

Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club – Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, September 21, 2026 – 7:00 p.m. on Zoom
Minutes

Chair: Owen Clarkin

Present: Annie Bélair, Bob Bergquist, Lisa Chamney, Ted Farnworth, Christina Huppé for Janette Niwa, Susan Lehman, Ann MacKenzie, Bev McBride (minutes), Jakob Mueller, Gordon Robertson, Jessica Simms, Ken Young

Absent: Katriina Ilves, Emilia Michaud, Elizabeth Moore, Janette Niwa

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as circulated.

2. Acceptance of Minutes from the June 15, 2026, meeting

Moved by Bev McBride, seconded by Jessica Simms, that minutes of the June 15, 2026, Meeting be accepted. **CARRIED**

Ann advised the board that a report on the *in camera* part will follow.

3. Business arising from the minutes

Any matters raised here were also discussed, and thus included, under other items.

4. Communications

There were no communications.

5. Treasurer's Report

a) Ken circulated the following report by email:

Current Financial Processing

No issues

Year-End Financial Processing

Please send in any outstanding expense claims. I have received several recently in response to the last reminder — thank you.

b) Susan asked if she, on behalf of the Macoun Club, could purchase some books this fiscal year, as this item was not in the budget. Ken said it was fine to do so. If a purchase is not tied to a budget line item, it does not matter in which fiscal year it appears.

6. Issues for Discussion

a) Draft Budget 2026-2027 (Ann)

Ann provided the following notes, after her presentation and the discussion that took place. The minute taker agrees that it is a fair summary:

The Finance Committee distributed the first draft of the budget to the board in advance of the Sept 21, 2026, meeting along with their report which is attached.

The various lines of the budget were discussed with the respective Chairs or representatives describing the basis for their estimates and the plans for the new fiscal year.

The Finance Committee had recommended an increase in the membership fees from \$40, \$45, \$20 for Single, Family and Student to \$50, \$60 and \$20. There was considerable discussion about this recommendation. Overall, it was felt that an increase in fees was long overdue since they had last been increased in 2010. It was noted that members should be made aware of the many activities undertaken by the club as part of any announcement. The club received a substantial bequest in 2014 and there is a perception by many members that we should be using this money instead of increasing fees. Later in the meeting, some of the directors pointed out that while many of our members are financially well off, others are struggling with federal government layoffs or the impact of the tariffs. It was felt that we need to recognize these realities. In conclusion, the Board will give this more thought and consider how the situation might be presented to the members.

The Finance Committee had also recommended that the print edition of the CFN journal cease to be issued starting with Volume 141. Directors were prepared to support such a move but recognized that the Publications Committee needs time to review the idea and consider alternatives. One of the alternatives suggested was raising the cost of the print version sufficiently to cover the costs and then assess the impact on subscriptions. Ken calculated that subscription rates for print issues would need to be doubled to have the same effect as dropping print.

The budget for the Events Committee included a new project, Discovery Day, and a revision of the Photo Contest. If the budget is approved in October with these budget elements, then they will not need further Board approval. There was not much discussion, and it was noted that Shawna Lucey will be at the October Board meeting as a new director and can speak about them at that time.

The other element in the Events budget was paying an honorarium to leaders of outings commensurate with what we are paying those who make a presentation at the monthly meetings. These honorariums are a recognition of the time and expertise provided by the individual. There was considerable discussion of starting this practice and most of it was favourable. Questions were raised regarding why we would give financial support for these activities and not for all the other volunteer work that many provide to the club. Those leading events are agreeing to a 'one-off' provision of a service on a specific date.

The idea of restarting the Research Grant program was favourably received. It was recognized as having the potential to make a positive impact on natural history in the area and contribute to the club's objectives. No further ideas or specifics were suggested.

The budget will be presented again at the October Board meeting for approval with any other changes that may arise.

b) Board Nominations

Ann had earlier sent the following notes:

- Jakob and I are now in the process of developing our slate of directors for the new fiscal year.

- *We received two responses from our notice in T&L – one seems promising but is not yet confirmed. The other is Dipto Sarkar, Assoc Prof, Carleton, Geog and Env Studies – spatial mapping. I am waiting to hear back from him to see if he is still interested.*
- *While we will be in touch with everyone, it would be helpful if you indicated to us if you intend to stay on the board, will stay but would like a change, intend to leave - whatever.*
- *For today I would like to make two motions for new directors effective October 1st. While we usually wait until the January ABM, in both these cases, it makes sense to appoint earlier.*

Moved by Ann MacKenzie, seconded by Jakob Mueller, that Deb Doherty become a member of the Board, effective October 1, 2026, and become the Chair of the Education and Publicity Committee **CARRIED**

Outgoing Chair Gordon Robertson will continue as a Board member.

Moved by Ann MacKenzie, seconded by Jessica Simms, that Shawna Lucey become a member of the Board, effective October 1, 2026, and become the Chair of the Events Committee. **CARRIED**

c) Awards Night planning/update

Jessica gave an update. A committee has been formed. They met for a discussion. They are considering starting the event earlier in the day. The Board discussed pros and cons of that. They also considered whether the event should take place at an earlier date.

d) OFNC mailbox

Bev reported that monitoring the ofnc@ofnc.ca email account was going well. She will be unsubscribing the address from various mailing lists and will respond to or forward onward only direct communications to the club.

e) Tech contacts (zoom, email, web): current & succession planning

Deferred

7. Committee Updates

a) Awards

Bev reported that a notice for members to submit nominations for the new awards season will be in the October-December T&L. We will also email the notice to all members with email and will update the OFNC website. Deadline for nominations is November 30.

b) Birds

The report was deferred to the next meeting.

c) Conservation

While conservation matters were mentioned under various agenda items, the report was deferred to next meeting.

d) Education & Publicity

Gordon submitted a report:

- *Our Instagram page continues to grow with 761 followers and over 311 posts. Send me any reels (videos) or stills you want posted.*
- *iNaturalist page for FWG has grown to 5077 observations and lists 1116 species from 263 people. There could be more added after a coming BioBlitz.*
- *Stephanie Valade has been in contact with Nina Stavlund about creating a Facebook page for publicizing OFNC events and activities.*
- *A French version of the club's trifold is in development for next year. The translation will be by Michelle Michichiuc.*
- *Presentation to Rockcliffe Seniors' residents by Chair.*
- *Flyers sent by Deb Doherty to help Junior Explorer's Picnic at Billings Bridge. We could not participate in person.*
- *Fred Scaini is working of getting a Google Drive for the committee to store our important documents (Youth Summit, posters, stories, trail maps, flyers, crosswords, etc.) for future use by the club.*
- *Plans are afoot for blogs on various topics such as interviews with our two latest Youth Summit attendees.*
- *Fred is planning to do short videos to post on our YouTube channel. We need to coordinate with Jakob.*

e) Events

Ann reported. Shawna Lucey will be the new Chair. Ann had previously sent the board an email message with four attachments describing new events the committee will be looking into developing.

f) Finance

Ann distributed a report both before and after this meeting. As requested, the latter version is attached to these minutes rather than embedded. See Appendix I.

g) Macoun Club

Report deferred to next meeting.

h) Membership

Report deferred to next meeting.

i) Ontario Nature

Report deferred to next meeting.

j) Publications

Jessica reported. The CFN editor's reported is attached as Appendix II.

- *CFN issue 139(3) is already partially posted online*
- *Jessica shared Publications Committee Chair Jeff Saarela's comment on the proposal to have CFN be online only: "Given that six articles [and notes] in 139(3) 2026 have already been published online, our move to post articles online as they are completed has greatly improved our timeliness of publication, and we are 100% on track to getting 4 issues out per year, within the calendar year of the volume. There is now no appearance of any delay in publication from a readers' perspective. In other words, the plan we devised last fall and*

implemented this year to get back on track has worked beautifully - thanks to the hard work of the journal production team.”

- Jessica shared the Finance Committee report, notably the discussion on moving CFN to online-only, with the Publications Committee last week.

8. Adjournment (21h00)

Moved by Owen Clarkin, seconded by Jakob Mueller, that the meeting be adjourned. **CARRIED**

APPENDIX 1

Report of the Finance Committee

September 2026

The Finance Committee met on September 10, 2026. At that meeting they discussed the budget and the overall financial situation of the OFNC. The resulting 2026-27 draft budget is attached for your consideration at the September 21 Board meeting where everyone will be asked to describe their proposed activities for next year and the basis for their estimated costs.

OVERALL

In the current fiscal year, it appears that we will have a slight surplus of revenues over expenditures because of the \$15,000 surplus from the Pelee trip. Without that we would be in a deficit situation.

The proposed budget projects a deficit of about \$87,000 before interest income of \$50,000. Typically we project a bigger deficit than what materializes but it seems fairly certain that we will have a significant deficit next fiscal.

The Finance Committee recognized the deficit projection but was also noting where spending was reflecting our charitable objectives. Since we have investment funds, we should be spending on activities that enhance our objectives. At the same time, we need to be aware that any decrease in our investment fund will, in turn, decrease the interest revenue generated. The estimated interest revenue is shown at the bottom of the budget to clearly state our deficit before and after interest income.

SPECIFIC ISSUES

Increase Membership Rates

The Finance Committee is proposing that membership fees be increased starting in January 2027. A family membership will be increased from \$45 to \$60. An individual membership will be increased from \$40 to \$50 and the student membership of \$20 will remain the same. Rates have not been increased since 2010 and membership fees do not even cover the cost of T&L. Inflation has been 38% since 2010 which means that \$40 then be \$55 now. The new rates should generate total membership fee revenue of \$41,000 per year. The budget for the next fiscal is estimating \$38,000 for membership fees since the fall renewals will not be impacted.

Cease the Print edition of the CFN Journal

The Finance Committee is recommending that effective Volume 141, the CFN cease issuing a hard copy of the CFN. Printing the journal costs about \$20,000 per year which is a third of the total expenses of producing the CFN. The scientific users of the journal rely on the online version. Page

charges should remain the same despite the lack of a print version. Not printing the CFN will not be reflected in the budget for the next fiscal year. Since subscriptions are already being received for Vol. 140, we must delay the implementation of the change. The benefit of the CFN to the OFNC charitable objectives will remain the same even without the print version.

Events

The Events committee has three new expenditure proposals that merit the attention of the Board. One for a Photo contest might require about \$400 (primarily for a Survey Monkey subscription). Another, for a Discovery Day, could cost about \$2,400. A description of both of these is attached. The third request is to pay leaders of outings an amount in recognition of their effort and often their gas. The Event committee suggested \$75 for each outing. We are currently paying \$100 to each person who prepares and present a talk for our monthly meetings. Finance committee is recommending that we stay consistent with that and offer \$100 for each outing leader. The cost estimate for that is \$4000 based on 40 outings a year. Some leaders will decline, as do some monthly speakers.

Research Grants

The Finance Committee is recommending that the research grant program be re-started. It is strongly in line with our charitable objectives. No amount has been included in the budget, but it could start with \$10,000.

Club Manager

No funds for hiring a club manager have been included in the budget. The Finance Committee is continuing to work on ways to decrease the workload of the treasurer. There is also concern about the impact on the financial situation of the club if we hire someone.

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APPENDIX 2

Dwayne's (Managing Editor) report: (as of 14:30 Mountain Daylight Time)
139(2) April–June 2026

- total of 88 journal pages published
- first two galley's posted online 8 May, fully posted 25 June, mailing date 8 July
- Editor's synopsis sent 7 July along with request for open access for the Feature Article
- open access granted today upon re-request; synopsis will be posted this week

139(3) July–Sept 2026

- last minute changes requested by the author (AU) to last manuscript (ms) to be posted (now that AU transfer of copyright and order form has been received) approved today
- the rest of the ms (total n = 7 in the issue) have already been posted, with the first one posted on 3 August
- total of 81 journal pages so far with pagination for Book Reviews (n =13 pages), New Titles (n = 3), and News and Comment (n = 1) to be finalized once the last ms is posted
- to increase the page count to a multiple of four, Editors' Report for volume 138 (currently in preparation) will be added

- part of the Editors' Report is a table tallying CFN subscriptions; nearly 60% of the 198 subscriptions for volume 138 were for print or print and online versions suggesting the print version is still important to CFN subscribers
- covers still be finalized once pagination is complete; layout person is currently in Europe but will work on CFN in the evenings
- Governor General patronage on the inside front cover will not be stated until new patronage announcement is made
- cover photograph (British Columbia alpine mushroom) already online

139(4) Oct–Dec 2026

- 7 ms currently scheduled for this issue
- 2 are currently undergoing formal copy editing with another 5 ready or nearly ready
- one copy editor went on vacation to Europe for about a month in July–August

Other manuscripts in the process (from farthest along in the process to just beginning)

- 6 AU revisions have been received, 1 of which the assigned Associate Editor (AE) has recommended as being ready for publication, with another 4 sent by Dwayne to the AE for their opinions, one of which has been received; all these 6 are awaiting Dwayne's review and final decision
- 18 ms being revised by AUs (since EiC decision January 2024) some of which will probably not be revised
- AE recommendation from initial peer-review has been received for 5 ms
- 17 ms under initial peer review including a resubmission of an early submission that required major revision/resubmission
- 3 ms have been assigned AEs but they haven't yet sent them to potential reviewers
- another ms received today for which AE still needs to be assigned
- 37 submissions received so far in 2026, 3 of which were declined (one after formal peer-review, another previously published online so not eligible for publishing in CFN, and a third was outside the scope of CFN)
- by the same time last year only 29 ms had been received so submissions seem to be increasing

Additional Tidbits

- no progress on thematic collection by Amanda and Dwayne; Dwayne's priority was to get 139(2) and 139(3) published while at the same time juggling production staff vacations, field work, and other commitments
- compliance with US Federal regulations for accessibility still being discussed
- response to email request for permission to use figures previously published in CFN sent; type of permission required dependent on type of copyright on the particular published manuscript