

## MINUTES OF THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

6 May 2019 Conference Call  
10:00-11:00am (Pacific – UTC-7)  
Amended and approved 18 July 2019

**Present:** David Craig (Chair), Olivia Bailey (Secretary), Rob Suryan (Chair-Elect), Kirsten Bixler (Treasurer), Peter Hodum (Vice Chair for Conservation), Rachael Orben (Washington/Oregon Regional Representative), Adrian Gall (Past Chair), Kerry Woo (Canada Regional Representative), Mary Cody (Non-Pacific U.S. States Regional Representative) [9].

**Absent:** Luke Einoder (Asia/Oceania Regional Representative), Cristián Suazo (S. California, Latin America, Hawaii Regional Representative), Ross Wanless (Europe/Africa Regional Representative), Marc Romano (Alaska/Russia Regional Representative), Kirsten Lindquist (Northern California Regional Representative), Corey Clatterbuck (Student Representative) [6].

**Others present:** Jane Dolliver (Communications Coordinator) [1].

### 1. APPROVE 6 MAY 2019 AGENDA

Motion to discuss the 6 May 2019 agenda moved by Adrian, Mary seconds

Request to move agenda item 5c up after voting items?

Motion to approve the 6 May 2019 agenda and move agenda item 5c to 5a, moved by Adrian, Mary seconds

Abstentions: 0, Nays: 0, Yays: 9, motion passed unanimously

### 2. APPROVE 21 MAR 2019 MEETING MINUTES

Motion to discuss the 21 Mar 2019 meeting minutes moved by Olivia, Adrian seconds

Motion to approve the 21 Mar 2019 meeting minutes moved by Olivia, Adrian seconds

Abstentions: 0, Nays: 0, Yays: 9, motion passed unanimously

### 3. APPROVE *Treasurer's Report – Bank change*

Motion to discuss the Treasurer's Report moved by Adrian, Kerry seconds

Looking at the Treasurer's Update report, the account balance is up to date as of April 26, 2019. Things have changed slightly; we have \$1950 and change for the Past Chairs fund. I completed a draft 2019 Meeting Reconciliation table. The big news is that we have a surplus of about \$30,000 from that meeting, which means we should have enough wiggle room to cover other expenses as needed.

Comment: That's great! Usually if the meetings make 7-10 grand, we're excited, but if we came out in the black, that is something to be excited about!

The caveat is that this does not include travel awards, and we spent about \$6000 on waived registrations and another \$2000 was covered by the general fund. So we did eat into that surplus a little bit.

Next, I have done some research about new banks. I checked out 4 large banks – Wells Fargo, Bank of America, Chase, and US Bank. I'm weighing the pros and cons of each. They are quite different, and I'm hoping to get feedback about this. None of these large banks are in Hawaii. They are all in CA, WA, and OR. Not all are in AK. This is an issue because for all but one they require someone to be physically in the branch when they become a signer on the account. It means that someone would need to potentially travel to a different state to become a signer. It might be worth it, because at least one of these banks has no wire fees. Currently we're paying \$50 per wire transfer, and we can get a good cash back card on our credit card. So it might end up being worth it.

Comment: I don't think the lack of a bank in Hawaii is a limiting factor. It was an issue when we had Treasurers based in Hawaii. But, if it's a bank that has good online banking services, it really shouldn't be a problem. If we have another meeting in Hawaii, we can set up a local account at a local bank for that meeting.

The issue is that with First Hawaiian Bank, that when I became a signer we were able to just snail mail all the forms around to get me on the account. We are not going to be able to do that; someone will have to travel to that bank. Chase is what I'm leaning towards right now, but they don't have branches in Hawaii or Alaska. I don't know if that is a deal breaker.

Question: So if we had a treasurer for one of those places, we would budget for that?

Ans: Right. If we make this change, someone would need to travel to be the cosigner.

Comment: We kind of do that with meetings anyway. It is a consideration, but there are a lot of good financial reasons for why staying with First Hawaiian doesn't make a lot of sense.

We have a choice in the credit card. Some have "cash back" cards where you can earn 5% cash back. For all these cards, you need a personal guarantor. This means that one person would have to apply for these cards using their personal credit. That could be a deal breaker, and it's also more work. This could mean that every time we get a new chair we'd need to reapply for the card.

Question: Does this count toward someone's personal credit, too? Would this show up if someone is trying to get a loan, for example?

Ans: I think so. Only one of these banks has a non-profit credit card that is not linked to anyone's personal credit, but that does not have cash back.

Question: Did you look into online banks only?

Ans: I looked into the 4 largest banks in the US because they have the largest number of branches on the west coast.

Question: Did you look into credit unions, or is there a reason not to?

Ans: I did, it doesn't seem like the best option because it means that both signers would have to travel to a credit union when an account was opened. If I opened an account at a credit union in Corvallis, I couldn't go to another branch to make a change; it would have to be at that branch. I talked to the credit union in Corvallis and they recommended that they go to a national bank.

Comment: I don't know much about Allied Bank, but they've been around a long time and have a good reputation. They might be worth looking into.

Comment: I would personally be nervous to be the guarantor because of the credit rating issue.

Comment: Me too. 5% cash back is nice but I don't think it's worth the risk.

Comment: I will pull up a recommendation by next month, so we can vote on that. If I come up with anything, I will send out an update.

**Action Item: Kirsten B. will make a bank recommendation to vote on at the next meeting.**

The endowment fund – I want to start a discussion this month about this. I communicated with the endowment fund committee about this – our draw of up to 6% is standard. 4-6% is standard for endowment funds, and 4% is more conservative. We currently use that draw for publications only, but our publication costs are now lower – we're not printing *Pacific Seabirds* and MO is pretty self-sufficient. I don't know that MO costs will continue to go down, given that last year we gave them an honorarium, and I don't know if we'll continue to do that. Regardless, we are not using everything that we could. I think that it is in our best interest to consider adding more publication related grants or changing how we use the endowment fund and lifting the restriction that it can only be used to publications. The endowment fund committee strongly supports lifting this restriction and to allow PSG to use this money where it is needed most. They strongly support continuing the Life Membership contribution going to the endowment fund. If we do change the endowment fund draw and let it go into the general fund, it means that the life membership is basically coming right back into the PSG general fund. I want to start a discussion about this and maybe vote on this in the next couple of months.

Question: Are there documents about the history of the endowment fund restrictions?

Ans: Yes, the handbook and bylaws. Any change to this would mean a change to the bylaws.

Comment: I think supporting the continued use of the endowment fund for honoraria is important. It's been a challenge to get people involved in MO, and those folks that we have involved right now are very dedicated and have been doing this for a long time. We haven't had

a lot of turnover because there haven't been people to hand things off to. Keeping MO going will continue to require money and more money that we have been putting in lately. That's not to say that we shouldn't relax the bylaws, but I think we need to keep publications the priority expenditure for these funds. As long as the needs are met for MO and Pacific Seabirds, then if there's excess we can allocate that to the Former Chairs fund or scholarships.

Comment: So you're advocating for no change and keeping it towards publications?

Comment: Not necessarily, but if we do change the language, making sure that publication remain the top priority for expenditures.

Comment: I guess in some ways, some amount of flexibility seems nice. But making sure that this is not lost in the future, especially after a few more generations of EXCO.

Question: Do you think we will need to provide stipends or salary to MO at some point?

Ans: Last year was the first time we've give honoraria. We may want to consider whether an honorarium to the Managing Editor is warranted as something that's established year after year. Particularly as a recruiting tool. Managing editor of a publication and doing it as a volunteer is kind of crazy.

Comment: I wonder if it's advisable to go and think about a job description for the position with a stipend. Then partition the endowment, thinking about a time in the future where we would need this. Particularly if the raw rate is less than 6% and if our capital is getting bigger, we could plan for an incentivized position. These non-paid things are harder and harder to do, particularly for early career people.

Comment: The position I worry most about is the online editor. That is a technical position. We are lucky enough that the Managing Editor's partner can do this as a volunteer. We are not going to be able to count on getting this for free with that amount of technical skill. We may be underestimating what the publication costs will be in the next 5-10 years.

Comment: We may need support staff that make it easier for the managing editors to do their jobs, and it sounds like positions where funding could help to support this.

Question: Are their professional services that can do that for us?

Ans: You can certainly contract it, if you can find someone to reliably contract from year to year. We could find someone who is freelance to do this and pay them. We've been trying to avoid paying for it, but that may be the route. We pay copy editors and paid online content manager.

Question: Didn't Managing Editor say that the copy editors are being paid below the going rate?

Ans: We were for the person who was doing it before. But with the new people, the rates went up. We may still be getting a deal, but the rates did go up.

Question: Are there things we can work on before the next call?

Ans: It might be good to have a discussion with Managing Editor about what she's expecting the copy editing expense to be this year, and if there's another paid position that we can afford that would help her. Also, whether they would like an honorarium this year.

**Action Item: Kirsten B. will discuss MO expenses with Louise Blight before the next meeting.**

Comment: Maybe we should talk about the Quarterly Review at a later time.

Comment: Sure, let's move that to the next meeting.

#### 4. UPDATES

##### 4a. STUDENT RESEARCH GRANT UPDATE

We had 11 applicants for the SRG – 2 undergrad, 6 master's, 2 PhD. All were good applications; they all recognized what the grant was meant for and targeted their applications accordingly. There is probably room for improvement in explaining budget justifications - what they will do with the money, not justify again why we should give you the money. But some of that may have been translation issues too.

We awarded 1 MS, 1 undergrad, and 1 PhD of each \$1000 each. I'll send the titles of the winner's projects around. Ray Martin from OSU got the undergrad award, Jacqui Glencross from University of Tasmania got the MS award, and Jaime Ojeda from the University of Victoria got the PhD award.

All have been notified and have received confirmations from all awardees. We raised more than we needed – we had one standout MS that we chose not to fund because we were prioritizing applicants that really needed the money to accomplish the basics of their research. This is how we awarded the MS grant. We had one application that was really strong and we exceeded our fundraising goal, so we have the money to fund her proposal as well. Particularly since the winning proposal was for less than \$1000. Is everyone okay with that? Are we financially okay to do that?

Comment: We are financially fine to do that, and I support awarding a second person.

Question: Does the money come directly to them or does it need to go through the university?

Ans: It depends on the university's policy. It should be able to go to the awardee directly.

Comment: For a one-time award like this, it shouldn't be a problem.

Question: The original intent was to have the general fund match up to \$1500, right? But it might be more than that, depending on how much the Former Chairs raised?

Ans: Right, since we set the target of \$3000 so that we could give \$1000 to each level, that's where the \$1500 came from. I think we can be generous and match 1:1.

Comment: We did get the candidates for the \$200 WSTC best pacific-related presentations. We will pick a winner and let the WSTC folks know and they will communicate with the awardee, then they will contact Kirsten to directly give them the \$200.

**Action Item: Adrian will contact Jill Tengeres to offer her the SRG award.**

#### 4b. COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

[Motion to discuss \*Pacific Seabirds\* as part of EBSCO moved by Rob, Olivia seconds](#)

The *Pacific Seabirds* Editor received a request from EBSCO, an online database of journals; they found us and ask us to be a part of EBSCO. This was confusing because *Pacific Seabirds* is already free online, so it seemed like there might be a catch to this. EBSCO makes money by selling their full database to libraries and institutions. If more journals are a part of it, they can leverage that when selling. It doesn't cost us anything, they just need our permission. The Communications committee is in agreement about this – it was passed by both the former former Communications coordinator and the current Marine Ornithology Managing Editor.

Question: Is there any reason to be concerned?

Ans: I was concerned that they would profit off of us, and they will, but barely. We are one of 18,000 publishers. Our content will be available and possibly more people will read *Pacific Seabirds*, so that's a win for PSG. It won't affect any money flow to us.

[Motion to approve all volumes of \*Pacific Seabirds\* to be hosted on EBSCO moved by Rob, Mary seconds](#)

[Abstentions: 0, Nays: 0, Yays: 8, motion passed unanimously](#)

Comment: Over Twitter, we launched the #30EarthMonthHeroes hashtag. We did 30 profiles of PSG conservation awardees – conservation grant awardees, lifetime achievement awardees, and special achievement awardees. We got lots of positive comments and people were thankful to be featured. We hit 3,000 likes on Facebook.

Question: Dave, can we use your office number for Facebook communication? Ans: Yes.

Comment: I received a TWS update, and they are hosting paid content for people who cannot attend the national meeting. I don't think that the paid structure is great for PSG, but I do think that there are people who can't attend but are still interested in hearing specific talks at PSG. This year, we had a pro-bono videographer, and those are all uploaded to the web. For PSG

2020 in Portland, would we transcribe talks, record them, none of the above? Would the content be hosted on the PSG website? These are all things to think about.

#### 4c. PSG 2019 POST-MEETING SURVEY UPDATE

Just a quick update, the survey went out, we got almost 50% response rate. The report gives you the main results. There were lots of comments on sustainability initiative. At the Member's Meeting we talked about how people get their information - website is the main method of communication, followed by listserv. 15% of respondents are open to volunteering in Portland. Overall, it was very positive.

#### 5. ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn moved by Olivia, Kirsten seconds

Abstentions: 0, Nays: 0, Yays: 8, motions passes

#### 6 MAY 2019 AGENDA

(\*Indicates need for a vote)

1. Roll call & approve agenda\*
2. Approve minutes 21 March 2019\*
3. Approve bank change\* and Treasurer update
4. Updates
  - 4a. Student Research Grant update
  - 4b. Communications update and Approve *Pacific Seabirds* part of EBSCO\*
  - 4c. PSG 2019 Post-Meeting Survey update
5. Action items and adjourn (Olivia)