

## MINUTES OF THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

31 October 2022 Zoom Conference Call  
4:00pm-5:30pm (Pacific Standard Time – UTC-8)  
Amended and approved on 30 November 2022

**Present:** Rachel Sprague (Chair), Roberta Swift (Past Chair), Sadie Wright (Secretary), Dick Veit (Chair-Elect), Sarah Ann Thompson (Northern California Regional Representative), Peter Hodum (Vice Chair for Conservation), Kerry Woo (Canada Regional Representative), Laura Koehn (Washington/ Oregon Regional Representative), José Ramirez-Garofalo (Non-Pacific U.S. States Regional Representative), Karen Lau Alarcon (Student Representative) [10].

**Absent:** Alexis Will (Alaska/Russia Regional Representative), Jenny Howard McKee (Treasurer), Tegan Carpenter-Kling (Europe/Africa Regional Representative), JB Thiebot (Asia/Oceania Regional Representative), Cristián Suazo (S. California, Latin America, Hawaii Regional Representative) [5].

**Others present:** Wieteke Holthuijzen (Corresponding Members Committee Co-Coordinator and Communications Committee Co-Coordinator), Laney White (PSG HELPS Coordinator) [2].

Review of participants/roll call.

### WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, & REVIEW AGENDA

Comment: Any additions or changes on the agenda? If not, I'll entertain a motion to approve the agenda.

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

Abstentions, 0: Nays, 0: Yays, 10, motion passed unanimously

### 1. APPROVE 28 SEPTEMBER 2022 MINUTES

Comment: Does anyone here have any proposed amendments to the minutes from our last meeting? If not, is there a motion to approve the minutes.

Motion to approve the minutes from last meeting: moved by Roberta, seconded by Dick.

Abstentions, 0: Nays, 0: Yays, 10, motion passed unanimously

### REVIEW 28 SEPTEMBER ACTION ITEMS

1. Peter will share with ExCo a draft listserv post requesting team input from PSG regarding development of new swag. **Done.**
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 item "c". A and b are completed at this meeting.**
3. 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.

Rachel will combine “a”, “b”, and “c” from this list and run them by the Code of Conduct Committee. Item “d” is done.

4. All: anyone with a recommendation for a new PSG Endowment Fund trustee should send Jenny their suggestions. Jenny will also ask current endowment fund trustees for ideas. Keep this. Jenny will reach out to PSG listserv to request suggestions.

5. 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](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1G39LiYCPvMzAi4P_v2r_JtFke3LudFH4/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=106904498621362809324&rtpof=true&sd=true) Keep this.

## 2. PROPOSED WEBSITE FUNCTION UPDATE

Overview: Currently our website runs on Word Press which is a free, very accessible content management system. You may have noticed over time if you’re visiting the website it’s moving a little slower, and as you’re navigating pages it’s very slow on the back end to update it, because some of the plug-ins we use are no longer supported. Anne Francis, who runs the business that we have our website built and supported by, contacted us and said it was best if we have them switch us over to a different page system. It should probably take 3 weeks to update it and cost about \$2500 in the long run. This should help with the stability of the web page and help us update it. The plug-ins are no longer going to be supported. The code could crash. I wanted to run that by ExCo because it is a pretty big investment. We could wait until next year. Anne recommended that we do it before spring. The good thing is that the website, I’m not doing a whole lot of updates for the Annual Meeting, so there wouldn’t be any problems if we want to update it now. Are there are any questions, and do we need a vote?

Comment: I think for items that we don’t have in the budget, ExCo needs to vote for over \$2000. My question on this, is the proposed architecture, does it replace Word Press?

Comment: No, it doesn’t replace Word Press, it replaces an interface called bakery. Bakery isn’t going to be supported anymore. We would be transitioning to Cadence, but it shouldn’t look any differently. Bakery is super slow for coding now.

Question: And it isn’t something that will make it more difficult for you to update?

Comment: No. It should be okay. Similar to Bakery. It’s a big general transition that’s happening for folks.

Comment: I’ll plan on adding this as a voting item to the agenda for our next ExCo meeting.

Comment: We should also ask Jenny where this is coming from in our PSG budget.

Comment: Sadie, are you looking at the end of November for our next meeting?

Comment: Does that sound all right to folks? I’ll look at scheduling our next ExCo meeting for the week after Thanksgiving? Nodding heads.

Sadie will add a voting item to the Agenda for our next ExCo meeting to consider approving \$2500 to fund this update to website function.

Wieteke will check with Jenny to determine where the funds will come from the PSG budget.

Comment: Thanks Wieteke. That would be helpful.

### 3. PROPOSAL TO RENEW/ADD TO PSG INSURANCE

Overview. It's a lot to digest. I will be reading what Jenny put together. Maybe we can vote next time. Essentially, Jenny is asking if we would like to add some insurance. Right now, we have general liability, which is useful for in person meetings where we have a lot of members attend. That only covers 200 people. If we have 300-400 attendees, we might want to update that. The other item is, currently the chairs and officers have liability insurance for wrongful acts, and covers up to a million dollars. The two policies currently cost us \$1300. Jenny is suggesting that we add a couple of policies that would add \$846, resulting in a total of \$2000 per year in insurance cost. The first coverage addition would be improper sexual conduct and physical abuse and would cover up to one million dollars for cases, not currently covered. The second would be three million coverage for fiduciary misconduct, which would protect the treasurer and other staff if there are wrongful acts. I think she is suggesting this partially because of our Code of Conduct. Total increase of about \$800/year. Are there questions for discussion?

Comment: I think we need to discuss. This is reminding me, if this wasn't in our approved budget, would we need to have this a week in advance for voting?

Comment: I sent the reports this morning. But this is only \$900, so maybe we could vote?

Comment: You're right, we could. So the question is, is this from Jenny? Do we have a lawyer who advises us on what policies that we should carry? Who else can we ask for advice, or is this straight forward?

Comment: I would imagine that because Jenny's mom is also a knowledgeable accountant, I don't have a problem with either of these. I'm curious about the extent of this coverage, so I do have a few questions, even though I think these sound like good ideas.

Comment: It sounds like this would cover cases not covered by the general policy.

Comment: It might be important to get this done before the in person meeting. If gatherings of only up to 200 people is covered, it seems like we may want to up that. We regularly have gatherings over 200. It's a good question about a lawyer. I haven't had to deal with that.

Comment: It sounds like something we should have a lawyer look at. Do we have legal expertise in PSG that we can ask?

Comment: We'd have to do a bit of research to figure that out.

Question: What's the specific question we'd want to run past a lawyer?

Comment: How much coverage we should have for sexual misconduct issues.

Comment: It sounds like useful insurance to have, but I'd like to understand if we need this. I think Jenny is giving us good advice. I'm not sure an insurance person can give us advice. Can we ask the institutional knowledge group about the legal expertise question?

Comment: Maybe. I'm writing it on my list of things to do.

Roberta will ask the PSG Institutional Knowledge group about legal expertise, and whether we need this insurance.

Sadie will add a discussion/voting item to the agenda for the next ExCo meeting for this topic.

Comment: Great. Let's move on to the next Agenda item.

#### 4. PSG HELPS PROGRAM UPDATE AND LETTER APPROVAL

Overview: A quick update from HELPS. We still have people applying for membership. We have the intake form translated into Spanish now. Thanks to Fernando and Wieteke for that. Fernando has joined the HELPS team. My main question is, how do I address the HELPS support for the Annual Meeting moving forward. I was wondering if ExCo had thoughts about in-person meetings. Last year with the virtual meeting, HELPS supported early career scientists registration. The primary goal of HELPS is to support membership. My only idea is that we could support a couple of ECS with an application deadline similar to the student process, but with an earlier deadline. Then we can also support students. Financially it's hard to support everyone with an in person meeting. I don't remember if travel awards for students, if the application already went out?

Comment: I think the student travel award application process is my job, thanks for reminding me. I will stay in touch with you on that.

Comment: Okay, any thoughts?

Comment: I was going to ask if we have contact with the past student rep, two reps before because maybe they will know about the pre-covid communications?

Comment: I think it's the past-chair duty, so maybe I should talk to Adrian. I'll start with her.

Comment: The other things with HELPS: I don't want to be taking away from asking for donations from the listserv. I don't want to divide those funds. I'm just open to feedback. It was great to support ECS last year, but I don't know if that's equitable going forward with an in person meeting. Along those lines, I was going to send out a donation request letter to listserv in the coming weeks. I have one drafted similar to the one I sent out last year, but wanted to find out how the funds will be used going forward. I can't remember how the letter review process went last year. Did ExCo approve the letter?

Comment: I could look back through some emails.

Comment: I do see some questions in old emails about student travel requests. That's in the Google Drive from 2018 and 2019. Folks requested up to \$16k in the 2019 meeting, and funded about \$11k. 2020 might be more relevant. There is definitely a good amount of interest. ECS could use the help as well, but we need to check on the student travel fund.

Comment: I think last year maybe just a couple of ExCo reviewed the letter and I sent it out. Is that okay to do this year?

Comment: I don't think it needs an ExCo vote.

Comment: I see something on our minutes from a year ago, you had proposed expanding our use of HELPS funds, and we approved that, but I don't see anything about approving a letter.

Comment: Sounds good. Maybe I could just run it by a couple of you to review. It's very similar to last year.

Comment: I think the letter itself looks fine. Let's go to the next agenda item.

## 5. ANNUAL MEETING/SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM UPDATE

Overview: I'll just run through the report. We have a draft program on Google docs. Nacho prepared a template and I filled it in. I have 19 subject headings for assorted submissions. I'm planning on sending out the call for abstracts this week. Talk times will be 20 minutes, a little longer than last year, with fewer overall talks. Two hours blocks of talks. We have a series of plenary talks, 5 such talks. Two LAA winners, one of whom will give a talk. Two SAA winners, both of which will give talks. And two other plenary speakers. 50 minute slots. I talked with Derek at EID about, they want to have a plenary speaker, and a 50 minute slot for that. I have two other items: Mike Scott, who attended the first PSG meeting in 1972 and he wants a roundtable discussion on how PSG came to be. That could be an evening event. I have someone who volunteered to give a Bayesian roundtable discussion, maybe two hours. It could be done online using the program R. More extensive discussion on EID: they have a two hour discussion session. They are thinking of having something that highlights specific topics that have not been highlighted at previous meetings. We think that will have good attendance. And their 50 minute plenary would be on an indigenous perspective on the use of the Channel Islands. Also, he's got a film that I think is relatively short, I think maybe 30 minutes, and focuses on issues faced by women scientists. I think a few folks have seen it.

Comment: I think I proposed showing it in 2021, but too short of notice.

Comment: Okay, I told him I thought it was a good idea.

Question: Are they going to charge you for the movie, Dick? When I wanted to do it, I want to say that I would've cost an extra \$5/person.

Comment: Okay, I'll check with Nacho on that.

Comment: One other thing, for the SAA winners, I don't think it is standard to have them do plenaries, but totally up to you. There is a team from China, Taiwan, and Japan. You could potentially combine them into one plenary.

Comment: One talk per award is what I'm planning. Not three separate talks for that team.

Comment: We did a special video one night last year. There is one SAA this year for the team.

Comment: Okay, I thought there was a second award. I see, just one SAA plenary.

Comment: In past meetings, the SAA recipients give short thank yous, but there are some cases where they give talks. It's up to you.

Comment: It's such a good team and project, I'd like to give them the time. I think it would be interesting if they're willing to give a talk.

Comment: If you have room and would like to do that, that sounds good. Any questions?

Comment: I just wanted to draw Dick's attention to the chat. It sounds like the movie Picture a Scientist is available on PBS.

Comment: Okay, I'll check it out.

Comment: Okay, moving on.

## 6. UPDATE: MARINE ORNITHOLOGY MANAGING EDITOR SEARCH

Overview: You'll recall that the current MO editor Louise Blight is stepping down. She had some thoughts about moving MO to a different publisher to help with the work, but right now that's not a possibility. We need to find a new MO editor. That's been done by an ad-hoc committee in the past, putting together a list of possible folks. In the interest of time, Roberta and I have started reaching out to folks. I talked to one person who is not interested, but a couple of other people might be. Roberta reached out to Nina and Lindsay.

Comment: Yes, some people want additional information. I reached out to Kirsten, and haven't heard back, so not sure if I have her correct email address.

Comment: You can read the details in the report, but this position only received \$2k/year, so it's more like a volunteer position. It's good professional development or someone headed for retirement. If others have additional candidates for us to ask. Please let us know. David Ainley is the Editor in Chief, but this Managing Editor does a lot of the logistics. Does anyone else want to help us screen or look for folks?

Comment: I know a number of people who are interested in this sort of work. Let me think about it. Does David Ainley have ideas?

Comment: He hasn't put forward any ideas. He's willing to keep doing what he's doing, but wants a new Managing Editor to help.

Comment: Louise recently emailed about a second person that helps her with the copy editing, and that person is financially supported in that role, but needs to be replaced soon. That person also wants to step down. We've got a lot of turnover right now.

Comment: So if no one else has any thoughts, we'll keep trying. Roberta and I will run an ad hoc job search in addition to other tasks.

Comment: How about David Duffy? I don't know if he's retired yet.

Comment: He is retired. He moved to Oregon.

Comment: He'd be very good at this.

Comment: That's a good suggestion. We'll follow up with him. We may have a gap. I don't know how we'll put this together before the end of the year. But I don't know an alternative.

Comment: Also, Phil Unit at San Diego Natural History Museum. I'll look him up. He's very organized.

Comment: We'll check in with David Ainley as well to see how he's doing, and prep for a gap in service. If you have brilliant thoughts, please let us know.

**Everyone should send ideas for a new Managing Editor of Marine Ornithology to Rachel and Roberta.**

Comment: Okay, we'll zoom along to the next agenda item.

## 7. PSG LISTSERV MODERATION DISCUSSION

Overview: This has come up several times, and has been in the context of Code of Conduct. We have thought about whether we should have a listserv moderator. We want to make sure there are inclusive places and not waiting for an offensive or inappropriate remarks. Maybe pre-approval of posts would help prevent that. I checked in with Verena, the current listserv manager, and she said that pre-approval of posts is possible. But she doesn't have time to do that. The question here might be is, do you think changing the listserv to require pre-approval of posts is a good idea?

Question: Who would do the pre-approval?

Comment: I talked to the EID committee to get their thoughts, and I am a moderator for several large listservs. There are two of us, and we err on the side of free speech. My idea is to come up with a fairly simple SOP. The post needs to be seabirds, it needs to be linked to seabirds. The rest of it is to follow the Code of Conduct and be a professional. I would think that 99% of the posts would take 10 seconds to review and post. We could have 2 or 3 volunteers plus the chair or past chairs moderating the posts. Combined with young folks who are tech savvy and could help monitor the posts. We don't want to put the burden on a student or a non-ExCo person. So having a team would make it a team approach and help provide support to enable a bit of an escalation or group review, including an ExCo member to evaluate questionable posts.

Question: I was wondering if it would be a group decision of a questionable post so no one is doing it just by themselves?

Comment: Yes, exactly. Some things will be obvious, but the group could come together to evaluate the questionable posts. I think we could have an SOP that could go to the ExCo for approval first. This isn't an official vote, but do you think the status quo is fine to continue, or do you think a proposal should be brought to the ExCo to establish a process and SOP for listserv moderation?

Comment: I hate to make more work for people but I don't see how we can't think about it further. This was put forward as a recommendation that we requested from the Code of Conduct committee. Moderation would certainly help with the hurtful emails that we've seen in the past and we need to take steps to prevent that from happening again.

Comment: I would echo that. I think 99% of the posts are fine, and I can't imagine that the volunteer role would be super time consuming. I think it's nice to have a separate set of eyes on these posts that helps keep things safe and inclusive on the listserv for when the combative emails appear. It means we are looking out for each other. I think the Communications Committee could find a way to help support this. There are lots of folks who may be able to help serve as part of the moderator team. I'm a big fan of this. I think it would be really nice, and would help people think about what they're going to post.

Comment: I like the idea. I think I'm pro this because this listserv represents all of us. When people post really rude and hurtful things, the rest of us have been taken hostage. This moderation idea is good and should be normal these days. We want posts to be respectful and represents all of us. I like the idea of sharing the load so one person doesn't have all the responsibility. But someone needs to be on duty all the time, or something will slip through the cracks. Days of the week or whatever so we know it's always covered. A bad one hasn't happened in over a year, but if we miss one email that could be the bad. I want to make sure we have it covered. I don't want it to be a big burden. Not a year at a time, maybe a week, and then pass it to the next person.

Question: Is there interest from people here to be part of an ad hoc committee to put these parameters into an SOP?

Question: Could some of those materials be taken from the Code of Conduct?

Comment: It sure could!

Comment: I could help (Roberta).

Comment: Anyone else?

Comment: I could help too. The Communications Team.

Comment: I could help too, and maybe we could reach out to the Code of Conduct team and EID committee. Thank you! We'll revisit this when we have a framework or proposal to talk about. Next item.

**Form an Ad-hoc Committee to develop SOP for Listserv Moderation: Rachel will reach out to Derek/EID. Wieteke will support from Communications Committee. Roberta will also assist. Anyone else interested in helping draft a proposed SOP should contact Rachel.**

## 8. TREASURER POSITION UPDATE

Overview: This report is to let you know that our Treasurer, Jenny, needs to vacate that role as soon as possible. We need to fill that position for the remainder of the two year term. We need to find and appoint someone. It is an off year for electing someone to this position, so we are not going to do that at this point. We have a couple of ideas and have approached a couple of people, without success so far. We are hoping the appointee could be considered in the 2024 election and stay on beyond one year. It's a lot to learn. It is a lot of work. We have been brainstorming about ways to reduce the workload, and simplify the accounting. We also need someone with Quickbooks expertise. We have funding the hire a bookkeeper so we're not burning out another Treasurer. And maybe we could have a secondary person who handles donations. One of the overwhelming tasks was writing all the thank you letters for donations. It would be nice to have a back up or secondary person to do that. We're asking for your input on these ideas, and ideas for a good Treasurer that we could contact. Jenny will stay on long enough to transfer her duties on to them. It's a pretty dire need right now.

Question: Have you reached out to Kirsten to see if she's interested in pinch hitting?

Comment: I reached out to her, but not sure if I used her best email address. She didn't seem like she had a lot of time available, but I will ask her.

Comment: This is the kind of thing we've talked about where really the Treasurer having Quickbook expertise is a huge help. Someone who budgets their own projects and think about different budget lines. The accounts depend on how someone's brain works. Jenny has thoughts for how to change things, but maybe the new person would prefer a different set up. I don't know if anyone has additional thoughts. We want to move some of the work to someone else or bookkeeper who would do some of the coding and moving money around. The Treasurer would be in more of a reviewing role. But even with that change, Jenny has said there have been enough changes in her life that she doesn't have time to do this.



Comment: It would be nice to have someone who is retired instead of someone with a full time job, but most people have full time jobs.

Comment: If folks have other ideas, please let us know.

Everyone: Please send ideas for potential Treasurer to Rachel and Roberta. Someone with Quickbooks experience and budgeting is preferable.

Comment: We are hoping to appoint someone soon to succeed Jenny soon, and run for the position in 2024.

## 9. LAA AND SAA AWARDS UPDATES

Overview: We awarded three LAA awards, and one SAA to a team of 3 people. The 3 LAA winners are Bill Sydeman, Kathy Kuletz, and Kees Vermeer. Bill and Kathy will give plenaries. Kees will not attend, but instead his nominators will meet him in Vancouver, BC to award him his plaque. It would be great to video that and stream it at the meeting, but I don't know what our video options will look like. But maybe we could share it online. That would also be the case for one the 3 SAA winners. Two of them are coming, Simba Chan and Professor Wan. Dr. Chen cannot come, so we'll send his award to him, but it would be great to video or stream the award acceptance. Maybe Dick and Nacho will know more about those options. I've been fielding questions about that.

Comment: It's really easy to record in Zoom. Given the non stable internet, I'd suggest pre-recording both of them. Dick, you could pretend on a Zoom meeting with Dr. Chen and his nominators. Nacho and I could help off screen. Then we could play it during the meeting. It's easy to email to Justine or myself.

Question: Isn't Kees doing one in the middle of November?

Comment: I don't know if they've picked an exact date. They could even record it on an iPhone.

Comment: Exactly. Once we have it on a computer, we could show a video during the meeting. That would be easier than making it happen live. It's so much easier and smoother.

Comment: I was wondering how to show it, but we'll have screens.

Comment: If we can show ppts we can show a video.

Question: So you'll tell Kees and others about this?

Comment: Yes, I'll give them some options via email and cc you Dick.

Comment: Exciting. I'm getting excited about this February meeting. All sorts of things. Dick and I are going to chat about Abstract submissions tomorrow. We're hoping the new site for abstract submissions is real easy.

Sadie rattles through the action items listed in red above.

Comment: We are heading into the holidays and abstract season. Is there any other announcements for the good for the order.

Question: Do we know anything about field trips?

Comment: Nacho and the local committee will have someone on field trip committee. Thanks all. Can I have a motion to adjourn?

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

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