

Waterbird Society Council Meeting Minutes

Virtual call (Zoom)

Sunday, February 20, 2022

18:00-21:00 (ET/New York/GMT-4)

Officers and Councilors in attendance (voting): Patty Szczys [President, Recognition], Kate Shlepr [Secretary, Archives], Chris Custer [Treasurer, Bylaws], Ricardo Zambrano [Vice President, Finance & Investments, Diversity], Caz Taylor [Publications], Jim Lyons, Gopi Sundar [Editor-in-Chief], Clay Green [Past President, Nominating], John Anderson [Archives, Book Review Editor], Dave Moore [Past President, Research Grants, Nominating, Membership, Diversity, Bylaws], Marisa Martinez [Diversity], Don Lyons, Kiah Williams, Aliya Caldwell, Gail Fraser [Student Activities]

Voting members unable to attend: Terry Master, Michelle Stantial

Non-voting members in attendance: Liz Craig [Diversity], Susan Elbin [Future Meetings, OC, Research Grants, Conservation], Chip Weseloh [Future Meetings, Diversity], Jonathan Cohen [Conservation], Jeff Spendelow [Bylaws, OC, Conservation]

18:06 ET Call to order (n=20 participants)

Introductions go-round

18:10 Committees: Who are the current co-chairs, where are there vacancies?

- Archives - Kate Shlepr and John Anderson
- Membership - needs new Chairs - active to-do list, data-driven
 - Jim Lyons volunteers himself
 - Patty Szczys can help liaise membership list
 - Will send a call-out for members to step up
- Nominations
 - Erica Nol has finished her term
 - Clay Green, Dave Moore
 - Membership list up-to-date? Clay will reach out to make sure past list is active/could call for more if needed, esp. non-US/Canadian
 - I. Kaan Ozcencil (won best student Conservation award last meeting, from Turkey)
- Bylaws
 - Jeff Spendelow, Chris Custer, Dave Moore
 - Low needs, works on demand
- Recognition/Awards
 - Patty, John - always looking for members
 - Fran Cuthbert and Dave Scheeler help, need non-US/Canadian

- Finance/Investment
 - Ricardo, Co-Chair, committee is not very busy. Add Jennifer Stucker as 2nd Co-Chair since Ricardo is the VP?
- Student Activities
 - Gail Fraser, Juliet Lab -
- ABC
- Ornithological Council (OC)
- Diversity - Marisa Martinez, Liz Craig, Juliet Lamb are Co-Chairs and have lots of members. Open offer to turn over Co-Chair position if someone wants to!
- Research Grants - Nellie Tsipoura, Kate Sheehan, Jan van der Winden are Co-Chairs. **Patty will check in and follow up with Council via email about whether they need more help.** They are a busy committee.
- Conservation - Jonathan Cohen, Sean Murphy are Co-Chairs. Other help with the annual Conservation Award but are not otherwise very active with the advocacy aspect of the committee's work. Would like to have a list of subject-area/species experts on hand for advocacy/outreach efforts.
 - OC connections lost now that Ellen Paul is gone.
 - **Gopi as Editor - help procure a list of experts?**
 - **Don Lyons plays an advocacy role with Audubon - he and Jonathan will talk offline.**
- Web Editor - Amanda Haverland
- Publications - Erica Nol still Co-Chair?, Jeff Costa (Chair), Caz Taylor (member)
- Gopi update on Journal: 44(3) and 44(4) are on their way to Painter. Following up on old submissions as information becomes available and will compile these into issue 45+. Progress made!
- Future Meetings - Susan Elbin and Chip Weseloh. Long-term commitments by local hosts needed.
- 2022 Texas meeting proposal submitted by Dale Gawlik, Local Committee Chair.
 - Clay Green is reviewing the proposal that was sent out.
 - Proposed days of the week are atypical, but otherwise follows our usual format.
 - Hybrid option.
 - Virtual fees (too high? discuss).
 - Fees could be reduced via sponsorship.
 - Will speakers be able to present virtually? We think yes - Clay will check. Think about how to arrange sessions to maximize participation both in the room and online.
 - Vegan, veggie options? Clay will confirm.
 - Jul 21 will be the student/international travel award deadline.
 - Patty will ask Dale to roll the "international" piece into sponsorship asks, e.g., Latin America for Texas.
 - Tilt back online due to COVID: by when would we decide? There are contingencies. Issue is that the contract with the Omni Hotel/Conference Center cannot be canceled without penalty unless there is a state/federal declaration of emergency.

MOTION: I move to accept the proposal for the 2022 meeting in Corpus Christi, Texas.
Gail/Chris - PASSES 15/0/0

Short break

19:27 Resume discussion (18 participants)

- We are extremely committed to moving on the revised Strategic Plan.
- Effort needs to be membership-wide, not just Council & friends.
- Last Plan expired in 2020. Review what's worked, what hasn't, and what's missing from that past Plan.
- Working group has 4-5 people
 - ...but also don't discount the knowledge of this group.
 - Aliya Caldwell would like to be involved
 - **First step:** In the old plan, each Committee weighed in on top priorities. Committee Chairs should review the old plan and revise/respond to it with a modern eye.
- Suggestion: Email a poll in preparation for a Town Hall-style meeting.
 - Caution: Polls don't often have a good turnout rate. Consider adding a virtual Waterbirds forum with live polls. Double-counting might be worth the broader reach.
 - Poll current membership, but consider future membership too (i.e., people who could join but haven't, like those who publish or attend our meetings but aren't officially members.)
 - Definition of "member": Is it important, or is participation all that matters?
- What is goal/purpose of Strategic Plan? Used to direct budget items; Cohesive document to benchmark status and explain future trajectory of the Society.
- Stay transparent through whole process.
- Hire a professional? Could do that now or after we are more organized.
 - E.g., Sea Grant facilitator (free!) could be useful to keep us on track (pro) but they don't know anything about our Society (con).
- Structure: Ask all Committees to respond to the recommendations under each area of the last SP from the point-of-view of their committee.
 - Interdisciplinary/cross-cutting.
 - Encourage participation of new councilors (Aliya and Kiah volunteered).
 - Review mission and create a vision statement.
 - Could tie this into annual reports - Patty will make a template.
- Timeline
 - Patty and Ricardo will work on a "call to Chairs" over the next week; ask for a return within a month (Mar 28); Officers will get together to plan next meeting/step.
 - Then, review and draft online poll questions by Sep. 2. Poll in fall then Town Hall at meeting? (pros and cons of doing it at the meeting)
 - Consider ways to involve members at the 2022 WbS meeting (Nov).
 - Steering Committee takes feedback by mid-Dec for a professional facilitator?

- Facilitator vs. consultant who is process-oriented (mission/vision).
- Steering committee can decide.
- Jan 16, 2023 = final deadline.
- Establish Working Group/Steering Committee Members: Ricardo, Gail, Liz, Aliya, Kiah, Patty (thank you!).

Final announcements/questions

- Amanda - Google workspace for nonprofits: @waterbirds.org email address.
 - Benefit: No cost. Anyone with an email address automatically has access to all shared folders, otherwise must be invited. Chat feature, calendars, meetings with up to 100 people. Google groups. Amanda will follow up to get people signed up.

Adjourn.