

THE OTTAWA FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BoD)
MINUTES OF MEETING
September 18, 2017

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

Chair: Diane Lepage

Directors Present: Annie Bélair, Jeff Saarela, Owen Clarkin, Gordon Robertson, Henry Steger, Ted Farnworth, Lynn Ovenden, Jakob Mueller, Ann MacKenzie, Remy Poulin, Eleanor Zurbrigg, Fenja Brodo, Diane Kitching

Birds Committee Liaison: Marc Patry (absent)

Other OFNC Members: Anouk Hoedeman and Susan Phillips, Safe Wings Ottawa

1. Minutes of the June 2017 Meeting

Moved by Lynn Ovenden/ Fenja Brodo that the June 2017 minutes be accepted with two corrections.

CARRIED

2. Business arising from minutes

3. Communications

4. Issues for Discussion or Decision

a) Safe Wings

Last spring, at the suggestion of the Bird Committee, the Board asked the leaders of Safe Wings Ottawa to develop a committee and Terms of Reference, as are required for other major programs of the OFNC. Safe Wings Ottawa is a program to reduce bird mortality from window collisions; it has been coordinated by Anouk Hoedeman and Sarah Kirkpatrick-Wahl and has a mailing list of 132 volunteers, 10 of whom are very active. The group has drafted Terms of Reference (attached as Annex A) which were read aloud to Directors. They are forming a committee including a representative to the Board of Directors (Anouk), a secretary (Susan Phillips) and treasurer (Heather Bryson); a list of committee members will be sent to Directors for the Board's October 16 meeting.

Moved by Anne MacKenzie/ Jakob Mueller that Safe Wings become a committee of the OFNC.

CARRIED

b) Birds of Nunavut

Further to discussion in June 2017 of Tony Gaston's request that OFNC support publication of a new 700-page book on Birds of Nunavut, Directors remain supportive of the project and hope it will also result in e-book. Acknowledgement of OFNC's contribution should include OFNC's logo and website.

Moved by Jakob Mueller/ Jeff Saarela that the OFNC pledge \$10,000 for the publication of Birds of

Nunavut, contingent on acknowledgement of OFNC's contribution.

CARRIED

c) Installation of a plaque to commemorate James Fletcher

The heritage program of Parks Canada is installing a plaque near the large parking lot at Fletcher Wildlife Garden this fall. Henry and Ted met with Parks Canada officials in late August and agreed on the location of the plaque and the date for its unveiling. Parks Canada is responsible for the installation of the plaque, the ceremony on Nov.9, 2017 and a reception thereafter. Henry is working on OFNC's sole responsibility, namely, to develop a guest list.

d) Change to setting of membership year

The Membership Committee proposes to change how membership year is set (and de-activated) in the database and the timing of renewal notices (see Annex B). The committee has long adhered to a membership year that goes from August 1 to July 31. Henry proposes to change the period of membership to a fiscal year basis, i.e. those joining between October 1, 2017 and September 30, 2018 would be given a membership number of 2018xxx. He also proposes a quarterly schedule for sending out renewal notices and de-activating membership for those who do not renew. This will have the effect of spreading membership revenue more evenly throughout the year.

Moved by Henry Steger/ Ann MacKenzie that the OFNC:

(i) adopt a fiscal year basis for the setting of its membership year, and that

(ii) apply a quarterly schedule for the process for sending out renewal notices and for deactivating non-renewing memberships.

CARRIED

e) Ontario Invasive Plant Conference

Iola Price, President of the Ontario Invasive Plant Council, invites OFNC to be a sponsor of the upcoming conference at the Ottawa Conference and Events Centre on October 10-11, 2017. A benefit of sponsorship is a couple of free registrations; FWG Committee could decide to whom these should be given. Directors would like to see a report back to the club in T&L or a blog or verbally to the monthly meeting. Lynn offered to bring OFNC's display and banner for the expo.

Moved by Fenja Brodo/Jakob Mueller that directors waive the usual requirement to allow one month's consideration prior to a major spending decision.

CARRIED

Moved by Fenja Brodo/ Jakob Mueller that the OFNC provide a \$1000 sponsorship for the conference.

CARRIED

f) Budget

Over the summer, the Finance Committee collected input from Club committees and drafted a budget for OFNC Fiscal Year 2018. Rémy presented this draft budget to the Board noting that OFNC's

financial situation is okay. He thinks the deficit will probably be much less than forecast, judging from the FY Actuals of recent years.

When reviewing the budget submissions earlier this month, the Finance Committee decided to **not** include the three following items in the draft budget until the Board has considered them:

- Publications Committee - 10K for the CFN re-design. This item was included in the previous budget but not actioned. Jeff explained that the journal's look and feel has not changed in 35 years and it is time for a fresh new look, nothing major. He expects it can happen quickly. They will also change the printing process from offprint to print-on-demand.

Moved by Jeff Saarela/ Gord Robertson that OFNC budget up to \$10,000 for re-design of CFN.
CARRIED

- Events Committee - 3.1K for Trip Leaders' Honouraria, i.e. 62x\$50. Last year, several former trip leaders declined the committee's invitation to lead another walk. The committee thinks trip leaders might be more likely to lead again if they were given some tangible acknowledgement of their time and expense in leading a trip. They initially proposed adding funds for \$50 honoraria for trip leaders to the draft budget, as this parallels the practice of the Macnamara Field Naturalists in Arnprior. However, Jakob has recently learned that most other naturalist clubs do not provide monetary recognition to trip leaders. Owen noted that groups hosting walks other than naturalist clubs typically do. Other ways of recognizing trip leaders were mentioned, such as a thank-you card, \$10-20 gas/coffee card or a collection of donations from trip participants.

Moved by Gord Robertson/ Fenja Brodo that OFNC budget \$1200 for \$20 honoraria for trip leaders.
CARRIED

- Safe Wings - 2K for Travel/Conferences need not be in the budget until Safe Wings requests funds for a specific travel/conference. At that time, the board will make a decision.

g) Amend Funds of the OFNC

The Finance Committee tabled the attached proposal to Amend the Funds of the OFNC (Annex C). The proposed changes will reduce the number of funds and needless complexity of OFNC's accounting framework; it is supported by the Treasurer and the accountant. The board will be asked to decide on this proposal at the October meeting with separate motions for each fund.

h) WIFI at FWG Interpretive Centre

Volunteers, speakers and OFNC committee members frequently need access to the internet when they are at FWG. Few people know how to use the Bell Mobility device on the computer and it is seldom used. OFNC is on Bell Mobility's smallest Flex plan (\$10 for up to 100MB/month with additional cost for overage). Use of the connection for a 1 hr meeting on August 10 resulted in an \$30 overage charge on the August invoice. An alternative way to access the internet is through the data plan on a personal cell phone; if you turn on 'wifi hotspot' on the cell phone, you can 'tether' your laptop or tablet to the cell phone connection. A 6 GB/month plan with Xplornet costs \$80/month.

5. Committee Updates

a) **Awards** - Nominations are now open for OFNC awards.

b) **Birds** - Directors commended Chris and Henry for coordinating OFNC's response to DND's request for a list of members who may call DND when they want to walk the causeway to Shirley's Bay.

c) **Conservation**

Owen is participating on an interprovincial project to document rare plants and a project to conserve a local stand of old growth white pine. He noted that five of the six most prominent ash tree species in North America (including white, green and black ash) entered the IUCN Red List yesterday as Critically Endangered – just one step from going extinct.

c) **Education and Publicity**

Bug Day was a huge success. OFNC's microscopes and insect displays attracted constant attention. 12 members volunteered to help for the day in response to Henry's e-blast; they had fun.

d) **Publications**

Directors commended Annie and the T&L team for the July 'Special 50th Anniversary' issue of T&L.

5. New Business

a) Henry wants to know what OFNC got for the Communications Plan.

b) Committee annual reports should be completed in November for approval at the December board meeting.

6. **Motion to adjourn** by Fenja Brodo/ Rémy Poulin. **CARRIED**

Recording Secretary: Lynn Ovenden

Meetings in 2017

October 16

November 20

December 11

Diane LePage
President
Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

Date

Lynn Ovenden
Recording Secretary
Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

Date

Annex A.

September 18, 2017

Safe Wings Ottawa

Authority

A Standing Committee of the Club
Constitution article 9
By-laws sections 8 (b), 11(a)(ii)

Composition

Committee members must be members of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club.

Duties

1. To engage in activities related to reducing bird mortality from window collisions.

Responsibilities

1. To support local efforts to prevent bird-building collisions through research, education and rescue;
2. To maintain a database of bird-building collisions in the Ottawa-Gatineau area;
3. To maintain permits for Safe Wings activities from the Canadian Wildlife Service and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry;
4. To raise funds for Safe Wings activities through donations and grants;
5. To provide a local response to issues related to bird-building collisions, and;
6. To advise the Club on issues related to bird-building collisions.

Annex B. Proposal for Changes to Membership Committee Procedures

The Membership Committee proposes to change the procedures by which it operates. The main impact on the Club is that membership revenue which now comes in mainly in November – January would be spread out more over the fiscal year. Members would see little day-to-day impact while being assured the full benefit of their membership.

Background:

It is in general thought that Club membership is on a “calendar basis”. In fact, the Membership Committee has long adhered to a membership year that goes from August to July of the following year, a practice which I have continued. For example, someone who joined August 1, 2016 received a membership number 2017xxx. Indeed, the Annual Report for Membership covered this period until three years ago. I added another layer of Complexity by changing the Annual Report to cover the Club fiscal year of October to September.

Membership renewal notices have always been sent in November to everyone. Before the use of email, these renewal notices were mailed and a “Second Notice” was mailed in late February. This practice is continued for members without email - only 48 such members in 2017. For several years now, most membership renewal notices have been sent in November by email followed by a second email reminder in late January and then a final renewal notice by mail in early March.

Until recently, non-renewing member were de-activated in late June. As a result, many received five or six issues of Trail & Landscape in their last year. Two years ago I began to de-activate non-renewing members in March. Now many fewer receive five issues of Trail & Landscape and no one now receives six issues of Trail & Landscape. The down side is that a very few now receive only three issues of Trail & Landscape but since this impacts only non-renewing members, no one has commented. I have unilaterally made a change this year to ensure everyone who has not renewed for 2017 receives four issues of Trail & Landscape before they are de-activated.

Proposals

1. Fiscal Year Change

I propose formally changing the period of membership on a fiscal year basis such that only those joining after October 1, 2017 would be given a membership number 2018xxx.

In anticipation of your approval, I will continue to give membership numbers of 2017XXX for those joining the Club before October. If necessary, these numbers can easily be converted to the current scheme.

2. Renewal and De-activation Dates

For members having an email address, I propose sending out renewal notices four times a year as described below for membership year 2018:

Renewal Notice Date	Date for renewal
October 1, 2017	10/1/2017 to 12/31/2017
January 1, 2018	1/1/2018 to 3/31/2018
April 1. 2018	4/1/2018 to 6/30/2018

July 1, 2018	7/1/2018 to 9/30/2018
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In addition, members who haven't renewed within three months of a previous a notice date will receive a second notice on the following notice date as below:

Renewal Notice Date	Non_Renewal: Date of renewal or joining
January 1, 2018	10/1/2017 to 12/31/2017
April 1. 2018	1/1/2018 to 3/31/2018
July 1, 2018	4/1/2018 to 6/30/2018
October 1, 2018	7/1/2018 to 9/30/2018

I will no longer send a second renewal notice by mail to those who haven't renewed as described above.

Anyone not having renewed by the last day of the second notice period would be de-activated as below:

De-activation Date	Non_Renewal: Date of renewal or joining
March 20, 2018	10/1/2017 to 12/31/2017
June 20, 2018	1/1/2018 to 3/31/2018
September 20, 2018	4/1/2018 to 6/30/2018
December 20, 2018	7/1/2018 to 9/30/2018

The sole downside is that some non-renewing members would still receive 5 issues of T&L as at present and is limited to about 40 cases per year.

I propose to continue mailing renewal notices in November for the current 48 combined Individual, Family and Student members and send a second renewal notice by mail to those who haven't renewed by the end of February.

September 2017

Finance Committee Proposal to amend the funds of the OFNC

Current Situation

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club currently manages 8 funds that are internally restricted and one fund that is externally restricted (The Martha Camfield Endowment Fund). Most of the money received and spent by the club is outside of these funds. They were set up for a variety of reasons over time but the result is to keep a pot of money separate from the rest of the business of the club. Other than the externally restricted fund which we are legally required to keep separate, the rest of the funds are maintained at the discretion of the Board.

Proposal

Reduce the number of funds from 8 to 3. A Director's resolution is required for each fund that is being changed. The Board should first consider these changes at the September Board meeting and vote on it at the October Board meeting. If possible any changes should be reflected in the accounts for the Fiscal year 2017-18.

Rationale

Each fund is described and discussed separately for individual consideration. However, the overall objective is to simplify our accounting framework and financial statement presentation. At present it is unnecessarily complex with little practical benefit.

FUNDS:

1. General Reserve for Contingencies – this was established by the club to fund outstanding operating expenses should the Club discontinue its operations. The balance is maintained at \$ 100,000 and there is no change over the year.
Recommendation: Close this fund. Given the current financial situation of the club there is no need to keep \$100,000 aside to cover liabilities upon dissolution.
2. Fletcher Wildlife Garden Fund – This fund supports habitat development at the FWG with income from directed donations and proceeds from the plant sale.
Recommendation: Maintain this fund. This is the most active fund with dedicated revenues and expenditures. It ensures that the funds raised are used for the FWG and not merged with overall finances. Balance Sept 30, 2016 - \$15,260
3. Manning Fund – This fund was established as a result of a bequest and the interest generated is used to assist authors to publish articles in the Canadian Field Naturalist.
Recommendation: Maintain this fund. This fund helps track the extent of waived author's charges relative to the interest earned by the fund. In the future the Club may wish to consider doing this tracking just through separate account codes but for now there is sufficient balance in this fund to warrant it staying separate. Balance Sept 30, 2016 - \$ 111,260

4. Seedathon Fund – This fund gets revenue from the annual birdathon and in turn it purchases seed for the Club's bird feeders. **Recommendation: Close this fund.** Revenue from the birdathon can be tracked by a separate accounting code as can expenses for seed. There is no need to isolate these revenues and expenses from the general accounts. Balance Sept 30, 2016 - \$295
5. Anne Hanes Memorial Fund – This fund was established in memory of Anne Hanes, the founding editor of Trail & Landscape. The funds are used to finance a gift for the winner, if there is one, of the Anne Hanes Natural History Award. **Recommendation: Close this fund.** The Club can easily afford the cost of a gift for an award winner without maintaining a separate fund. Balance Sept 30, 2016 - \$521.
6. De Kirline Lawrence Fund – This fund was established from a bequest from this popular author of nature books. It is supposed to be supplemented by annual donations and the proceeds used to support conservation efforts. **Recommendation: Close this fund.** This fund has been inactive for some time. There is no need to keep a separate fund to support conservation efforts that can be comfortably financed by the club at large. Balance Sept 30, 2016 - \$13,384.
7. Macoun Funds – There are two Macoun funds. The Martha Camfield Memorial fund is used to support special projects of the Macoun Field Club. The Macoun Baillie Birdathon fund was created from donations from the Baillie Birdathon and its purpose is to support bird research by a Macoun Field Club youth member. **Recommendation: Merge these two funds into one Macoun Fund.** There is little activity in either of these funds, certainly not enough to justify keeping two funds. Revenue comes from half of the interest from the externally restricted Martha Camfield Endowment fund. Balance Sept 30, 2016 - \$5,097 combined.

Prepared by: Ann MacKenzie