

**Meeting of the Board of Directors (BoD) of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club**  
**Monday October 19, 2020 – 7:00 p.m. Minutes**  
held through Zoom video conference  
during COVID-19 global pandemic

**Chair:** Diane Lepage

**Present:** Ken Young, Ted Farnworth, Ann MacKenzie, Eleanor Zurbrigg, Fenja Brodo, Annie Belair, Bob Cermak, Jakob Mueller, Elizabeth Moore, Diane Holmes, Dwayne Lepitzki, Anouk Hoedeman, Gord Robertson, Henry Steger, Owen Clarkin, Diane Kitching (for first part of meeting)

**Absent:** Bev McBride, Catherine Hessian

1. Approval of the Agenda – approved as circulated with the addition of:
  - 4b. Annual Business Meeting
  - 4c. Macoun Club Annual Report
  - 4d. Communications
2. Acceptance of Minutes from September 21, 2020  
**moved** by Elizabeth Moore, seconded by Jakob Mueller, that the minutes of the September, 2020 meeting be accepted. **CARRIED**
3. Treasurer's Report – Ann: The fiscal year end was September 30<sup>th</sup>. The required adjustments have been calculated and now the accounts are being finalized by the bookkeeper for the accountant. We cannot say yet if the pandemic working conditions will impact on our timelines for producing the financial statements.

We have entered into a new agreement with our bookkeeper, Plus Associates, starting November 1st. The cost of services will be increasing from \$400 per month (\$452 with tax) to \$647 per month (\$731 with tax) with the new agreement including the cost for preparing the year end reports. In total the annual cost will increase about 44% from about \$5,400 to \$7,764 before tax. This is a substantial increase which will be phased in over the first three months. Part of this new agreement is a commitment to specific service standards as an addendum (attached) to the engagement letter. We will explore our options in the new calendar year.

4. Issues for Discussion/Decisions
  - a. Budget 2020-2021 (attached) - Ken advised that there were two changes of consequence from the draft budget. The budget for bookkeeping had been increased (see Item 3 above). The Safe Wings revenue and expenses budget figures had also been changed after they had provided a detailed report regarding their activities. The anticipated deficit is now \$22,880 which is considered to be manageable.

**Moved** by Ken Young, seconded by Ann MacKenzie that the budget document distributed today be accepted as the budget for the fiscal year 2020-2021.  
**CARRIED.**

- b. Annual Business Meeting (ABM) – the ABM is scheduled for January 12, 2021. Jakob anticipates planning for the ABM through Zoom but wondered whether this is permissible under the Club’s constitution. Ken didn’t think there was anything in the constitution to prevent a virtual meeting. It was noted that other organisations, such as Ontario Nature and the Kingston Field Naturalists’ Club, had used Zoom for annual meetings. It was also noted that the Ontario Government has given carte blanche to organisations to conduct online meetings. Ken will look into Zoom electronic voting. Dwayne noted that the upcoming COSEWIC meeting will be on Zoom with electronic voting and volunteered to report on how this worked. It will be necessary to establish that people who vote are members. It was suggested that a Zoom meeting may attract a larger attendance than usual. It may be necessary to get the next level Zoom package which will allow up to 300 attendees. Jakob asked that anyone with ideas about added programming to augment the meeting get in touch with him.
- c. Macoun Club Annual Report – some members of the Board expressed concern about the contents of the report. Further discussion was deferred until the November meeting when all members will have had the opportunity to read the report.
- d. Communications – Diane had received a request from a member that the Club consider opening the FWG RC and allowing a picnic in the summer for seniors. Diane wondered whether this could be an annual event. Ted felt it was undesirable that the FWG become a “picnic area”. Gord advised that AAFC did not want any gatherings on the property, at least during the pandemic. Jakob suggested that, post pandemic, the Events Committee should consider having a “Summer Social”. Diane L was also in favour of this idea. Further consideration of the idea was deferred until Covid restrictions are lifted. Diane had also received a request from a teacher, Michael Leveille, who is doing a presentation on John Macoun and had asked for any promotional material from the Club. It was not clear exactly what he wanted and Diane will ask for clarification.

## 5. Committee Updates

- a. Awards – Eleanor reported that the committee is planning a Zoom meeting for December to discuss nominations. She encouraged Board members to consider possible nominations, especially for Honorary Member. There have been no nominations for Member of the Year. It may be that this award will not be made in this exceptional year but other service awards are available.
- b. Birds – Bob reported that Greg Zbitnew has drafted an update to the information on the website regarding where to bird in our region. He has also volunteered to update David Britton’s rare bird documentation and documentation of birds seen in the OFNC area on the website and keep it up to date. With respect to the Committee’s Annual Report, Bob was not sure that he should be the one to report on Facebook. Although he had commented on it in recent years, it had never been the intention that he or the committee should be responsible for this. As previously discussed, the Board was of the opinion that this responsibility should lie with the Education and Publicity Committee but it was acknowledged that this committee does not have the resources to take it on. It was noted that the Board had previously agreed to the formation of a communications

committee but that volunteers had not been identified to do this either. It was felt that the Club's Facebook activities should be reported and, under the circumstances, Bob agreed to continue to do this until another committee can do so. He may be able to find a volunteer to help with communications and he may discuss this with Gord.

Bob suggested that the Board discuss whether OFNC should have a committee that monitors the activities of the City and alerts the Club to any relevant concerns. He asked Ken for input and Ken acknowledged that, when he and his predecessor were Chairs of Conservation, they had taken more of an interest in the political aspects of conservation and less in the practical aspects of conservation. The current committee has taken the more practical approach by generating data e.g. locating species of concern, establishing inventories of natural spaces, etc. Owen is of the view that it is preferable for the OFNC to maintain an unbiased position by establishing scientific facts and then liaising with advocacy groups, as they have done with e.g. Ecology Ottawa and the Greenspace Alliance. Jakob agreed that the OFNC should be presenting a well balanced view but noted that the Club has been caught by surprise by some government initiatives. The idea of an advocacy sub-committee had been discussed previously. Ken felt that such a committee would have to have a very specific focus on areas not covered by other local advocacy groups. Owen advised that the committee did not have the necessary volunteers anyway. Bob wondered whether advocacy could be part of a communications committee with a role in monitoring government activity. Owen reiterated his concern that advocacy and an unbiased position were not compatible and Jakob agreed that the Club is taken seriously because of its measured approach. Anouk suggested that the Club should take advantage of some of the opportunities that do exist to participate in government consultations such that the Club does have a voice. Fenja agreed with Anouk and asked that she alert the Club to such opportunities. Jakob complimented Anouk on her advocacy work.

- c. Conservation – Owen reported that OFNC had signed onto a joint letter with the Ontario Field Ornithologists and Ontario Nature sent to the provincial government expressing strong opposition to ERO 019-1806: *proposal to expand the capture of wild raptors (birds of prey) by licensed falconers*. He noted that this reflected OFNC advocacy. Owen had met with two groups of Carleton University Environmental Science students regarding two undergraduate projects taken on under the guidance of Dr. Susan Aitken: 1) the impact of citizen science iNaturalist observations on rare species observations in the Ottawa district using Dan Brunton's 2005 list of flora as a gold standard and 2) a study of the death rate of rock elm. The Ottawa Stewardship Council and Janet Mason are also involved. The Committee is focusing on their red spruce survey in Voyageur Provincial Park. They will visit the park three times a month for rest of the year to try to cover the whole park. They also hope to extend this work with other parks e.g. Fitzroy PP, Rideau River PP, Gatineau Park. They had participated in the annual field survey of the High Lonesome Reserve near Pakenham, making some broad management recommendations and adding a couple of rare plant species to the Reserve's list. They had met with the Friends of Petrie Island and Janet Mason of the Ottawa Stewardship Council to wrap up a tree inventory of Petrie Island with a view to recommending future management. Owen will be meeting with representatives of Lavigne Natural Park near

Bourget who have requested help from OFNC with a first inventory. Dr. Robin Poole of the Cooper Marsh Conservators had requested support of their opposition to plans to build a campsite adjacent to marshland in the Cooper Marsh Conservation Area where rare birds, such as sandhill cranes and least bitterns, are found. Although this is outside the OFNC area, the Board felt that OFNC should support their opposition and Owen will follow up. Two planned visits to sites in Quebec had been cancelled due to coronavirus. The Committee is, however, keen to increase its collaboration with groups in Quebec.

Owen suggested the Club should try to recruit additional members to join committees so that the Club can better fulfill its mandate. He felt that a push to create virtual events over the winter would draw people in. He also felt that awareness of environmental issues was quite good through collaboration with allied organisations but noted that advocacy events and meetings regarding such issues were often held during the working week when it is difficult for many people to attend. He suggested a call for members of committees with more flexible schedules and those with specific interests rather than just a general call. Bob agreed that a general call often resulted in volunteers without an appropriate background and he preferred to invite volunteers with known skills. Diane H. suggested that, with respect to advocacy and conservation, knowing the City Councillors is the best way to gain information. The current Council does not prioritise conservation and green development and one needs to work with those councillors who are interested. Ann asked whether Diane would be prepared to help in this area. Diane said she could do this but sought assurance that OFNC is prepared to respond accordingly. She would be happy to meet with individuals who are prepared to act in cases where development is proposed in conservation areas. Anouk noted that one can sign up to receive newsletters from various organisations involved in planning. .

- d. Education and Publicity: Gord reported that he had given nine Brownies a tour of the FWG with Covid precautions. There are now 11 fall storyboards around the FWG. Gord has noticed people looking at the boards and then looking for the plants described. He is planning three winter storyboards. He has developed wildlife quests for Strathcona Park and is looking to develop more for other parks. They have lost one member, Emily Shearer, but recruited another volunteer.

Gord Robertson **moved**, seconded by Jakob Mueller, that Sarah Wray be accepted as a member of the Education and Publicity Committee. **CARRIED.**

- e. Ontario Nature Meeting: Jakob reminded the Board that OFNC had previously written a letter to the City opposing the proposed Brian Coburn Extension through a section of Mer Bleue, another example of OFNC advocacy. The NCC and other likeminded organisations had also opposed this project. Jakob was pleased to report that Ontario Nature has taken up this cause. He drew the Board's attention to an article about Mer Bleue in the last ON magazine.

- f. Events – Jakob reported that Bev, who was spearheading the virtual event initiative, has had to withdraw from a number of activities and that he has lost contact with another member. He plans to create some digital presentations and would like to create a YouTube account to post these events subsequently. This could also be used to archive previous material e.g. the workshop on fungal identification. Owen strongly supported this initiative. Ann established that this material would be available to the general public. Owen suggested that there should be a delay before posting so that Club members would get the benefit of seeing the presentations before non-members. Diane L had contacted Tamara Bloom and she is willing to join the Events Committee. Jakob advised that Lynn Ovenden has also agreed to join the Committee.
- Moved** by Jakob Mueller, seconded by Owen Clarkin, that Tamara Bloom and Lynn Ovenden be accepted as Members of the Events Committee. **CARRIED.**
- The meeting discussed various strategies for recruiting further volunteers for committees. Jakob invited anyone who knows anybody who might be prepared to do a presentation to contact him.
- g. Fletcher Wildlife Garden: Ted reported that the season has ended in the garden for a couple of the groups but Sandy will continue to work until the snow falls. Last week a group from Health Canada came to volunteer and next Saturday a CWF group is coming to plant some wildflower seeds. The entry mechanism on the front door of the RC is being changed. A magnetic photo ID card will be required to access the building and entry and exit will be recorded. Approximately 30 cards have been handed out initially. Use of the keys will be phased out. One new key will be issued which will be placed in the lock box with a different code known only to a couple of people for use in emergencies. Gord noted, and Ted agreed, that lots of people have been using the FWG this year, especially families who have discovered the garden during the pandemic. Hopefully this will translate into future interest in nature.
- h. Membership: Henry reported that membership is down considerably. If this is Covid related it should hopefully rebound if Covid is controlled but, if not, the Club will need to consider how to increase membership.

Henry had been advised by Chris Traynor in July that DND feels the Shirleys Bay access list is too long. Henry had sent those on the list an email asking if members would be prepared to have their names removed from the list if they did not visit the site. 38 members/52 family members had agreed to be removed. Chris had previously suggested that the Club should restrict the number of people who can be on the list. Bob suggested that the Club consider not inviting new members to have their names put on the list. If they subsequently express interest, their names could be added.

- i. Safe Wings: Anouk reported that the season is slowing down although it is still far ahead of last year in numbers. They are expecting the Bird Safe guidelines from city staff to go to Planning Committee on November 10 and to go to Council the following week.

- j. Publications: Annie confirmed that the October issue of T&L had been sent out and that she had a substantial number of articles for future issues.  
Dwayne reported that he had just received Vol. 134.2 of CFN and they have 10 manuscripts for Vol. 134.3 which they are well on the way to completing.
- k. Macoun Club – no report

6. Adjournment – there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Recording Secretary: Elizabeth Moore  
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Upcoming Meeting Dates

- November 16, 2020
- December 21, 2020
- January 18, 2021
- February 8, 2021
- March 15, 2021
- April 19, 2021

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Diane Lepage  
President  
Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

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Date

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Elizabeth Moore  
Recording Secretary  
Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

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Date

Addenda

1. Signed Bookkeeping Agreement with Plus Associates Bookkeeping Inc.
2. 2020-2021 Budget

## Addendum 1.

Addendum to Agreement between  
Plus Associates Bookkeeping Inc and  
The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club  
November 1, 2020

### **Regularly**

Plus Associates will update the OFNC accounts in QuickBooks Online on a Bi-Weekly basis, on every other Thursday:

1. Deposit Records which had been submitted up to that time will be entered.
2. Payments posted to Hubdoc up to that time will be entered in Quick Books and the related payment prepared (Photo or cheque) and sent to the Treasurer for approval and final processing.
3. The bank reconciliation for the previous month will be done by second Thursday of the month.
4. Any requested modifications required to the books, such as coding changes, that have been identified by the Treasurer will be entered.

### **HST Rebate Claim**

Plus Associates will prepare the claim for the HST Rebate within 5 weeks of the close of the rebate period (March 30 and Sept 30), submit it to CRA and send a copy to the Treasurer.

### **Budget**

The treasurer will provide Plus Associates with a copy of the budget approved by the Board of Directors by the end of October. Plus Associates will enter this information into Quick Books so that a report can be regularly generated showing the Profit and Loss statement with the comparable budget lines. This report will be available by the end of December.

### **At the fiscal year end, September 30<sup>th</sup>**

#### OFNC

Will provide Plus Associates no later than October 15<sup>th</sup> with documents detailing any required year end adjustments or entries related to:

1. Membership fees

Addendum 2

<b>OFNC Budget for FY 2020-21</b>		
<b>Expense or Revenue Item</b>	<b>2020-21 Budget</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Income</b>		
4005 Membership fees	27,000	
<b>Sales</b>		
4030 Sales - Education and Publicity	200	Sales of OFNC merchandise; proceeds of the Awards Night auction
4030 Sales - Fletcher Wildlife Garden	6,000	Proceeds of the Fletcher plant sale
4030 Sales - Trail & Landscape	200	Advertisements in T&L; sales of T&L
<b>Donations, bequests and grants</b>		
4105 Donations - Received - General + 4110 Donations - Unreceived	4,200	Donations not directed to any specific OFNC activity. (Received means that a charitable donation receipt was issued).
4105 Donations - Received - FWG	1,500	Donations directed to the Fletcher
4105 Donations - Received - Seedathon	500	Donations directed to the Seedathon
4109 Donations - Received - Safe Wings	6,000	Donations directed to Safe Wings
4120 Bequests	0	
<b>Canadian Field-Naturalist</b>		
4202-4210 CFN Subscriptions	19,000	
4220 CFN Author's Charges	28,000	Charges to authors for publishing in the CFN
4440 Interest	41,000	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>133,600</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>		
<b>Activity Expenses</b>		
5010-5060 Canadian Field-Naturalist	60,000	Cost of producing the CFN: editing, printing, mailing
5105 Trail & Landscape	23,000	Cost of producing T&L: editing, printing, mailing
<b>Fletcher Wildlife Garden</b>		
5202 Habitats	8,500	Outside work, tools, signs, mulch, etc.
5203 Fundraising	1,500	Plant sale related expenses
5230 General	700	Interpretive Centre expenses, trail maps, publications, books, etc.
5305 Awards Committee	300	Award certificate paper, frames, engraving, printing
5306 Awards Night	1,200	Food, hall rental, etc.
5310 Birds Committee	1,850	Bird seed for the OFNC feeders; Bird count costs



5311 Safe Wings Ottawa		
Regular operations	9,000	Operating expenses (2,000), Rescue and rehab supplies (3,500), Education (1,250), Conferences (750), Mileage (1,500)
Capital project	4,000	
Macoun Club		
5315 Macoun Club - General Fund	350	Little Bear magazine, binding Little Bears
5315 Macoun Club - Macoun Funds	300	Hats for members
5325 Education & Publicity	2,800	Bug Day, postage, Science Fair prizes, Youth summit
5330 Events	2,080	Speakers' honoraria; Out-of-town speakers' expenses; Incidental meeting expenses; Zoom webinar package
5340 Research Grants	15,000	
5670 Donations	5,000	Donation to MacSkimming Nature Centre
<b>Activity Expenses, Total</b>	<b>135,580</b>	
<b>Operating Expenses</b>		
5335 Membership Committee	1,200	
5605 Affiliation fees	450	our membership in Ontario Nature & Volunteer Ottawa
5615 Bookkeeper	8,300	
5620 Club Administration	850	Includes postage stamps, photocopying for the ABM; PO Box rental; travel & entertainment
5685 Insurance	1,800	
5645+5690 Paypal & Bank Charges	1,800	charges for financial services
5710 Professional fees	5,500	Annual financial statement review; CRA charity return; legal fees
5790 Website	500	Hosting fee (\$265), domain name registration (\$20), Zoom meeting package (200)
5790 Online advertising	500	For advertising on Facebook and other online sites
<b>Operating Expenses, Total</b>	<b>20,900</b>	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>156,480</b>	
<b>Net Revenues (Expenses)</b>	<b>-22,880</b>	