

**THE OTTAWA FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB
MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING**

May 28, 2012

Fletcher Wildlife Garden Interpretation Centre, CEF, Ottawa, 7:00 p.m.

Chair: Ann MacKenzie

Council Members Present: Annie Bélair, Fenja Brodo, Dan Brunton, Don Hackett, Diane Lepage, Rémy Poulin, Jeff Saarela, Henry Steger, Ken Young, Eleanor Zurbrigg

Council Members Absent: Carolyn Callaghan, Barbara Chouinard, David Hobden, Diane Kitching, Karen McLachlan Hamilton, Jeff Skevington

Guests: Rob Lee (Chair of the Macoun Club) and Ian Davidson (Executive Director of Nature Canada)

1. Minutes of the April 16, 2012 meeting

Changes to be made: Ann MacKenzie's name must be added to the list of absent Council members and the initials "Sk." or "Sa." must be added to specify if the minutes are referring to Jeff Skevington or Jeff Saarela.

Moved by A. Bélair/F. Brodo that the
April 16th minutes be accepted with these modifications.

Carried

2. Treasurer's Report K. Young

Expense Authorization Procedures

The by-laws of the OFNC require expense authorizations to be signed by committee chairs prior to cheques being issued. For some years, this process has not been followed, in order to speed up payment of bills. The Treasurer issues cheques once he or she is satisfied that the expense is legitimate, after consultation with committee chairs if necessary. The actual expense authorizations are then signed when committee chairs attend Council meetings. They are then forwarded to the Club's bookkeeper.

This results in significant delays in bookkeeping, which then delays the production of comprehensive financial reports.

Motion: That the Treasurer be authorized to sign expense authorization forms once he or she is satisfied that they are legitimate.

Moved by K. Young /E. Zurbrigg

Carried

3. Changes within Council

Ann announced that Yi Zhang is leaving Council since she and her family are moving to Calgary.

Rémy had also announced, prior to the meeting, that he is now the Birds Committee rep on Council since Chris Traynor will not be coming to Council meetings anymore.

4. Security Policy regarding Volunteers Working with Young People

Ann reminded Council that the main reason we are dealing with this at this point is for good governance: Council needs to document what is done in terms of safety and security to demonstrate that it is exercising due diligence.

Ken said that with our current insurance company, a Directors and Officers Insurance would cost \$660/year + PST. This insurance would provide protection in case the OFNC is sued for something not covered by the general liability insurance. However, he indicated that the policy might only apply to Council. Ann added that if we bought this insurance, it would need to make sure it applies to Macoun Club leaders and possibly all the other trip leaders as well.

ACTION: Ken to find out from the insurance company if all trip leaders are or could be included in the Directors and Officers Insurance.

Diane K. had circulated a draft of the Macoun Club policy as well as a draft of the practices to Council for comments. Rob said that the tweaks proposed were accepted. He highlighted that the policy must be a short and general statement, stating that the Macoun Club will be safe. The practices, on the other hand, must be allowed to change and cannot be set in stone.

Ann read the latest version of the policy out loud.

Motion: That Council accepts the *Macoun Field Club Policy with Regards to Field Trips (2012)*, to be accompanied by the *Macoun Field Club Practices (2012)*.

Moved by R. Lee /F. Brodo

Carried

A copy of the *Macoun Field Club Practices* had also been circulated. Council agreed that to show due diligence, police checks must be repeated every 10 years as indicated in current draft of the Practices.

Council then approved the *Macoun Field Club Practices (2012)*, which are to be attached to the *Macoun Field Club Policy with Regards to Field Trips (2012)*, as tabled on the understanding that changes can be made. They are to be reviewed and approved by Council in May of every year.

5. Presentation on the 2013 BirdLife World Congress by Ian Davidson

The 2013 BirdLife World Congress will take place in Ottawa on June 20-22 2013 and will include 3 days of internal strategic planning on June 17-19. All are invited to attend the public sessions on June 20-22. Ian invited the OFNC to set up a booth during the fair where the club activities and the CFN can be promoted. He also explained that volunteers will be needed to help out at during

the congress and to lead field trips, and asked for the OFNC's help. Council agreed to put an announcement on the website and in the October issue of T&L to recruit volunteers; Ian confirmed that he will be able to send a more specific list of tasks to include in the announcement.

Rémy will also be meeting with the CEO of BirdLife International to discuss the OFNC's involvement further.

6. Black Out, Speak Out

"Black Out, Speak Out" was organized by ENGOs reacting to the federal budget's changes to environmental legislation, and cutbacks to programs involving environmental research, national parks programs and similar activities. It will consist of darkening website homepages on Monday, June 4, and replacing them with a message of support for better environmental laws and our right to defend them. Council agreed that the OFNC should participate.

7. Ontario Nature Regional Meeting on May 5

Diane L. gave the highlights of the meeting. She emphasized that the Kingston Field Naturalists said that the management plan for the Amherst Island Owl Woods –which the OFNC had financially supported– is nearly complete. There was also a lot of frustration expressed against both the federal and provincial budgets for environmental programs.

8. Advertisements in Trail & Landscape

Ann and Don said that except for Lee Valley who replied that they were not interested in buying an ad in T&L, none of the businesses that received a letter have responded. It was agreed that we should follow up with phone calls.

Ken asked if we should let businesses advertise on the OFNC website. This would, for example, allow them to post weekly specials. Ann and Don agreed that as part of the follow up to the letters, they should ask businesses if they would prefer to advertise on the website.

Another thing to consider is to put a blurb on the website announcing to businesses that they can pay to have an ad printed in T&L. Council will discuss after Don reports back on his phone calls with businesses.

9. Dealing with Large Crowds at Field Trips

On Earth Day (April 22, 2012), more than 70 people showed up for Dave and Carolyn Seburn's walk on amphibians and reptiles at Mud Lake.

The Excursions and Lectures Committee therefore decided to plan more activities and have more leaders for Earth Day. They are also considering organizing a workshop for trip leaders, which would include tips on how to manage such large crowds.

10. OFNC Archives

Everyone is still encouraged to bring material for archiving to Dan who will then forward it on to Carolyn Williams.

11. Committee Reports

See [Annex 1](#) for the Fletcher Wildlife Garden report.

12. Motion to adjourn:

Moved by D. Lepage/J. Saarela that the meeting be adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

CARRIED

Recording Secretary: A. Bélair

Meetings in 2012:

June 18

September 17

October 15

November 19

December 10?

**Report for Fletcher Wildlife Garden
2012 05 28**

The season is now well under way with preparations for our plant sale on Saturday June 2. The working groups on Tuesday mornings, Wednesday evenings and Friday mornings are all operating. Our association with Volunteer Ottawa has produced 2 individual volunteers and a planned visit by a group of Fulbright scholars. The group from Price-Waterhouse who has come for several years now, is due on June 1. A new group from Microsoft (via Evergreen Foundation) came on May 24 and planted trees in the Ravine. With the removal of a lot of weed trees last year we still have space to fill even after their efforts. The Monarch Waystation will be planted with some plants being grown for us by Budd Gardens and paid for with our prize money/grant from Fido/Evergreen. We thought Evergreen was sending us another group from Molson to do invasive species work but that has been cancelled. All these working groups provide funding to support their work so in the case of the cancelled Molson group we have been promised the funds will still arrive.

An entomologist at AAFC is conducting an insect survey. There are a number of bee boxes and collecting cups scattered around the property. Please do not interfere with them if you find them.

FWG is now publishing a newsletter as well as two different blogs which will give you more information on what is happening at FWG.

submitted by David Hobden