

MINUTES OF THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

14 April 2022 Conference Call

15:00-16:45pm (Pacific Standard Time – UTC-8)

Amended and Approved on 25 May 2022

Present: Roberta Swift (Past Chair), Dick Veit (Chair-Elect), Rachel Sprague (Chair), Sadie Wright (Secretary), Jenny Howard McKee (Treasurer), Alexis Will (Alaska/Russia Regional Representative), Peter Hodum (Vice Chair for Conservation), Tegan Carpenter-Kling (Europe/Africa Regional Representative), Sarah Ann Thompson (Northern California Regional Representative), Karen Lau Alarcon (Student Representative), Laura Koehn (Washington/Oregon Regional Representative), Kerry Woo (Canada Regional Representative), José Ramirez-Garofalo (Non-Pacific U.S. States Regional Representative), JB Thiebot (Asia/Oceania Regional Representative) [14].

*Note: José and Sarah Ann joined during voting item #2 and Peter and Tegan left before ExCo voted on item #3.

Absent: Cristián Suazo (S. California, Latin America, Hawaii Regional Representative) [1].

Others present: Wieteke Holthuijzen (Communications Committee Co-Coordinator), Anna Vallery (Communications Committee Co-Coordinator), Rob Suryan (Former Chair), Derek Harvey (EID Committee Co-Coordinator), Katie Stoner (EID Committee Co-Coordinator), Laney White (HELPS Committee Coordinator) [6].

Review of participants/roll call.

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, & REVIEW AGENDA

Comment: I know we need to add at least one item.

Comment: Yes, the room block reservation in San Diego needs a signature by tomorrow. We don't need to vote, just need the Chair or Treasurer to sign it.

Comment: Okay, we can do that. Other items?

Comment: The Communications Committee would like to distribute the post-meeting survey. Can we add this to the end of the agenda?

Comment: Yes, we can add that as item #7.

Motion to approve the Agenda: moved by Roberta, seconded by Kerry.

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

1. APPROVE 21 FEBRUARY 2022 MINUTES

Questions: Any changes to the draft minutes? Shaking heads, so it looks like we need a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting.

Motion to approve the 21 February 2022 minutes; moved by Dick, seconded by Peter.

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

REVIEW FEBRUARY 21 ACTION ITEMS

1. Peter will draft a listserv post requesting team input from PSG regarding development of new swag and share it with ExCo for review/input. **Peter has not done this, and asks to keep it on the list.**
2. Future agenda item: Need to discuss sidebars on what documents and information should be shared on the ExCo Google Drive (privacy concerns). **Sadie/Rachel will meet to discuss where to fit this on a future agenda.**
3. May/June agenda item: Sadie and Louise will touch base to add an agenda item to discuss the future ExCo vision for Marine Ornithology more fully. **Sadie will contact Louise and ask if she can bring this item to the May 2022 PSG ExCo meeting.**
4. Regional Reps should think about who can be corresponding members and who can help out the Corresponding Members Committee, and provide those thoughts to Wieteke and Carlos. **Done.**
5. Future agenda item(s): Need to discuss making 2022 annual meeting content available after the meeting, workshops between meetings, and possible membership/registration waivers for Committee leads. **Sadie/Rachel will meet to discuss where to fit this on a future agenda.**
6. Everyone should think about who would be good ExCo officer/regional rep candidates and submit those suggestions to Jane. **Done.**
7. JB will bring a formal proposal to ExCo to vote at a future meeting on changing the name of the Northeast Asia Seabird Conservation Committee. **We reviewed the process and he will do this.**
8. Roberta and Rachel will reach out to Brad Keitt to get ABC's perspective on PSG having a delegate to that organization. **They will do this in the next day or so. Keep this on this list.**
9. Everyone should send suggestions for a new PSG delegate to the Ornithological Council to Roberta. **Keep this on the list.**
10. ExCo will review Roberta's report (#16) regarding the PSG Honorarium Policy for invited speakers and panelists, add suggestions and revisions, and ExCo will finalize a PSG Honorarium Policy. **Roberta will bring this to an ExCo meeting later this year.**
11. Sadie will send/email ExCo with a fillable conflict of interest form for them to sign and send back prior to our next meeting. **Done.**

2. CODE OF CONDUCT UPDATE AND VOTE ON TERMS OF REFERENCE

Overview: Good to see everyone. Here we are again, and hopefully near the end of this with the Code of Conduct. What we have today is the Terms of Reference, and we need the ExCo to vote on that. In the first page of the report is the rundown of next steps. We need to send a message out to the listserv about the terms of reference, which we will also post on the website. The list of scenarios is for us to use, but it will not be on the website. Next steps will also include, we need to add at least three more people on the code of conduct committee. A couple of highlights in the terms of reference: the limits of authority. We went back and forth on jurisdiction and private space. What we agreed on is during PSG activity (listserv, venue hosted by PSG) any interaction can be reviewed by the committee. When an activity moves into a private space, such as outside the venue after a meeting, the only complaints the code of conduct can review are those that are relevant to PSG activities. It took us awhile to sort that out, but I think we are in a good place now. We wanted to be clear that this is the perspective of the current committee, and we can modify the terms of reference in the future if future ExCo and/or code of conduct committee want to revise. There is some text about bystanders filing complaints. Those

complaints would need to include the person who the action occurred against. Complaints will not be filtered by ExCo; the code of conduct committee will review them all. We added a case appeal process. This gives an opportunity for the person who the complaint was filed against to appeal the decision. We also added a modification process for future groups to consider. The terms of references also includes a description of voting and quorums. I'll leave it there but let me know about questions.

Comment: Rob I wanted to add about interpretation. We didn't want to make it so restrictive that the next code of conduct committee couldn't implement the terms of reference differently.

Comment: Right. If there are no thoughts or comments, it would be up for a vote.

Question: I'm wondering about the composition of the committee. I know that we had talked previously about training for the committee?

Comment: Yes, the terms of reference talks generally about wanting diversity in gender, age, and other characteristics on the committee. We did also talk about training, but without specifically knowing what training to require, we did not include that requirement. Training in conflict and implicit bias is encouraged.

Comment: I thought we had a sentence about encouraging training, but I'm not seeing that here.

Comment: I think that what Katie said about training in implicit bias is important.

Comment: I know we removed language about requiring training.

Question: Is this at a point where ExCo could add a recommended or encouraged training?

Comment: Amending the terms of reference would require a vote by the ExCo and code of conduct committee.

Comment: It's up to the ExCo what they want to do. My interpretation of the process is that we have an agreed upon terms of reference that the ExCo needs to vote on.

Comment: Right. I want the ExCo to understand where we are at. We've been trying to do this with the three members of the ad hoc code of conduct committee.

Comment: I think if we want to add language about training, we would have to defer our vote.

Comment: I think we could add the language and vote today, and the code of conduct committee could review and vote later. But maybe this is getting hung up on something unnecessary. But if someone has major concerns, we should talk about that now. But if you think this is a good place to start and a good framework to help ExCo move forward, we should vote to accept this.

Comment: To follow up, there has been a lot of language that has been added and removed. For example, we did recommend training, and that was removed because we didn't specify exact training. It's a balance of general and specific requirements. For example, we asked generally for diverse representation and it's up to ExCo and the committee to fulfill that. For training, there was not agreement in specific training requirement so it was all shelved. PSG should champion and encourage people on the committee to take training.

Question: Can we vote to accept the terms of reference as they are and discuss the training at the next ExCo meeting?

Comment: If you want to modify the terms of reference, we should do that now.

Comment: We can vote to accept the terms as they are now. We can modify and amend in the future.

Comment: The EIDs role is to potentially advise on what type of training for folks on the code of conduct committee, so I'm happy to bring this back to the EID to see what they think.

Comment: I think that's a perfect avenue to determine what type of training is encouraged. Thank you Katie.

Comment: Ok good. So do we have a motion to vote on the terms of reference? Or are there further questions?

Motion to approve the terms of reference as written for the Code of Conduct Committee Terms of Reference; moved by Dick, Peter seconds.

Abstentions, 0: Nays, 0: Yays, 14, motion passed unanimously

Comment: Ok, so we will go forward using these accepted terms of reference for the Code of Conduct committee. I think we all recognize that we want to do this better going forward and want to leave room for growth and improvement, but I think this is a good place to start. We need to start somewhere. Thank you especially to Rob and Roberta for taking so much time to do this. We now have an opportunity to add more folks to the Code of Conduct committee.

Comment: My thought is to reach out directly to PSG members and the listserv and cast a wide net, and ask for a simple description for why they want to participate in the committee. The decision is up to us. It would be nice to have a statement of why.

Comment: I think that's reasonable. Not a long application but a paragraph.

Question: Do you think we can ask for reference or two? In case it's someone we don't know?

Comment: Having references would be nice, but I wonder if that's asking too much for a volunteer?

Comment: Maybe we can go back to the person if we have a ton of applications? Given this is the first round, it would be good to get a schedule of staggered terms.

Comment: I'll coordinate with Roberta on sending something out. An email to the listserv. Lots of difficult discussion but I think we're in a good spot right now.

Rob and Roberta will coordinate to send a listserv email asking for more Code of Conduct Committee rep volunteers.

3. EID COMMITTEE DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY RESULTS AND LETTER TO EXCO

Overview: Katie—I would like to go through the results of the demographic survey and then we would like ExCo to vote on how we use those results. Our proposal is to include in the results in a peer-reviewed journal such as Marine Ornithology. The paper would include our methods, how we distributed it to members, and the results of multiple choice questions. 23 day distribution via Cvent to all current members. We received 198 responses of out of 590 current members. Examined gender (56% female, 40% male, 3% non binary, 1% queer). Also looked at gender by age. We asked people to list their highest education. We asked about country of residence, and here is a map of all the places where people said they were working on seabirds. Country of residence was 12, while country of work was 60. So there are a lot more countries where work is happening where membership isn't living, so this shows

there is room for increase. We asked about race and ethnicity. There was a lot of diversity listed. We also asked about long lasting or chronic condition and examined that relative to the US Census. Over 50% of PSG members have been members for 5 years or less. We asked questions about whether people feel welcomed to PSG and can share their culture and identity. We identified sources of bias and exclusion. I'll read through several quotes provided by members in the survey. The EID discussed these survey results and collectively wrote a letter to ExCo where we highlight specific concerns and recommendations. I'm going to read the letter. I'm happy to take any questions, I know that was a lot of information.

Comment: I think it would be really good, I do have some follow ups to determine how to implement a lot of your recommendations. I think a lot of this has been pending the finalization of the code of conduct committee's terms of reference. Now that we have that it would be good to have the EID Committee's help to draft some of this language and some of these protocols.

Question: I don't go on the listserv. How are these incidents being detected?

Comment: Everyone who monitors the listserv gets the email, everyone sees the rude or unsavory comments which have happened too often the last couple of years. In some cases, those conversations have moved into personal emails. We've responded to the offender directly, but not to the whole listserv. Some people thought it would go away, but it will be good to have quick text we can respond with and a process for evaluating incidents.

Question: Is it possible that offensive material slips by because it is not moderated?

Comment: Yes. There are over 1,000 people on the listserv. It depends, sometimes I don't see a bunch of the stuff until after it happens. There is a listserv manager, but posts don't go through her, she doesn't have to approve them. A listserv moderator is a suggestion, but that would take a lot of work and not everyone is available all the time. Some of it has been public and some of it is in personal emails regarding conversations on the listserv. Which is unacceptable.

Comment: One thing I would add, one question, Katie, so good to hear and receive the feedback. Do we need to amend the code of conduct to specify that it must be read, or can PSG just require that for attendance at meetings?

Comment: I think the code of conduct says it is voluntary, but that could be an issue. It's not binding. The recommendation is to require people to abide by it.

Comment: One part would be to delete the sentence that says it is voluntary, and the second part would be to add a checkbox anytime you submit something to PSG that says "I have read the code of conduct and will abide by it".

Comment: Perfect. A simple check box. Another thing is that Verena filters a lot out of the listserv. It's only members who's messages go straight to the listserv. Non-members posts get reviewed and filtered by Verena and sometimes it takes a long time for those posts to appear. And the other thing, Katie, is about perception. Every time there has been a complaint about listserv activity, there has always been a response back to the person who posted the negative post, but there hasn't been a response back out to the listserv letting folks know that happened. There is conflicting opinions about how quickly to block people.

Comment: I think the problem is that PSP members don't know that's happening and assume that nothing is being done. It appears that there is no accountability.

Comment: I think one way we can handle that is to have a blanket post that says "there have been some recent inappropriate posts and we are taking action." I also think about the code of conduct voluntary language; I also think it shouldn't be voluntary. When you join a group you are agreeing to certain things, so there should be social sideboards. But I think we would have to have a vote to remove that voluntary language. The members approved the voluntary language.

Comment: It was voted on by membership.

Comment: We can check the bylaws. I don't know the structure for amending the code of conduct. Maybe that can be an action item for me to look into.

Rachel and others will examine the PSG Bylaws to determine the process for amending a PSG policy.

Comment: I'm trying to be mindful of time and EID has some very important items here, so are you looking for a vote on use of the survey data? And additional items need to be addressed and we need more discussion. What are the most valuable things to help with now?

Comment: EID can generate a list of the most important items from the letter. I'll send that to Sadie. It would be helpful to get a vote on how we can use the demographic survey data today.

- 1. EXCO: Determine process for revising the Code of Conduct, and adding acknowledgement to PSG-associated activities (membership, listserv, award nominations, etc.)**
- 2. EXCO+EID: Develop language for monthly reminder to be sent out to members from EXCO email.**
- 3. EXCO+EID: Develop protocol and language for written statement responses to potential Code of Conduct violations and/or incidents.**
- 4. EXCO+EID: Develop language for guidelines for appropriate listserv content to be distributed monthly to listserv users.**
- 5. EXCO+EID+Communication Committee: Develop plan for listserv moderation including identifying a group of moderators.**

Question: So Katie you're thinking of using the responses to the multiple choice, not the descriptive comments?

Comment: Right, we wouldn't use the short answer responses, just the multiple choice. The way we see this is, as we were putting this in context, it's really difficult to find information from our field specifically, or other more general fields. So we think it's valuable to get this out there for other organizations to refer to.

Question: These data are so fantastic, especially the quantitative data. Are there any unintended consequences that people can think of as far as sharing these results?

Comment: The only thing I can think of is having people hesitate in joining our organization.

Comment: I would think that the fact that we're trying to publish it in itself is showing that we're trying address this, and would override any negative feelings towards PSG.

Comment: The other thing that would be useful in the journal is to explain what we are doing with the data.

Comment: Having that context is part of the discussion of a publication. Is there a motion?

Motion to approve the EID Committee preparing and submitting a manuscript summarizing the results of the multiple choice questions from the demographic survey; moved by Roberta, Dick seconds.

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

Question: Katie, have you seen similar results and surveys from other organizations?

Comment: I have not. It's also challenging to find similar organizations with similar geographic ranges. If you know of any, please let me know.

Comment: I've looked for something and haven't seen anything like this published.

Comment: Thank you, EID. ExCo appreciates what you've done to gather this information and determine some action items. Any other thoughts on this topic right now? Okay, moving to the next item.

4. PROPOSED NEW ENDOWMENT BOARD TRUSTEE

Overview: This was Kirsten's effort, so please review the report to be aware. We have two trustees along with the Treasurer, me, to make these decisions. One trustee needs to step off immediately and Kirsten found a volunteer who is interested in seabirds because of his daughter's involvement in PSG, and has a 40-year history in financial work. His name is Gary Collar. Jenny reads through the description in the report.

Motion to approve Gary Collar as the new PSG Endowment Fund trustee; moved by Jenny, Roberta seconds.

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

Comment: Any further discussion about Gary? I appreciate Kim and Dan's recommendation about having someone who has more of a background in finance and passing interest in seabirds, so Gary looks great. Will he replace Jim immediately?

Comment: Yes, that is my understanding. So if anyone has a recommendation for replacing Ken, if you could refer them to me, that would be great!

All: Anyone with a recommendation for a new PSG Endowment Fund trustee should send Jenny their suggestions.

5. FORMER CHAIRS MEETING UPDATE

Overview: Rob—I wanted to make sure everyone was aware of this report, especially Roberta, aware of the Former Chairs report, because I actually didn't know it existed most of last year. A couple of things to mention, you can look through there, but Alan Burger mentioned that he was interested in local hosting a meeting in British Columbia. Also Doug Bercham was mentioned for that. Roberta, you're kind of on the hook for finding a meeting location to keep us thinking 3 years out. Also Nina Karnofsky mentioned that we've always said Asilomar is too small to bring a meeting back to, but Nina mentioned that with our new hybrid meetings, maybe it's a good place to consider. The announcement went out about Julia Parrish's about a 10K donation for former chairs to be focused on student research grants. There was also discussion about a student equipment market place and they are very supportive about that. For example, if someone has extra binoculars or scopes or other items that they are willing to

donate, and they are into that opportunity, but they need someone to facilitate that. And then, there was support for creating a PSG institutional knowledge working group. Wieteke I guess this comes back to you. Discussion about having an email group that ExCo can send questions to. Does that sound doable? It's not just former chairs.

Comment: Yes, I think we could put something together for that. It depends on big the group is and the frequency of use. We could compile a list of folks and their expertise and that's the resource that's available. Or we could create a separate group.

Comment: That sounds good. I'll check in in with you. I think it's a tool to use for reaching out. Also just, I will act as a liaison for PSG former chairs for PSG 2023, and we have Mike Scott, who is one of the founding members and first chair for a couple years wants to join the local committee. So I'll reach out to the local committee. And that's it.

Rob and Wieteke will coordinate about how to create and email group or other group format for "PSG institutional knowledge" including former chairs and others.

Question: Rob, did I hear you right, the meeting after Seattle, isn't that Costa Rica?

Comment: Yes. Seattle, Costa Rica, then British Columbia.

Comment: Okay, thanks.

6. TREASURER'S UPDATE

Overview: I wanted to keep everyone updated. I took over for Kirsten and she's been fantastic in trying to get me up to speed. There is a lot so there is a lot of learning going on. The first thing I did is submit the information required to file taxes. The information on our end is done and I can update you at the next meeting about the status of our tax return/submission. The next thing is our SAM.gov account which is the system for our award management, so that is a government account, if you ever get grant from the federal government you have to have that. You have to renew it on an annual basis, so I just did that. For the third order, our quarterly financial review is attached. I want to figure out the best format to show everyone. Registration is down for the year, but I suspect that is because of how Cvent disperses funds, so I'll look into that. How often do you want financial reports? Do you want it monthly or quarterly? Another question is whether we can consolidate checking accounts. Right now we have 6 or 7 checking accounts to separate pots of money. That makes it easy to deposit to the right account, but could make it tricky in pulling out money from the wrong account. It could be easier to just manage one account and track how much money is in there from each pot. The last thing is that I think it could be a good time to do an audit. I think it has been since 2012 since our last audit, at least as far as the records I could see. And it could be good timing with a new treasurer stepping in. So those are the things I wanted to ask you about, and now I'll see if anyone has any thoughts or questions on that.

Comment: Do we want a financial report at every ExCo meeting, or is quarterly enough to see those profit loss statements?

Question: Do we know the precedent or requirement?

Comment: I think Kirsten did quarterly but I'm not sure I'm up to speed for what she did for every meeting. We could keep it to quarterly, or could make it more frequent near the meeting when that information is more important.

Comment: For new folks, we approve a budget annually, so the financial updates are more how on track are we. I'm fine with quarterly as long as you are tracking it monthly and keeping an eye on things. You could tell us about great news or things that are out of whack.

Comment: I don't see any reason to do it with increased frequency from what we already expect.

Comment: Okay sounds good. The next potential thing is consolidating checking accounts. I almost sent someone money from the wrong account. I don't see a need to have separate checking accounts. I can clearly label things in QuickBooks.

Comment: Some of it may be keeping some of the funds like for research out of the revolving account used for operating budget. One thing may be, we could table some of it to further discuss in more detail what each of the accounts are? We could reduce it to 2 or 3? QuickBooks has made it easier to code expenses and donations.

Comment: I can make this an action item for next month and go into more detail.

Comment: You could reach out to whoever was treasurer before Kirsten, or it's really up to you Jenny.

Comment: I'll table it for now and think through it a bit more. The last action item is an audit. I know that would cost money, and I could provide an estimate and we can vote on that. I just wanted to float the idea that an audit would be a good idea in the future.

Comment: Yes, I would be supportive of an audit. If anyone has worked with an organization that does that sort of thing and you'd recommend them, let Jenny know.

Jenny will bring to the next meeting details about a proposed audit and possibly consolidating checking accounts for an ExCo discussion/vote.

Comment: I think that's pretty much it. Feel free to reach out to me with questions.

7. Additional Item: APPROVAL TO SEND OUT THE POST-MEETING SURVEY

Overview: I think this was an added item to discuss or approve the post-meeting survey?

Comment: Yes, Anna had to leave early but I think she wanted to know that the survey is approved and that the questions looked good and that ExCo approves to send out the survey. I think she also wanted a list that she could send it to because she built the survey in Google Forms.

Comment: Right, and I think that she duplicated the post-meeting survey from past years into Google so that it could move into Google Drive. I remember thinking that it looked good, but I could have forgotten to email back. I don't think we need an actual vote. Does anyone have any notes or feedback?

Comment: I couldn't remember either. Anna did this last year.

Comment: I put the survey together a couple of times and I sent it to ExCo to review and comment, and then after that I send it out. There was no formal approval.

Comment: For sending it out, does that go through CVent?

Comment: I don't mind sending it through CVent if you send it to me. Then it would go to all registrants.

Comment: Okay, I will send you the link.

Wieteke and Anna will send Rachel a link to the post-meeting survey. Rachel will send the post-meeting survey to PSG 2022 meeting registrants via CVent.

Comment: Okay, and any content you want to go in the email.

Comment: Okay thank you.

Comment: Any other announcements? Let's go through action items.

Comment: Roberta and Rachel, maybe we need to talk about a theme for the next meeting?

Comment: I think it's all you, Dick. You can work with the Local Committee to come up with a theme. You don't need us to weigh in unless you want feedback from us.

Comment: It's up to you if you want to ask the LOCO. They may have some feedback. Or Roberta and I may be able to pull up past themes. Or the themes could be on the website.

Comment: Okay.

Sadie reads through all the action items from the past action items list and other items in red text above in the notes.

Comment: That's great everyone. Thanks for the great discussion. Let's get a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn the meeting; moved by Sadie, Dick seconds.

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