

## MINUTES OF THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

19 December 2019 Conference Call  
5:00pm-6:23pm (Pacific Standard Time – UTC-8)  
Amended and approved 27 January 2020

**Present:** David Craig (Chair), Rob Suryan (Chair-Elect), Olivia Bailey (Secretary), Kirsten Bixler (Treasurer), Kerry Woo (Canada Regional Representative), Marc Romano (Alaska/Russia Regional Representative), Kirsten Lindquist (Northern California Regional Representative), Corey Clatterbuck (Student Representative) [8].

**Absent:** Adrian Gall (Past Chair), Cristián Suazo (S. California, Latin America, Hawaii Regional Representative), Ross Wanless (Europe/Africa Regional Representative), Luke Einoder (Asia/Oceania Regional Representative), Mary Cody (Non-Pacific U.S. States Regional Representative), Rachael Orben (Washington/Oregon Regional Representative), Peter Hodum (Vice Chair for Conservation) [7].

**Others Present:** Katie O'Reilly (PSG 2020 Local Committee Co-Chair), Joanna Smith (Ad-hoc Code of Conduct Committee Chair), Emma Kelsey [3].

### 1. APPROVE 19 DECEMBER 2019 AGENDA

Motion to discuss the 19 December 2019 agenda moved by Olivia, Rob seconds  
Motion to approve the 19 December 2019 agenda moved by Rob, Marc seconds  
Abstentions: 0, Nays: 0, Yays: 8, motion passed unanimously

### 2. APPROVE 26 NOVEMBER 2019 MEETING MINUTES

Motion to discuss the 26 November 2019 meeting minutes moved by Olivia, Rob seconds  
Motion to approve the 26 November 2019 meeting minutes moved by Rob, Kerry seconds  
Abstentions: 0, Nays: 0, Yays: 8, motion passed unanimously

### 3. UPDATES

Motion to discuss updates moved by Olivia, Rob seconds.  
Abstentions: 0, Nays: 0, Yays: 8, motion passed unanimously

#### 3a. PSG 2020 Update

Starting with fundraising, Kim has been getting a lot since we last talked! At last check, we raised \$18,300 for conference support – separate from travel award support. Fundraising spreadsheet and letter at Google drive link. Let me know if you can't access. Can see updates in real time.

Comment: Good progress!

Comment: Hilton – we are in process of moving banks. Going to do deposit method, don't need to fill out credit application, don't need to do a master bill.

Comment: I do think we should not do direct bill, they should invoice and we can pay deposits by check as needed. Can keep track so that we do not overdraw from the two sets of bank accounts.

Comment: Great, we will do deposits and not direct bill.

Student Rooms – Kauai – isolated, difficult to find rooms. Do we want to do that again this year? Can cancel up to Feb 6<sup>th</sup>. Beds are full, but small. Can't fit 2 per bed. 2 per room unless someone sleeps on the floor.

Comment: Will discuss more in next update.

Comment: Hotel pickup – as of December 16, total of 150 nights to make our book. Didn't get the latest registration data, not sure how many have registered. From the abstracts, looks comparable to Hawaii.

Question: Do we know how many rooms in room block have been reserved?

Ans: Yes, report has the original contract. Pickup is on the 3 big nights, have 68 rooms reserved out of original contract of 120. Still have 52 rooms that we need to get reserved per night.

Comment: Tried to reserve online, didn't show any rooms available to me.

Comment: Tuesday night was very low, so moved some from Sunday night to Tuesday. I went in through the link – gets you to the special rate. Originally showing nothing available for arriving on certain days. Will keep monitoring. Can send out an email to the listserv.

Comment: Asked about a government rate, it is different than the PSG rate.

Comment: You won't be counted as a PSG pickup with a government rate. Many federal employees have probably done that.

Comment: Hopefully they can tell us how many people are reserving rooms for those dates – especially if we come up a little short in the room block.

Comment: Also, most federal employees have not heard if they are approved to go to the conference yet. But they have to make reservations anyway. So some may not get approval and then will have to cancel their reservations.

Comment: 123 registrants in CVENT, currently.

Comment: That's good, we should pick up more rooms as more people register.

Exhibitor Costs – helps folks know for next year. Local artist - \$50, NGOs - \$100, Exhibitors that gave over \$1000 get a free table. Encouraging silent auction items as well.

Former Chairs Meeting set at Picnic House, across from hotel. It will cost about \$500-\$600, which is at least what it would cost to have it at the Hilton. Meeting is Saturday, 12 – 13:30. Have many volunteers, but need more!

Question: Is there any way for student volunteers to receive a reduced registration rate?

Ans: We don't have a mechanism to do it. May offer gift cards to those spending a lot of time volunteering.

ExCo will let Katie know if they cannot access the Fundraising Google Drive.  
ExCo will send Katie volunteers for PSG 2020.

### **3b. Student Representative Update**

Update to student pre-paid rooms - beds won't hold 2 people comfortably. 2 students to a room. Downside is that room cost can only be split 2 ways - \$412.50. Could still be competitive and comparable to other hotel rates in the area.

Successful in Kauai, should continue, especially since there is no penalty for canceling rooms if they don't fill. Now, since only 2 students can fit into a room, we are hoping for 4 rooms. But will have to ask ExCo for a vote.

Question: What happens if students back out? What happens if we don't fill the room block because of that? Ans: My understanding is that they backed out early on in the process, wanted a confirmation immediately that they were in the room block. Not as many room options in Kauai. On my end, I will work to communicate that they have confirmation of being in the room block. Not sure there are other ways to assure that they don't back out. I think that backing out and not being able to come to a PSG meeting is a big deterrent to signing up.

Question: Were students not able to pay to come to the meeting? So this is a way to save money? I don't think you have to pay for the entire stay when you reserve a room. Or was it trying to get people to share a room without students having to do that themselves? Ans: It was more about there being a lot of up-front costs to attending a meeting, especially to Kauai. I don't know the direct comparison of Kauai to Portland for up-front costs.

Comment: I don't think that they need to pay that much up front now. If they only need to enter a credit card and it won't be charged, then do we need to do this?

Comment: Last year we were charged for the first night up front, and it was a fair amount.

Comment: I think including fees it was around \$300.

Comment: Yes, it was a good solution in Kauai, maybe there's other solutions that work better in the future. I think if you pre-pay for around \$200, that's still a significant cost for some students and some early career professionals. But I see the advantage to advertise the specific payment system for the hotel – you can reserve at the rate up until a certain time and cancel, and you'll only be reserving for the first night, that will help. Another thing that helps is finding other students to room with. A lot of people were able to stay onsite in Kauai without going through the room sharing process.

Comment: Looks like cancellation notice must be given 72 hours before the reservation. And it is showing that there are no rooms available Tuesday – Sunday again, so we need to move more rooms over.

Question: So we just wait until the next meeting to do this? Or do 2 rooms now and then wait?

Ans: It's my understanding that we have already approved 2 rooms.

Comment: I'm comfortable advertising 2 rooms now, and depending on the level of interest we can bring adding two more rooms to a vote on the next call.

Comment: Would ExCo be okay with gauging the level of interest and then pre-approving something over email?

Comment: I think we should wait and see, and get an advertisement out soon.

Comment: I'll put out the survey soon.

Corey and Katie will advertise the student rooms, we will discuss additional rooms during the next call.

### **3c. PSG 2020 Travel Awards**

Very successful – 8 MS awards – 3 from US, 3 from Canada, 1 from Mexico, 1 from Cape Verde studying in Japan. 3 PhD awards – 2 from US, 1 from Japan. ECS – 2 from US, 1 from Philippines.

Comment: Question about whether there are restrictions about spending the money, my understanding is that it is a reimbursement.

Comment: Yes, as long as it is spent within the purpose of what they asked for.

Comment: Great, will follow up about payments.

Kirsten will follow up about travel award payments.

### **3d. Elections Committee Update**

We have filled at least one nominee for each spot! Asking about the Treasurer situation – discussion about a trainee coming in – maybe an Assistant Treasurer? Not sure if only one person can have access to the bank accounts. Like an apprentice positon.

Comment: For liability reasons, Treasurer cannot share passwords with anyone other than the co-signer on ExCo. But should confirm in bylaws. I think it would be good to have a backup, especially if Treasurer is busy. Around the time of the meeting, it would be great to have help. But for the rest of the year, I don't know that there would be that much to do.

Comment: Maybe getting assistants for around the meeting would be a good way to gain nominees for the Treasurer position.

Question: What would be the formality of that, would it be an elected position or just a volunteer role?

Ans: Let's double-check the bylaws and check with the Past Chair to see what she knows.

Comment: We have talked about that a person who has access to the accounts, for liability reasons, needs to be elected.

Comment: But there are roles that they could help with without having access to the accounts.

Comment: Yes, helping with travel awards, communications about who is getting paid and how, sending invoices, and sending thank you notes to everyone who donates money.

Question: Could we make up a tentative job description before the next meeting? Ans: Yes, I can do that.

Comment: If anyone has ideas for nominees, please send them to the Elections Committee; it would be nice to have two nominees for each position.

Kirsten will make a tentative job description for an Assistant Treasurer to present at the next call. ExCo will send recommendations for nominees for missing positions to Katie.

### **3f. Code of Conduct Update**

Code of conduct has been revised after the PSG meeting in February. It's at the very last stages, needs approval from members. Committee formed in 2015, code was written and has been reviewed by ExCo and was sent out for member comments. There are 17 pages of member comments, all were reviewed, and comments were incorporated into a simple, 1-page code of conduct with a page of footnotes. Major change was to make sure that it said that the code is "voluntary." The legal review strongly indicated that we make it voluntary, at least initially, instead of mandatory. Lots of legal implications around making it mandatory. Legal review document is on archive folder that ExCo has. Next step is to send a copy to Secretary and Communications Committee Chair, they will set up ballot to send to members – "yes"/"no" to adopt the CoC. Ballot sent out, open a month, and then assuming over 50% of votes are "yes," a motion will be brought to ExCo to approve.

Code of Conduct does not say who to contact with complaints. Listserv guidelines currently say that queries should be sent to Communications Committee. I think that both complaints with listserv and CoC should be sent to Secretary – elected position, job is to send out queries to officers and ExCo.

Comment: Good idea to have an elected office receive complaints/questions.

Comment: I think that it is not as intuitive to contact the Secretary, or will they just communicate directly with someone they know on ExCo or the Communications Committee. Not sure that people will respond to the Secretary.

Comment: Website, job postings – send to Communications. Reminder about listserv guidelines could be sent out every year, could also be posted more prominently on website. Problem I see with the Communications Committee Chair – only on our 2<sup>nd</sup> Chair. Less "solid" than elected officers. From a legal perspective, better to go to Secretary. Communications could forward complaints they receive to Secretary. Best practices would be to send to Secretary.

Comment: Makes sense, we should formalize. Just trying to ensure that the communications happen that way.

Comment: Last complaint on listserv, Chair or listserv coordinator could have asked to complaint be directed to Secretary. Became trial by public opinion. CoC committee has also suggested that we create another ad-hoc committee to handle these complaints. This was resolved immediately once the

member was contacted. What happens when the member does not respond immediately – lawyer talking about shaky ground in terms of consequences.

Comment: Suggesting that as we approve the new CoC, create a new ad-hoc committee that works specifically on complaints and violations of the CoC.

Comment: Exactly. AOS has a voluntary CoC, they have a standing committee. As the CoC is put in place, it's possible that complaints will come up from the past. Important to know that code is not retroactive. We could add a sentence about that – doesn't explicitly say that it is not retroactive right now. Dealing with people's memories. Also, have members from many different countries. PSG registered in CA. This will be top of people's mind in January, right before the meeting.

Question: Does anyone know what the procedure is to form a new ad-hoc committee? Ans: Should be in the handbook – Chair for committee is approved by PSG Chair, they strike a committee. Strike the meeting; ask for volunteers for Chair of the committee and then volunteers for the committee. For CoC committee, asked at Member's meeting at San Jose meeting. Made a terms of reference for the CoC committee. Could draft, if that would be helpful.

Comment: Yes, that would be helpful.

Comment: So at the 2020 Member's Meeting, can ask for volunteers for committee to implement the code of conduct. Dave or Rob would approve. Last query, at the last PSG ExCo meeting in February, we talked about putting all the member comments up on the website. Society for Conservation Biology did this. Synthesized, no identifiers. If you're not sure about that, can send to Secretary, she can send around. Good way for people to see how much care members took to comment on the CoC. Robust review process, > 200 comments.

Question: Can we have a motion – pending adding CoC is retroactive and adding contact for questions/queries/complaints goes to Secretary. These changes on top of changes made after February 2019 meeting. And ask for a ballot created by Secretary. Ans: Yes.

Motion to revise CoC version 5 – adding that CoC is not retroactive, complaints/questions directed to Secretary, and send CoC to vote moved by Rob, Marc seconds.  
Abstentions: 0, Nays: 0, Yays: 8, motion passed unanimously

Jo will send the CoC to Olivia and Jane.

Olivia and Jane will set up ballot.

Jo will draft ad-hoc committee formation implementation protocol

Jo will send Olivia the comments section from Code of Conduct

Comment: Wanted to bring up concerns from listserv, have had conversations with members that they do not feel comfortable expressing themselves on listserv. Have had members say that the only way they feel that they can express their displeasure is to not renew their membership. Wanted to bring up idea of sending out something as the Membership Coordinator – what it means to be as a PSG member.

Comment: Let's collaborate on that. Sent from Membership and Chair. Good to let people know that there has been efforts to make changes.

Comment: Great, we can have a letter for the next meeting.

Comment: Thanks for bringing this up, I have also had conversations with people about not wanting to continue their membership. I think this would be a positive way to deal with that.

Comment: Seems like appropriate timing with the Code of Conduct vote coming up.

Emma and Dave will work on a message to the membership to address concerns on the listserv.

### **3e. Communications Update**

Want to bring attention to, besides the great job that the social media is doing, is that Jenn Lang are looking for a replacement editor for *Pacific Seabirds*. Editor would start in March 2020; send ideas Jenn's way, important and time-consuming position.

ExCo will send Jenn Lang recommendations for *Pacific Seabirds* replacement editor.

### **3g. Treasurer's Update**

All accounts are in order and up to date. Have been sending out invoices for the 2020 meeting. That is mostly caught up – few invoices that need to be sent out for sponsorships. The online store is up and running. Next step is to request that the Square button go on website. Can now sell merchandise before the meeting. Haven't gotten the new bank accounts yet, have gone through the online application process twice and it hasn't gone through. Will be sorted in the next month. Planning on keeping both accounts open for the next few months so that all checks clear and to get automatic billing set up for the new account.

### **4. ADJOURN**

Motion to adjourn moved by Olivia, Rob seconds

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

### **19 DECEMBER 2019 AGENDA**

(\*Indicates need for a vote)

1. Roll call & approve agenda\*
2. Approve minutes 26 November 2019\*
3. Updates
  - 3a. PSG 2020 Update
  - 3b. Student Representative Update
  - 3c. Travel Awards Update
  - 3d. Elections Committee Update
  - 3e. Communications Update
  - 3f. Code of Conduct Update
  - 3g. Treasurer's Update
4. Action items and adjourn