



FRIENDS OF TUALATIN RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

March 24, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes

The meeting was held via Conference Call.

Present: Bonnie Anderson, Dawn Carovano, Alan Christensen, Cheryl Hart, Tom Hartz, Phyllis Millan, Michelle Miller, Sharon Miller, Louie Olivarez, Michelle Scholz, Willem Stoeller, Irene Vlach.

Excused: Keith Mays

Staff: Larry Klimek, Eva Kristofik

We have a quorum (7 directors required).

I. Call to Order (6:30pm)

II. Approval of Agenda

The approval of the agenda was merged with the items in the Consent Agenda.

There were no objections to doing so as no changes were suggested for the agenda.

III. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of the February Meeting Minutes

B. Financial Reports
Reports were submitted electronically.

C. Visitor Services Report
Report was submitted electronically.

D. Photo Society Report
Report was submitted electronically.

E. Restoration Report
Report was submitted electronically.

F. Membership Committee Report
Report was submitted electronically.

G. Other reports

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda and the reports:

1. Tom
2. Phyllis

Discussion: Willem reported that the Photo Society's April program was canceled. All program nights through November have a confirmed presenter.

No objections to the motion, no abstentions.
Passed, with all in favor.

Note: the bylaws will have to be amended to comply with the new state law requiring unanimous votes for motions made in remote meetings.

IV. New Business

A. Update on FWS/ Refuge status, VC, Budget, staffing: Larry

Currently only he and John are working at the Refuge. All other employees are working remotely. Many visitors visited the Refuge over the weekend and during the last few days, many of them for the first time. However, the Refuge is likely to be closed later this week – as will be the case for other Refuges in Washington and Oregon. USFWS will follow the local health advisories. The gate will be closed and signs posted. John and Larry will maintain the infrastructure. Some work is taking place in the field, with employees working by themselves.

The budget for Tualatin River NWR approved by the Regional Office provides for the hiring of a Visitor Services Park Ranger on a permanent basis. We also were authorized to permanently fill the Park Ranger position, using funding from the urban program. This will be in lieu of the FOR receiving funding for community engagement activities on the Complex. Larry asked the Board whether we would consider hiring a Park Ranger for a year and/or until FWS fills the position. An additional employee would be required to be fully staffed.

The Wapato opening will be held on September 26. It will be our major public activity for the year and require much planning and coordination. The event might extend over the whole weekend. Cheryl suggested we send invitations to VIPs ASAP and raised the question of whom we should invite. Friends will cooperate with FWS in planning and conducting a celebration/ceremony at the dedication on Sept. 26.

Larry received \$60,000 for building a 1.9 mile trail at Wapato, including a 1 miles ADA section.

An agreement was signed with the City of Gaston to provide parking for the Refuge on city land.

FOR will help spread word if the Refuge closes.

B. Update on Plant Sale, Bird Fest, grant, planting: Bonnie

Plant sale: Bonnie notified Bosky Dell that the April Native Plant sale is cancelled. Bosky Dell not only provides the plants but also is our largest sponsor. Cheryl suggested that we encourage those in need of native plants go to Bosky Dell because they are taking a hard financial hit. We talked about possibly having a native plant sale in the fall.

The Bird Fest committee met this morning. There was unanimous agreement that there should be no Bird Fest this May. Options for an alternate date were discussed. The committee is considering a virtual Bird Fest. Bonnie will send some information about options for a virtual Bird Fest. The Arctic NWR has experience with virtual events. Various suggestions for online content were made by board members, including a recommendation by Louie to include items in Spanish. We will probably lose the deposit made for the busses (\$1,136). Larry will notify USFWS about our decision to cancel the event, but the Service will make the final decision. When we have the approval for the cancellation, we can notify the public. Going forward we will focus on the Sept. 26 Wapato opening as our primary community event.

Grants:

- 70,000 \$ from One Tree Planted program of the Bonneville Environmental Foundation. \$65,000 for trees and planting and \$5,000 for admin. Last week 100, 000 trees were planted in 1P &2P.
- \$15,000 from City of Sherwood: \$7,500 for 2021 Bird Fest; \$5,000 for EE and \$2,500 for restoration
- \$30,000 from the Washington County Visitors Association –pending. For the ADA trail (about a mile) at Wapato Lake NWR. Decision postponed until April.

Willem report that FOR signed the agreement with Clean Water Services this morning and that hopefully CWS will signed it tomorrow. At that point they will be able to invoice us for \$400,000 to pay for the work they completed on the Chicken Creek restoration project. We received a grant for this amount from Willamette Water Supply.

C. Board member changes, Board Retreat, future Board calls: Alan

Peter Paquet and Gary Fawver resigned from the board for health reasons. Gary is willing to continue helping with training. We need to recruit additional board members, if at all possible, someone to represent the interests of Wapato. Curt has a contact in the Gaston area, but at this point that person is not willing to commit. We might generate interest through aggressive promotion of the Set. 26 opening.

September 26 also is the date of the Friends' Annual Meeting which somehow will have to be meshed with the Wapato opening. Sept. 26th also is National Public Lands Day, and National Urban Refuge Day.

The Chicken Creek restoration project also will need formal closure – perhaps on Sunday September 27th.

Tom: The last 3 training days of the Volunteer Naturalist Training have been postponed at least until summer. We will have to coordinate with Jenna about the cancellation of the summer programs and the summer training. Gary agreed to do a couple of training sessions for the Naturalist Training and will continue volunteering for puddle stompers. The planned April 15 event to recognize his contributions to the Refuge is also postponed to the summer. Tom will communicate with Gary. Bonnie called for pictures of Gary to be used for a slide show. Louie will try to get pictures from the George Fox community.

The April 25th Board retreat will have to be postponed unless we can do it remotely via Zoom. Bonnie and Willem will work on setting up Zoom. We may test it at the April Executive Committee meeting.

Alan will work with Willem and Bonnie to subscribe to Zoom (\$69).

D. Open Forum to share other relevant information

Cheryl: the April Fly-in is canceled. Louie had planned on participating. The gala will be rescheduled but the Fly-in will take place virtually – meaning all interested Board members can participate via conference call. She will keep us posted. The date has not yet been set.

Alan: Robin, our mentor, retired.

Michelle S. asked about the feed-back received on the urban wildlife strategic plan. The responses were compiled and submitted. Larry will work on the national strategic plan, virtually.

Bonnie: she is currently working from home. Natalie is working from home or on solo projects on the Refuge. She has been assigned a vehicle that only she will have access to during this time to minimize cross contamination. Carly has access to the Visitor Center, but telecommutes the rest of the time. Jenna works from home 20h/week on EE related projects assigned by USFWS; Andrew is back on payroll to work from home as needed on special projects. The plan to hire additional staff is currently on hold.

Willem reminded us that we did not make the needed change in the purpose of the bylaws to reflect that we now are working with a complex of National Wildlife Refuges. Bonnie pointed out that we also have to review the bylaws so they reflect the recent changes in state law. The bylaws have some inconsistencies and Irene will send her notes about the inconsistencies.

V. Unfinished Business

VI. Announcements

VI. Adjourn (7:55pm)

Motion to adjourn:

1. Louie
2. Willem

Passed, with all in favor.