saturday or Sunday. I will check with Gail Richards, the President. That would siphon off a lot of people, including me. Also, of all the Audubons they have one of the best youth programs. The San Diego Conference might be something the Sea and Sage could participate in. Also, Tom Blackman offered to help.

**Dan K.:** I spoke with Charlene Glacie, and she is willing to help. San Diego has pelagics in September so we can coordinate with them.



**John H.:** **ACTION ITEM:** I will start the process rolling. Maybe we can have a Board decision electronically to get moving on that. Jen Hajj emailed me recently with a couple of recommendations based on her experience in San Diego with organizing the San Diego Bird Festival, so we have some information to start with.

### **Student Programs**

**John H.:** Wendy is not here nor is Teresa. We did fill all our 10 student scholarships, 8 younger birders and 2 college students coming to the conference. We also awarded 4 grants this year. The Board approved 3 grants, but while we were in the process of reviewing the 18 proposals, an anonymous donation was received for the purpose of adding a 4<sup>th</sup> grant. All have a newsletter article as part of their projects. I can send out a quick report in an email. The people who worked on the Committee this year were me, Ed Pandolfino, and Susan Gilliland. I had put on the agenda for Teresa to report on a podcast. **ACTION ITEM:** I had some comments that asked that when we have the podcast to post it on the website and make it clear that it is a student program oriented podcast. The initial presentation wasn't clear that it was coming from student programs.

### **Field Trips:**

**Shaun:** We have had multiple trips this year and our revenue from the Cuba trip was \$8,000 and the Costa Rica trip was \$10,000.

**Jon D.:** I will be leading a trip to Wisconsin in June of 2024.

**John H.:** The way we have done field trips has been varied. We've had trips within our area of anything from a 2 day trip to a long 10 day trip and the way those trips have been organized is varied too. There was almost no Board discussion regarding the international trips, which meant I didn't know how they were supposed to go. Largely they involved working with a tour company or tour guide in the country where the tour was taking place. They handled everything, and the WFO person went along as a leader and worked with the tour company to develop the itinerary, but it seemed like the only involvement of WFO was to collect some money at the end. The Costa Rica trip this year got a little bit complicated. We did not know that we were actually going to have to handle the money until pretty late in the process. **ACTION ITEM:** After that experience, I thought we probably needed to develop some guidelines about how we organize these trips so that we know what is coming in advance. I sent this to the Board and maybe we need more time for that. We need to have a timeline so that things are done far enough in advance and there is not some last minute scrambling. Some of the domestic trips in the past involved a lot of volunteer work, i.e., Lena Hayashi, Dave Quady, Ed Pandolfino. They all helped in organizing those trips too. In the last year our Field Trip Committee has not been very active. We felt we should standardize the way in which we do some of these things.

**Phil:** The number one problem is that field trips always get put at the end of the Board meeting, so they get short shrift. As you probably know Kurt Leushner suggested that we do a field trip to Colombia in August of 2024. So, I hope that is a far enough advance notice and it is the kind of time we would need to move forward with an idea like that. I have worked a lot with Debbie from Holbrook. She and Kurt and I got together and discussed ideas and possible itineraries, so she provided a proposal for a very nice itinerary although the costs would be \$6,000 including the donation. Kurt and I would like to get feedback from the Board. Should we go forward with this, being organized by a well-established company? There wouldn't be a lot of work on our end but whether this is still within our scope and if that kind of money is comfortable to charge for this trip.

**John H.:** Has there ever been any kind of a thought about a percentage for the donation.

**Jon D.:** I always thought it was roughly about \$700 but the length would vary rather than a per day expense.

**Shaun:** Wouldn't it depend on the cost too, a percentage?

**Jon D.:** We are not going to cost out everything for the Wisconsin trip and then take a percentage of that price. So, John H. you are saying we should come up with procedures.

**Robin:** We talked about this in the Finance Committee meeting we just had. I think we should concentrate on field trips within the Western Field Ornithology purview, i.e., pelagic trip in Washington state. This would encourage us to get out to the various states and create interest within the membership and PR for WFO. We could try to get more members in the western states. It wouldn't be as difficult to arrange as it would be for an international trip.

**John H.:** **ACTION ITEM:** We need to resurrect a field trip committee that comes up with ideas like that and find people who are willing to lead them.

**Jon D.:** **ACTION ITEM:** My suggestion is to have a zoom meeting to just come out with parameters on field trips, rather than to throw it to the full Board.

**John H.:** **ACTION ITEM:** I will try to put together a zoom meeting with some people, and other people on the Board can tell me if they are interested. Phil, Jon D., Kurt, and maybe some others might be interested.

**John H.:** If you want to hire somebody to do the work then you must define what that is and then you must increase the pricing. For example, for the Siskiyou trip that we did, I probably put a hundred hours into that, i.e., organizing the hotels, the food, transportation, etc. Of course, a professional would take 25 hours. So, if you want the leaders to put in 100 hrs. and then lead the trips, you won't attract as many leaders and maybe they think that it would not be such a good idea to do the trip after all. **ACTION ITEM:** We will take this discussion to a smaller group.

05:07pm

**Nominations:**

**John H.:** We have 4 people departing from the Board this year, Andy Munro, Wendy Beers, and Susan Gilliland have finished their terms; and Matt Baumann had 1 year left on his term, but because of family reasons has decided to leave the Board at this time. Normally we do the Board turnover during the conference and this year we decided not to have a Board meeting at the Conference, and the Conference is earlier than normal. We are not ready to do this Board transition today, but we do have 4 nominees; 3 of them are confirmed. I think we should be able to have information on the Board nominees to everyone electronically probably the time before the Conference. We could do an electronic vote of the Board to accept those nominees, or we could push that to an early Fall meeting in early September after the Summer Conference. We are not prepared to do it today.

**Kimball:** Remember that the bylaws state that the membership must approve the slate so that makes it a little trickier. If you don't have a slate before the meeting, there are ways to get around it, but keep in mind that we require the membership approval.

**John H.:** I think what we did during the pandemic year was that we had a little zoom meeting that approved the slate of Directors then. I will check my notes as to how we did that before. We could do something like that.

**Jon D.:** What's the problem with doing it at the Conference in Colorado? You could probably dispense with it there satisfactorily during the announcements.

**John H.:** We don't have a Board meeting this year at the conference. We could do an electronic vote before that or do it during announcements.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

5:10pm

### **Board Retreat:**

**John H.:** It is something we have talked about doing off and on for a couple of years. We wanted to have some goals for what we want to do with the funds that we are raising, also building membership; thinking about how to handle the funds that we have. Some of those things were discussed at our 2019 retreat but quite a bit of time has elapsed since then and almost the entire Board has turned over. It is a good idea to have some sort of retreat. Perhaps we could do that in the fall. Having an in person retreat is tough given how widespread our group is geographically. A couple of options would be to have an in person group, but then try to have the whole session be available virtually for others, or to do the whole thing virtually. **ACTION ITEM: Before the retreat we would want a little planning group so that we have some targeted discussion points. Any thoughts about that or should I push ahead a start a planning group?**

**Jon D.:** John H., you did the last one in Zzyzx. Kurt could set it up with the institute there.

**Elisabeth:** I think it would be a great idea to have a retreat whether it be virtual or in person. I heard some earlier commentary on the idea of a Strategic Plan. I know planning is not in everybody's interest when you are on the Board. It can be fairly painless when it is done in a coordinated fashion. And this is a good way of doing that. I was looking at the \$450,000 that is sitting there and planning field trips and youth programs, etc., and I feel like it might be good to have a document that says, what you are going to do for i.e., the youth programs, the field trips, etc., going through point by point. That might be a good agenda for a work retreat. Maybe I should not have mention Strategic Planning and just say, let's have a plan or just have a strategy. I also want to go back to how much do we want to include Mexican partners, etc. All that needs to be looked at from a global perspective.

**John H.:** That's a perfect example of things that we hardly have time to discuss.

**Elisabeth:** In a couple of days, we could go through the whole thing in the global picture of WFO. How much do we want to invest. That would be a good exercise.

**Shaun:** I think we should also have it facilitated by someone outside the Board. It would be a better outcome for us.

**Kristie:** Maybe not everyone on the Board is familiar with exactly what Strategic Planning is; it is a procedure that you hire consultants for.

**Elisabeth:** I suspect WFO has gone through 2/3 of this already, i.e., mission statement, rules of conduct, etc. Ideally, I would like to see is a list of high priorities and where are we going to invest this amount of money. As a Director of a nonprofit, this is what I am always looking for. What are

we are going to make a priority. I certainly have input on that, but I think that that would be even more important for an organization that doesn't have a lot of staff.

**Maci:** It was my experience working with nonprofits, that it's helpful for me to hear how I should divide my time and what are the priorities of the organization. It would help to know how much time it will take to get certain projects and focus areas done and what are we doing in the next 5 years. What are our goals and then we can work on fundraising goals. And how much staff time should be allocated to doing those kinds of things.

**Elisabeth:** I like the idea of a Board retreat where we can discuss all those things. If anybody is interested in working with strategic thinking on nonprofits, there are certainly folks who can facilitate these sessions, but I am not trying to push it. It would be a good idea, given that you have some money to spend. Spend it wisely, don't spend it on the first thing that comes to mind.

**John H.:** **ACTION ITEM:** Maybe I will try to put together a little planning group to come up with a proposal for the Board. There is nothing to vote on today because we don't have a specific date or a specific proposal.

**Motion to adjourn made by Don M., seconded by Robin, and passes unanimously.**