

MINUTES OF THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

25 November 2020 Conference Call

9:00am- 10:18am (Pacific Daylight Time – UTC-7)

Not yet amended and approved

Present: Rob Suryan (Chair), Roberta Swift (Chair-Elect), Kirsten Bixler (Treasurer), Peter Hodum (Vice Chair for Conservation), Olivia Bailey (Secretary), Rachael Orben (Washington/Oregon Regional Representative), Katie Stoner (Northern California Regional Representative), Mary Cody (Non-Pacific U.S. States Regional Representative), Marc Romano (Alaska/Russia Regional Representative), Nina O’Hanlon (Europe and Africa Regional Representative), Kerry Woo (Canada Regional Representative), Kristin Brunk (Student Representative) [12].

Absent: Cristián Suazo (S. California, Latin America, Hawaii Regional Representative), David Craig (Past Chair), Chung-hang Hung (Asia and Oceania Regional Representative) [3].

Others Present: Jane Dolliver (Communications Committee Coordinator), Emma Kelsey (Membership Committee Coordinator), Katie O’Reilly (Elections Committee Chair), Sadie Wright (nominee for Secretary, 2022-2024), Jennifer Learned (nominee for S. California, Latin America, Hawaii Regional Rep, 2022-2024), Laura Koehn (nominee for Washington/Oregon Regional Rep, 2022-2024) [3].

1. APPROVE 25 NOVEMBER AGENDA

Motion to discuss the 25 November 2020 agenda moved by Olivia, Marc seconds

Add NWPAC discussion.

Motion to approve the 25 November 2020 agenda moved by Peter, Marc seconds

Abstentions: 0, Nays: 0, Yays: 12, motion passed unanimously

2. APPROVE 30 SEPTEMBER 2020 MEETING MINUTES

Motion to discuss the 30 September 2020 meeting minutes moved by Olivia, Marc seconds

Motion to approve the 30 September 2020 moved by Roberta, Peter seconds

Abstentions: 0, Nays: 0, Yays: 12, motion passed unanimously

3. UPDATES

Motion to discuss Updates moved by Olivia, Peter seconds.

3a. PSG 2021 VIRTUAL MEETING UPDATE

Local Committee has it under control, a great group of people who are planning exciting stuff for the meeting. Jennifer Barrett from Connect Consulting has been guiding us through the process, she identified the platform for us. That's the main platform, video will be through Vimeo and Zoom. Platform has all the functionality we requested and is several \$1,000 under budget. We will be able to archive all talks. Will have concurrent sessions but you can go back and see all talks. Have that option for up to a year or longer if we decide to take it. Don't have to stress about missing talks you wanted to see. Can ask questions before, during, and after talks. Posters - can answer questions throughout the meeting. Allows folks to be more engaged. Have the ability to live stream for concurrent sessions, if we need to do that. Nice to have the capability. Will have a web and mobile app. Can record talks ahead of time, can make sure talks are under 12/13 minutes. Make sure we have time for live Q and A. Great platform to host virtual field trips.

Registration started at the beginning of the month on Cvent, Adrian heading that up. If you haven't been on the event site already, please do. Registration has been a little slow. We only have had 18 people registered as of yesterday when I got the latest report. For folks who have done this before, how does this track with normal years? Is this normal or should I be seeing 100 registrants at this point?

Comment: It's pretty typical to have pretty low registration and low abstract submission until you get to the deadline or closer to a deadline.

Comment: I can look at the numbers from last year. I don't think it is going to matter in some ways because this is so different, because nobody has to make their travel plans or anything. So I feel like this is going to be one where people almost would just go to the last minute, so I wouldn't worry about it.

Comment: There was a suggestion from one of our members that I want to take to heart. I had gotten some feedback about the price structure and there was a concern that we were coming in pretty expensive compared to other meetings that are going on or will be going on. Contact me if they have any specific questions about the price structure. I don't think we've ever publicly justified price structure to the membership before. This is new for us. I feel pretty confident about our budget and I feel pretty confident about our price structure based on the

budget that we all agreed upon. Please talk to me if anyone has any concerns. But for now, I'm just getting feedback from folks and seeing where that stands, but personally I think it's fairly reasonable but if others disagree, then we can have a conversation.

Comment: Just some cliff notes on why we priced it that way. And I mean it was mainly based on the fact that when we decided on the prices we just wanted to cover our costs, not to get any profit. But we also didn't really know how much things were going to cost, and Jennifer Barrett's contract is \$20,000 so that's quite a bit. Especially when we don't have some of the sources of income during the meeting this year. And then the other thing is that students are free. And so basically everybody else's kind of paying for the students. So, and then there's also an opportunity for people to request a reduced rate because of COVID. So I think we figured that most people that went to this meeting in previous years were paying \$300 for registration plus travel costs and everything so that \$150 would not be a lot, relatively speaking. At that time we didn't really know how much other people were charging for their meetings because it was the beginning of all this. I think given some of our costs are less like the platform, we probably could have asked for a little bit less, but it's kind of late now. But I think the big message is that people who can pay the full price are supporting students and others who can't afford it this year.

Comment: I think one of the reasons that this topic came up is that the Waterbirds Society recently held a virtual meeting. Registration was only \$35 which seems like a pretty large contrast. But the difference is that their conference was held entirely on zoom. So they put an extreme amount of volunteer time into producing a link for every single session that happened. One suggestion that I was thinking of is just to provide some sort of details, even just on the event that just mentioned that we are using a different platform and that we have outside help in producing the meeting because that would at least give some justification to charging more because we're providing something that's potentially more professional.

Comment: Yeah. And at the time we didn't really know how many attendees we would have. I mean, normally we have 300 so we were budgeting based on that, but it's conceivable that we could have 500 people because so many people can attend. Because of the nomination process for federal employees, a lot of people can't attend PSG every year. This year, we should have a lot more, but we don't know that until it happens.

Comment: We set the price and there's not, not a lot that we can do about it now. I like your suggestion, although I am a little bit concerned, but I think we could add some language to the website. Not necessarily saying this is better than what is being offered at other meetings, but just highlighting the functionality of the platform that we're using. So I think it's going to be going to be great.

Comment: I just attended a state of the science workshop that New York held and they used the ~~Heever~~ Whova platform. And it's fabulous. It worked really, really well. It was \$200 and nobody griped about paying for that at all. And it was actually short, it was like four half days.

Comment: Not to belabor this point but I'd be happy to send a post out to the listserv, not trying to justify our price, but a forward looking perspective on what we're trying to do. A part of this is if there is some surplus from this meeting, it could not only support students for our next in person meeting, but also help reduce costs on our next in person meeting. But I think more importantly the message to portray is that this isn't a one off for us, you know, we're looking to transition to a virtual meeting maybe every other year or if not, that at least having a virtual meeting as part of every meeting going forward to. So I think that also supports the approach being taken of a more professional and sustainable meeting and not really 100% reliant on volunteer effort.

Comment: I put that link with the language that we do have on the event website that we did change. But if anyone has ideas or thoughts or suggestions about how to make that better or different things that we could add, especially if you're on the committee, please feel free.

Comment: Fundraising. We have a fantastic fundraising crew. They have sent out the first round of letters, so Regional Reps, they may be contacting you, if they haven't already to support their efforts in targeting people within your region. Please be proactive too and that's a message for everyone on EXCO if you have ideas for potential sponsors. We're trying to hit folks that we don't normally contact. We have a lot coming in already. And we have a couple of larger potential donations that we're waiting to hear back from so hopefully by the next meeting we will have a lot more to report on that. Silent auction items are being solicited and there is a link in the report, so please take a look at that. And if you have something to share for the silent auction, please go to the site and check it out. We've been pushing a lot of our messaging through the communications committee and you guys did awesome thank you very, very much and more to come. So expect to see on a rolling basis, a lot more about the meeting coming out.

We have several social events planned for the meeting. We still have a little bit of work to do on defining what the opening kind of reception is going to look like. But we also have a field fails social event ~~that~~^{that's} got a bunch of people signed up for it already, so looking forward to that. A couple of student events planned as well, the typical events that we have for students, the ECS panel and then also the student mentor gathering. We are looking for mentors, as we always are. We have a good group of potential panel members for the early career scientist panel. I think that's going to be really, really great. We are reaching out to a lot of folks that I feel like we haven't in the past. So I think that was going to be a great session because there's going to be a lot of fresh voices there which I'm really excited for.

Field trips - we solicited a bunch of field trip ideas and we got more than we can handle. We have great ~~great~~ field trips planned for you. So if you haven't signed up for the meeting yet go to the event and see what we've got. I also put descriptions of all the field events in the report. But it's going to be, it's going to be cool. It's going to be a really neat part of this meeting and I'm for one. I'm very excited about it.

Merchandise - get your merchandise now, the store's open. Once we sell 30 or 40 items, anyone getting on the site can search for PSG and get our merch. So currently, you have to have the link to get to our pages on the merch site. Please go ahead and do it early, so that we can get that site searchable.

Yes, Jen said there are banners available. Now that we're getting those donations in for those of you who haven't seen the fundraising letter at certain levels of fundraising. We are giving those sponsors certain perks, one of them is having their logo on the banner at various points of the meeting. So thank you for the reminder again.

Comment: Great, thanks. This is an awesome effort to see everything coming together. I am super impressed with all that you and others are doing. Thanks to everybody for stepping in and venturing out into new territory here for our annual meeting.

Comment: Another thing I wanted to add quickly is that we're going to be looking for session administrators/monitors in addition to some of the technical assistance that Jen and her crew are going to give us. We're going to have people to help with each session to like communicate questions or watch out for trolls. Let me know if anyone's interested in doing that.

3b. PSG 2021 SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM UPDATE

We're talking about having up to four concurrent sessions. Of course, this will depend on how many abstracts we get. And at this point in time we only have one and the deadline's Monday. So I've gotten a lot of encouragement to extend the deadline. And then we've got a couple special sessions, one of them is going to be a discussion panel. There are a couple really great people on the scientific programming committee as well. They're putting together a couple of sessions that are their ideas and they're just moving forward with it and doing a great job. One of them is going to be a discussion panel about wildfires and marbled murrelets and we're going to have some marbled murrelet biologists as well as some fire biologists on this panel, it'll be probably an hour discussion panel, maybe 55 minutes with five minutes of transition. Then a celebratory symposium on the bird banding lab - 100th anniversary. This was done in a different meeting, taking that and refocusing on seabirds. Some ideas - Wisdom the albatross, albatross banding and demography projects.

Plenary speakers - great news, Scott Edwards confirmed. He's a Harvard biologist that does some seabird work and he rode his bike across the country this year to sort of bring awareness to the Black Lives Matter movement. I'm super excited about that. Heather Renner is also going to give a plenary. For now, just one plenary per day. The third one could be the lifetime award achievement lifetime achievement award recipient.

I've got a couple people queued up, one person from New Zealand and one person from India. We're trying to take the opportunity this year, having a virtual meeting, to expand our horizons and invite people from around the world. I've offered free registration for plenary speakers. I hope I didn't overstep considering the fact that we usually pay their travel costs.

Comment: Usually for invited speakers it's a free ride - registration, banquet, etc. That's no problem. There's a fair number of usually federal employees who can't take that free offer and end up having to pay for registration and everything on their own. It would probably be good to send out a message today to extend the abstract deadline, just so that people aren't trying to work through a holiday weekend to get an abstract in on Monday.

Roberta will send out a message today about extending the abstract deadline.

Comment: An idea from a member - have a late, breaking abstract deadline in January, and then all of those submissions are posters. Something to think about. And number two is thinking about maybe two plenaries per day. Making some of those plenaries people that have received PSG conservation awards throughout the world doing stuff in seabird research poor areas.

Comment: I'll have to get that information from you on who those people are.

Jane will send Roberta information on who has received conservation awards from PSG.

Comment: Thanks very much to put all this together and also everybody who's chipped in with Cvent, that's a huge effort.

3c. AWARDS UPDATE

I'll reach out to Dave over the holiday weekend. It sounds like he's gotten one proposal for a lifetime achievement award, at least for one person. I'm not sure how many he has. But I'll follow up and send out a report.

Rob will follow up with Dave about Awards.

3d. TREASURER'S UPDATE

Accounting is up to date, the accountant has looked at everything. In order to set up a payment site for auction this year, we need to set up a PayPal Pro or Stripe account. I recommend a Stripe account. Fees are similar to Square, which we already have. PayPal's pricing is opaque and frustrating. Would increase our fee spending by 1.5% and there is a fixed fee by country that can be exorbitant. Not sure there are any drawbacks to having both Stripe and Square accounts. Will give LOCO/EXCO reps access for silent auction. Can't send money out, but these accounts are linked to our bank account so wanted to let everyone know.

Comment: Stripe account sounds great to me. One question on fixed assets - world seabird database, it shows a value and net appreciation. What is the purpose of this? I don't know the history.

Comment: Good question. We donated money to this a while ago, I'll find out more information for you from the accountant. She has described it to me before.

Comment: My guess is that it's a piece of equipment. We bought an item and it doesn't gain/lose value.

Kirsten will set up a Stripe account for silent auction.

3e. ELECTIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE

We've had a lot of success - lots of "yes" answers. Not sure if it's easier for people to access meetings since it is virtual, not worried about paying to go to the meeting. Just need one more person for three regional rep positions. If you have suggestions, let us know. We would like to have at least 2 people running for each position. We're especially happy to have 2 people for the Chair-Elect position. Will be getting bios up and running soon. Marc is helping with SurveyMonkey stuff, which is key.

Comment: Can we draw from this pool to recruit replacements for Katie and Jane?

Comment: I think so. I will pursue that.

Comment: Just one thing, if it looks like COVID is not going to go away and we're going to have another virtual meeting, it would be good to have either a backup LOCO chair or start looking in the spring.

Comment: If it's looking like that, I'm willing to carry on until we can find someone else or actively look for someone to take that place. Learning a lot helping with the Elections Committee. I see future Chairs in the group of people on the LOCO. These are people we can draw upon for years to come.

Comment: Yeah I agree, that it is very exciting to see all this contribution from new faces and really incredible input. PSG has been struggling with that for years.

Jane will look into people to step into Elections Committee Co-Chair roles.

3f. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

2 volunteers who have volunteered to take over for Emma. Both helping with LOCO, plugged in to PSG. Have a handbook that was started a few membership coordinators ago, added to with each coordinator. Will be passing it off in the next month. Hopefully new people can join in the next EXCO meeting. When I started it was during an annual meeting, so hopefully we can have a similar introduction for new folks. Wieteke and I have been working on the membership drive for the end of the year. 4 weeks of thematic appeals to both listserv people and social media. Different aspects of what it means to be a PSG member and bolster membership, especially in a

year when people might not be renewing for the annual meeting. Waiting on art from someone, will send out the first round next week.

Question: We had talked before about automatic renewal for memberships. What did we need to do to have that happen?

Ans: For security reasons, CVENT doesn't save credit card information. Could have an option for monthly payments. Might have more interest in smaller payments over time.

Comment: Okay, thanks. At some point it might be something they update or change within that site, they've been updating it over the years. Maybe that something for those people who might want to link PayPal or something like that. Having the option could help prevent lapses.

Comment: That would be great. It could allow us to have the option for monthly payments, which wouldn't make a difference on our end, but might make people more interested if they're paying a couple dollars a month.

Question: What is our current membership and where do we want to be?

Ans: I just pulled them a couple weeks ago, we sent out an email to lapsed members two weeks ago. I'll pull them again so we can see how these different phases do. I didn't look at the numbers but I will follow up.

Emma will follow up about current membership numbers.

3g. COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE

Theo has big family commitments, someone may need to step in to help with regional reports. Social media and website are moving along, everyone is doing great! Working with LOCO on website. Suggestion of DEI panel/workshop, working with Marc and Roberta on that. Some sponsors were concerned that we are asking the same as an in-person meeting, not sure what they'll get with sponsorship since we won't have tables. Wanted clarity on why it is more expensive than other meetings (Waterbirds). Good to make it clear to sponsors that we are charging more for a better platform and conference organizer. Working with Kirsten to separate out what a plenary costs PSG in a way that sponsors feel like they're not just feeding PSG's pockets.

Comment: There is a possibility that people who donate are able to display through the platform. Will have to talk to Jenn.

Comment: Important for people to remember than we are potentially going into an expensive meeting in San Diego in 2020.

Comment: Robb Kaler has helped get regional reports and with copy editing in the past, and I have as well. I will ask him if he's willing to help.

Marc will ask Robb Kaler about helping with regional reports.

Question: Rob, did you reach out to Theo? Or do we still need to do that.

Ans: Robb has reached out to him to let him know that he is available. Not sure if he has heard back.

Comment: Wanted to put in another plug for a DEI panel. Went to Waterbirds, it was a 3 hour panel and then smaller discussion. Thought it was well done and valuable. Don't have to replicate exactly, but important to elevate people of color within our membership.

Comment: Maybe we can have a separate discussion. Would love to hear more about it.

Comment: It also happened a week after the meeting, not during the whole thing. Helped set it apart.

Comment: Spoke to Theo about a few things. Do you know where the other issue is, how close?

Comment: I think it is almost done. Hopefully just needs copy edits.

Comment: Have you had that conversation with him? Or is that something we should ask Robb about to try to help him get that one out the door? It'd be nice to wrap that up and get it off of Theo's plate.

Comment: First issue is the stuff from the meeting. And the second issue is the regional reports from this year. They could come out together. Second issue hasn't been started?

Comment: That was my read from Theo. ~~That the~~ That the second issue would not come out until spring of 2021 most likely. I think that's when it came out last time, too, but that'd be great if we could help him move that went along, faster, but for now I'm thinking, how about the first issue. How can we just get that one out the door; we can take care of the second issue after that.

Comment: I think that's going to be super simple. Have the regional rep solicitations gone out?

Comment: The lists of members have been made; it hasn't been sent out.

Emma will send out the list of regional members to the Regional Reps.

Comment: As I understand it, Robb was waiting to hear from Theo to tell him when to begin solicitation of the regional reports, but there's no reason why we can't just get them now. So I think that's a good idea.

3h. NPAWG

I got an email about the North Pacific Albatross Working Group and there is some interest or question as to why it's not more of a formal committee within PSG. That discussion did occur in the beginning. What I remember is that the people who organized it originally felt they didn't need to follow the committee guidelines and the reporting structure. But there was also the other

part of that discussion that they are more informational - not like MMTC where they're working on survey protocols, things like that that needed to be reviewed and a PSG sign off on a product. We could revisit the topic, but that is what I remember.

Comment: One of the reasons that I've heard from Jo is that originally technical committees were supposed to be temporary. That's since changed, but the idea was that there wasn't a conservation issue that the committee was formed around to resolve. It was all albatross species, but they weren't trying to get their listing status changed or something. Since then, the technical committees have just remained.

Comment: Yeah, and part of the discussion initially was when there was a petition for Black-footed Albatross to be listed. I think part of it too is evaluating what the benefit for NPAWG is in a more formal connection to PSG because it doesn't seem like there's much benefit in changing.

Comment: That sounds great. I'll report back to Greg and let you know. I think it was mostly just that Greg wasn't really around when NPAWG was formed. So, he was unclear and he said, many of the current members were unclear what relationship NPAWG had with PSG. He wants to clarify that for the folks who are participating in that working group. If there was any benefit or if EXCO felt like we would like to have that relationship formalized, they would be open to it. So maybe this would be appropriate for a conversation when we have our all day meeting in February. In addition to giving us a report, maybe Greg could touch on that and we could have a discussion about it.

Comment: Yeah, that sounds great.

Comment: Maybe one benefit is just that we give them space at the annual meeting we provide them with electronics, that kind of thing. That's the benefit that I see.

Comment: If anyone wants to participate in conceptualizing this DEI panel, maybe we could meet in December. If anyone is interested, let us know.

Marc will report back to Greg about NPAWG's relationship with PSG.

4. ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn moved by Roberta, Kirsten seconds

Abstentions: 0, Nays: 0, Yays: 12, motion passes

25 NOVEMBER AGENDA

(* Indicates need for a vote)

1. Roll call & approve agenda*
2. Approve minutes 30 September 2020*
3. Updates

- 3a. PSG Virtual Meeting 2021 Update
- 3b. PSG 2021 Scientific Program Update
- 3c. Awards Update
- 3d. Treasurer's Update
- 3e. Elections Committee Update
- 3f. Membership Committee Update
- 3g. Communications Committee Update
- 4. Action items and adjourn