

MINUTES OF THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

29 June 2022 Conference Call

11:00am-12:30pm (Pacific Standard Time – UTC-8)

Amended and approved on 4 August 2022

Present: Roberta Swift (Past Chair), Rachel Sprague (Chair), Sadie Wright (Secretary), Dick Veit (Chair-Elect), Jenny Howard McKee (Treasurer) Sarah Ann Thompson (Northern California Regional Representative), Tegan Carpenter-Kling (Europe/Africa Regional Representative), Laura Koehn (Washington/Oregon Regional Representative), Kerry Woo (Canada Regional Representative), [9].

Absent: Peter Hodum (Vice Chair for Conservation), Karen Lau Alarcon (Student Representative), Alexis Will (Alaska/Russia Regional Representative), José Ramirez-Garofalo (Non-Pacific U.S. States Regional Representative), JB Thiebot (Asia/Oceania Regional Representative), Cristián Suazo (S. California, Latin America, Hawaii Regional Representative) [6].

Others present: Nacho Vilchis (Local Committee Coordinator), David Ainley (Marine Ornithology), Louise Bight (Marine Ornithology Editor), Pat Baird (PSG rep to Ornithological Council), Derek Harvey (EID Committee Co-Coordinator) [5].

Review of participants/roll call.

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, & REVIEW AGENDA

Comment: We have our quorum, we have our roll call. Let's look at the agenda. Does anyone have anything to add to the agenda? Any questions?

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

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

1. APPROVE 25 MAY 2022 MINUTES

Questions: Any comments, questions, additions for the draft minutes from the last meeting's minutes? Is there a motion to approve the minutes?

Motion to approve the 14 April 2022 minutes; moved by Kerry, seconded by Laura.

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

REVIEW MAY 25 ACTION ITEMS

1. Peter will share with ExCo a draft listserv post requesting team input from PSG regarding development of new swag. **Keep this.**
2. Rachel/Sadie will touch base regarding several potential future agenda items: a) listserv moderators, b) making 2022 annual meeting content available after the meeting, and c) workshops between meetings. **Keep this. We've added a couple of agenda items, but we can include these in the future.**
3. Rachel and Roberta will gather more information from Brad Keitt including contact info for the coordinator of the Bird Conservation Alliance, and bring the info back to ExCo. **Rachel and Roberta will gather more info from Brad Keitt and solicit a PSG rep to the Bird Conservation Alliance.**

4. Roberta will confirm with Doug and Pat want to be replaced as reps on the Ornithological Council. **Done.**
5. Rob and Roberta will coordinate to send a listserv email asking for more Code of Conduct Committee rep volunteers. **Done.**
6. Rachel will meet with the EID Committee to determine schedule/path to address these topics:
 - a. Develop language for monthly reminder to be sent out to members from EXCO email.
 - b. Develop protocol and language for written statement responses to potential Code of Conduct violations and/or incidents.
 - c. Develop language for guidelines for appropriate listserv content to be distributed monthly to listserv users.
 - d. Develop plan for listserv moderation including identifying a group of moderators. **Progress, but please keep this for next month.**
7. All: anyone with a recommendation for a new PSG Endowment Fund trustee should send Jenny their suggestions. **Keep this. Jenny will also ask current board for their suggestions.**
8. Rob and Wieteke will coordinate about how to create an email group or other group format for “PSG institutional knowledge” including former chairs and others. **Keep this.**
9. Roberta will move the draft Honorarium Policy into the Google Drive and enable ExCo folks to provide comments on the draft. **Done.**
10. Rachel will ask at the next Local Committee meeting if they would add waivers or reduced registration costs for committee leads to their annual meeting budget. **Nacho will consider this for the LoCo budget if it can be done.**
11. All: If anyone has ideas or suggestions from other groups for platforms that can provide registration, abstract submission, and memberships, let Rachel know. Rachel will reach out to SMM and WSU conference organizers (Charles and Lindsay, respectively) to get their thoughts. **Done.**
12. Rachel will reach out to Katie Stoner, Derek Harvey, Rob Suryan and others on the EID and Communications Committee regarding drafting revised language to indicate that the Code of Conduct is expected to be followed by PSG members. **Done.**

2. CVENT/MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT CONTRACT

Overview: PSG’s vendor for our membership database and what we use for abstract submission and event registration is Cvent. Roberta and others can speak about how helpful it is or not. It works for some things, but not well for others. It’s not the cheapest, and it is not the most user friendly, especially not for abstract submission. I just used Excel for abstract submission last year. I reached out to some of my friends and contacts at other organizations and got some info on what they used. We got a quote from Cvent. And a quote from XCD which is what Society of Marine Mammalogy uses, and they wouldn’t give us an exact quote but estimate they run around \$15,000/year. We’ve been paying about \$6,500 for Cvent. There are other membership database options like Wild Apricot that gets one of the better reviews, is around the same cost as Cvent without the abstract management, and may be more user friendly. We wanted to have a conversation with ExCo about this because ExCo approves the cost, and we’ve been with Cvent for awhile. Any questions?

Question: Has anyone tested Wild Apricot to see how it compares? Is that possible?

Comment: We haven’t tested it yet, and they do offer a free trial. So we could do that. That’s one of the suggestions in the report. We should at least look into the free trial.

Question: What will be the abstract submission process if we use Wild Apricot?

Comment: We could use a Google form that puts it into an Excel sheet anyway.

Comment: I think it would be worth trying then. I did a lot of the website management for CVent for a couple of years, and thought it was a pain. And it wasn't the best aesthetically. I think we could do better. Working with it from the Treasurer's standpoint, I have to email them regularly to get the money we're owed. And it doesn't seem like it should be that hard. Maybe Wild Apricot would be better.

Comment: The only negative I see, is that if we switch we'll have to move all of our membership into a new platform. We'd have to get another crew to help with that. Jennifer Urmston and Stephanie Loreda.

Comment: Maybe we could reach out to them and ask for help testing.

Comment: They've used CVent a little. I can ask them. Are you suggesting that we ask them to help test the free trial with Wild Apricot?

Comment: Yes, that would be helpful.

Question: When does CVent expire?

Comment: I think October. [CVent actually expires on August 15, 2022]

Comment: Okay, I will write to them right now and ask them.

Roberta will ask the Membership Committee to assist in testing Wild Apricot via free trial.

Comment: Okay, I'm assuming general consensus is that XCD is too expensive for us.

Comment: Yes, membership due and registration is double or triple what we are paying for PSG dues at SMM.

Comment: We're probably not ready for that now. Okay, that sounds like a good plan. Let's move on to Louise's agenda item.

3. FUTURE OF MARINE ORNITHOLOGY DISCUSSION

Overview: I had originally requested to speak to ExCo about the future of MO, but I'd like to shift our primary ask to be about increasing our annual budgetary ask from ExCo. And then some supplementary information and conclusions of my report to help inform a short discussion about how MO can move into the future. A bit of background, MO is the publication of PSG, in conjunction with most of the other world's seabird societies. But it is primarily a PSG initiative. I've been the managing editor for 7 years. We've been mostly self-sustaining on page fees and subscription fees with influxes of funding from PSG publication fund. We currently have budgeted \$6k/year and we've asked for that in full the past several years. The time has come to request more money from that fund. The cost of publication is increasing. See the conclusion of the report. Report 3b has the concluding statement. The recommendation today is that option 1 of our report be accepted. Increasing the maximum annual amount that can be request from \$6k to \$8500 to meet our current expenses. We can pay support folks a little bit more. The copy editing people are getting paid below current market rates. That's not sustainable in the long run. They do great work and we don't want to lose them. We have increased page charges slightly. A dramatic increase in page charges would require a discussion about long term vision. Any questions?

Question: It seems to me that page charges have skyrocketed for journals in general. PSG/MO page charges are very modest. You mentioned a different pay scale for students. We may want to consider increasing rates for institutional supported papers?

Comment: At the moment, if someone request a page charge waiver, someone from grad school or low income country (interestingly people from low income countries do not request waivers), we don't want to discourage higher impact papers and want to encourage people who may not be able to publish elsewhere. While I am not opposed to having a two tier or three tier rates, we could do that, and increase page charges, but I'd like to have a discussion about what that means for deterring submissions. We get a lot of push back on page charges, and David and I push back on that, particularly for authors from institutions. I understand from conversation with Kirsten when she was the treasurer that we do have funds for this and this is an appropriate use of those funds. How much does ExCo want to support MO in that way? MO is held in high regard. We get high impact authors who publish with us and those from low income countries.

Question: What is the average length of submission pieces?

Comment: It's pretty varied. We get quite a few short notes for first records. We also get very long papers that publish decades of data. 1500 words to 10,000 word. The average page charge would be \$480.

Comment: That's really not much compared to other journals.

Comment: Flat fees is another option, but with all the short notes we get, that would not be fair to those authors.

Comment: I do like the idea of subsidizing so we can reduce page charges overall. I would look to Jenny to let us know if the \$2500 annual increase is significant and affordable.

Comment: That is significant but I'll dig into it whether it's affordable.

Comment: One thing I'll note, is that I did not provide this report to ExCo at least a week in advance of this meeting. So for funding requests of greater than \$2000, we need to have a week to review, so we'll want to mull this over until our next meeting in order to vote on a \$2500 increase.

Comment: I feel like this decision may be based on where the money is coming from. I think our general fund has extra funds, but I know there is a limit in how much we can take out each year. I'd prefer to wait until next month to take a vote so we can get all the information together. Is that all right with you Louise?

Comment: Yes, that would be fine. One thing to keep in mind is that I don't think the amount for the publication fund has ever been increased, so this would be just catching up.

Comment: I like the idea of keeping it affordable for everyone, and also understand that people who need support often don't ask for it. That's a barrier.

Comment: I've said to people, we can waive it all, and they'll say, no, we can pay it. And these are people from poor countries and that represents a significant portion of their budget. We can't continue to publish without more funds or increasing page charges quite a bit.

Comment: This is a social equity issue. There are a lot of organizations that are deliberating over social equities these days. Other journals are trying to run at a profit, so that's why publications costs are going

up, which is selecting against the people who don't have the money. I do see it as a major selection factor against the people who don't have the money, and am happy that MO is socially equitable.

Comment: Thanks David for being explicit about it. That's the reality.

Comment: Thanks to both of you for the input and everything that you put into it. Maybe it's time to put our money where our mouths are. Rachel has asked me to moderate for the rest of the meeting, so I'll try to do that. Anyone else have anything else they want to say?

Comment: If we increase to \$8500 as proposed, are we just squeaking by or do you anticipate we'll be good?

Comment: The budget that I sent shows that it puts us in a comfortable position, but that's an excellent question because costs continue to go up, including mailing. I think we'd be in a good position for a couple of years. I think ExCo needs to think about the future of the journal, and that's a broader conversation that needs to happen. There are options to have PSG publish MO, but have the day to day management done by a science publisher and I've suggested pansoft Canada publishing or ornithological press. OUP has taken over Auk and Condor. We could put in a proposal to them. Since I've submitted this report I've heard back from Canada publishing, and they are not for profit. Good journals there. Two years ago they said they were not interested. I contacted them a week ago, and they are now interested in considering MO now. TBD. They'd take over running the journal, and they are consistent with what we want to do. The model we have now, the finances and amount of time are not sustainable. It runs mainly by volunteer time. David, Ben, Ben's assistant for the internet, me, and my assistant. That's contingent upon volunteers. I'm going to be stepping down from MO. I've received an appointment and can't do both. My recommendation will be to serious look at Canadian publishing. Or else ExCo will need to replace me. And that's a lot to ask. You might not be able to find something.

Comment: That's going to be rough when you leave.

Comment: Congratulations Louise, but bummer for us.

Comment: I have a meeting with Canadian publishing next week and I'll let you know what they say. Often they'll allow us to keep our own editor in chief.

Comment: What percent of the endowment fund can we take from for publication of MO?

Comment: I want to get that for us next month. I'll have that out a week in advance.

Comment: Is there an upper limit?

Comment: I'll have that next month. I don't want to misspeak.

Comment: Is the endowment fund increasing each year?

Comment: It depends on what it's invested in. It had been increasing. There is an upper limit on what we can withdraw. I have to double check the amount.

Comment: Is that where the \$6k is coming out of?

Comment: Yes, that's correct.

Comment: The fund had gone up, but not some much this year. Any additional comments about MO? Okay, seeing none, Pat do you want to talk about the Ornithological Council donation check box?

4. REQUEST FOR ORNITHOLOGICAL COUNCIL DONATION CHECK BOX

Overview: Doug also wants to put in a proposal for next meeting. We used to have a service every year to renew our subscriptions (OSNA). We split off from that. There used to be a check box for donating a dollar or any amount to the Ornithological Council. It wouldn't cost any extra money to get someone to put that on the webpage for when you sign up to be a member of PSG or to renew your membership. You could check to donate to PSG in general, or up your membership, or add a check box to donate to the OC. Do any of you ever read the Ornithological exchange? Have you used the services of OC?

Description of some of behind the scenes efforts of OC including supporting ornithologists in their efforts to conduct research and seek authorization. Lobbying Congress to better legislate authorization for seabird research. Examples of successful efforts. The reports by Ellen and Lauren are very good. I have a table I can send around that shows how much per member different organizations pay per member to OC. Wilson pays about \$10/person. PSG pays \$2/person. We were below a lot others. It's not that much money. I'm going to have another proposal for increasing our contribution, but right now I just want to add a check box to the webpage for registration renewal.

Comment: It sounds like you want to advance the check box today. I would suggest that we run it by our communications and membership committees to see if they have concerns?

Comment: I know that there are checkboxes associated with the meeting, but not sure about with membership. We could check with them and vote next meeting.

Comment: What Pat just said is complete news to me. I'm learning more about the OC today, and I've been around for quite awhile. I'd be happy to personally contribute to the OC. Could we have a paragraph describing what Pat just said so people understand what they are contributing to?

Comment: We always send a report to the chair of PSG and circulate it to the listserv, but people are so inundated with everything that they may miss it. I could write something up. I could put it on the listserv.

Comment: Just put it next to the text box to describe what the donation supports. Lobbying Congress to support bird research. Sadie, what do you think the downside is?

Comment: I'm not identifying a downside so much as wanting to work with those committees to make sure the logistics work. It sounds like Roberta has seen the checkboxes in the past and it could be something that would work.

Comment: I do remember the checkboxes for registering for meetings. We contribute to OC, so I don't think it would be out of line to ask members to contribute more.

Question: Do we want to vote on advancing that today? Or Pat are you thinking that you and Doug want to bring a second proposal?

Comment: No, he hasn't written it yet. Or I haven't written it yet. We could write a second proposal. The check box is a member thing.

Comment: What I'm hearing is that the second proposal will deal with the annual amount PSG is contributing to OC, and the checkbox is for member donations?

Comment: Yes. Pat Bees has to support herself somehow. We would like to support her and keep us aware of these political actions. She just wrote a letter to the Canada government to make them aware of a project that was going to damage habitat.

Comment: Any logistical concerns? We accept money for all kinds of funds. We could put the check box on either registration or membership renewal. Any thoughts or concerns?

Comment: My only concern was already voiced by Sadie. It would be nice to involve the membership committee. I'm not sure if we could vote and ask for their input. I agree that it's already been done, there is precedent, but let's check with them first.

Comment: That sounds reasonable. We'll get the paragraph from Pat for next time. We'll try to get the membership committee on the call next month. Does that sound okay to everyone?

Pat Baird will write a paragraph description of what the OC donation will be used for to include with the check box requesting donations. She will send it to Sadie.

Sadie will add two agenda items to the July/next ExCo meeting regarding OC rep funding: 1) PSG funding, 2) membership donations request check box.

Comment: Yeah, that sounds good. It wouldn't hurt to put it on both the registration and renewal pages. Please run it by the membership folks. Who should I send the paragraph to?

Comment: You could send that me in report form and I'll include it as an agenda item for our next meeting.

Comment: Perfect. I will send that to you.

Comment: Ok, next agenda item.

5. TREASURER'S UPDATE

Overview: I am going to be doing the quarterly financial report at our next meeting. Our GF balance as of Monday is \$142,000 so that has gone up a bit since last year at this time. This was because of income generated because of donations and income from the meeting. I am going to be dispersing student grant award winners ASAP. If anyone hasn't updated their volunteer hours, they should do that now. We need that for tax return.

ExCo members should enter their volunteer hours at this shared spreadsheet:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1G39LiYCPvMzAi4P_v2r_JtFke3LudFH4/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=106904498621362809324&rtpof=true&sd=true

Comment: I included my tasks as treasurer in the report. I will be updating monthly tasks and looking into the other long term items like getting us an audit. We need a draft retention policy and draft reimbursement policy. I'll look to other organizations for examples. Any questions?

Comment: Are you talking about ways people can donate to PSG?

Comment: That could be two different things. One, Kirsten had talked about making us a registered charity on Amazon Smile, so that people could select PSG as their charity. Another thing is that there is a national database of registered non profits, and in order to get on that database, you have to have certain documents in order. One of them is 5 years of tax returns. We have that. The other two draft

documents that I mentioned would help make us eligible so people could find us easier in order to donate to us.

Comment: That sounds great. Thanks! Any other questions for Jenny? Thanks Jenny. We'll move to the next item.

6. LOCAL COMMITTEE UPDATE

Overview: I think we are on schedule. We are about 8 months away. We need to get the budget up to date. I'm following the handbook. We have the theme. We have the announcement posted on the website. We've started on the schedule. The pending thing is the budget and getting that approved by ExCo. Other than that, this is the quiet before the storm. We have a big group of people who want to be on our local committee. I need to get those people with delegated duties and need to do some fundraising. On that note, if I could ask you for advice. I have a list of people who help us fund. I am beginning to realize that we will collect donations by the 100s and hopefully that adds up to \$30k. I would love more contacts. For example, who should I contact at BLM or USGS? That's where I am spending most of my time now.

Question: Nacho, did you get lists of funding contacts from previous local committees?

Comment: No.

Comment: Oh, we need to get you those lists. On the Google Drive. Do you have access to that gmail account?

Comment: Yes, I'll look in there. If I can't find it, I'll reach out.

Comment: Kim Nelson was really involved last year, and may be willing to help this year.

Comment: Marc Romano passed around a spreadsheet last year to all regional reps to try to update contacts for donations. We updated some contacts. You could send it to the regional reps again to get updated information.

All: send contacts for potential Annual Meeting donors to Nacho.

Comment: We have all summer to start knocking on doors. Does that sound like we are on schedule? Dick is also taking the lead on the schedule, and he's also going to take the lead on getting the plenaries and other special sessions.

Comment: I think we talked about this before, but I don't remember. I've been tossing around the plenaries, and have an idea for three. We have an hour session at the beginning of the day on three days, but I thought the lifetime achievement award recipient will also give a plenary. I would like that to occur closer to the time they get their award, maybe Friday night?

Comment: As long as we can fit it in the schedule. Friday night is the banquet.

Comment: The last couple of years we've done it as a morning plenary. Does anyone remember what we did before? You guys can do whatever you want.

Comment: As long as we can fit it in the schedule, you can do whatever you want. 3 or 4 plenaries is fine. We do have time in the afternoons.

Comment: It also depends on who agrees to do it. Thanks, that answers my question.

Question: Dick, does one of the plenaries include an EARS person?

Comment: Yes, I've invited someone.

Comment: In terms of the budget, I believe these award winners will need to have a budget for travel.

Comment: The flight price could affect the budget depending on where they are coming from.

Comment: I don't know how confidential the nominees are.

Comment: When does ExCo vote on the annual meeting budget?

Comment: We'll do it at the next ExCo meeting. I'll reach out to Justine and I think we can do that. We can select our caterer and get prices.

Comment: Our goal will be to award the two awards at least a week in advance of our next meeting so you can incorporate that into our next budget. Folks said earlier, before we started this meeting, that we might want to reopen the nominations for lifetime achievement awards since we received no nominations for women until after the close date. I think if we want to do that if we all agree that it is appropriate. Being that our organization is over 56% women. Do we think that is enough reason?

Comment: multiple yeses

Comment: Anyone against that idea? No, okay, I'll do it.

Comment: Follow the data. It's a hard decision but good for you to reopen it. One last question. Once we get a donation, how do we get that into PSG's bank? I guess I would need an invoice so they can send PSG a check?

Comment: In the past, Kirsten has been able to generate invoices. Or sometimes donors can purchase services, like AV services. We just do it on line and pay by credit card.

Comment: Some organizations can send a check, they can make that out to PSG, and I would cash that into the appropriate bank account. I can generate an official invoice if needed. Or we have options for people to pay for something with credit card if that works better for the organization.

Comment: Okay, I'll reach out to you so we can start collecting. Do I need to set up our own meeting bank account?

Comment: As far as I know in the recent past we don't have a separate meeting bank account. It will go into our GF and coded meeting fund.

Comment: Thank you. I think that's all I have.

Comment: I'll be part of the LOCO in 2024 and we have some of the same questions, so this is helping me for 2024. We are supposed to be finding a conference location to get that ready. One thing we are struggling with is, I know budget will reflect sponsors and registration. But is there a maximum amount we should not exceed for the conference venue and hotel?

Comment: You know what I did, I looked at previous budgets, and conference budgets hovered around \$80-85k. You can make a ball park with 350x how many people you think will attend. About 200. Then you can see how much you can play with.

Comment: In past meetings we count on 300 attendees.

Comment: Good. We are curious to see the San Diego budget.

Comment: If it's an expensive place, you can charge \$350 a person, and if it's inexpensive you can charge \$280. We got lucky with the university location.

Comment: That's our last report. Let's go through action items.

Sadie rattles through action items above denoted in red.

Question: Did we identify a person who is going to connect the membership and communications teams about the check box?

Comment: I'll do that.

Sadie will email the Membership and Communications Committees with a heads up about the check box/OC donation idea.

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

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