

## MINUTES OF THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

24 October 2023 Conference Call

2:00pm-3:00pm (Pacific Standard Time – UTC-8)

Approved



**Present:** Dick Veit (Chair), Juliet Lamb (Chair-Elect), Rachel Sprague (Past Chair), Lara Brenner (Secretary), Lindsay Adrean (Vice Chair for Conservation), Sarah Ann Thompson (Northern California Regional Representative), Pamela Michael (Treasurer), Kerry Woo (Canada Regional Representative), Julia Gulka (Non-Pacific U.S. States Regional Representative) [9].

**Absent:** Jaime Ojeda (S. California, Latin America, Hawaii Regional Representative), JB Thiebot (Asia/Oceania Regional Representative), Tegan Carpenter-Kling (Europe/Africa Regional Representative), Karen Lau Alarcon (Student Representative), Alexis Will (Alaska/Russia Regional Representative), Amelia DuVall (Washington/Oregon Regional Representative) [6]

**Others present:** Wieteke Holthuijzen (Communications Committee Co-Coordinator), Kirsten Bixler (Former Treasurer), Roberta Swift (Former Past Chair), Jenn Urmston (Membership Coordinator), Sarah Guitart (EID Committee Co-Coordinator), Laney White (HELPS Committee Co-Coordinator), Katie Stoner (EID Committee Co-Coordinator) [7].

### REVIEW September 25, 2023, ACTION ITEMS

1. EID committee, HELPS committee, LoCo committee, Dick, and Rachel will work to identify indigenous speakers for annual meeting and identify routes to fund expansion of indigenous, student, and international participation in PSG. **Keep and modify - Dick will lead a brainstorming discussion at the end of the next ExCo meeting with the goal of producing a document outlining funding mechanisms for increasing diverse participation at PSG meetings by the February business meeting.**
2. Dick will reach out to encourage members to serve on membership committee. **A previous member found 2 volunteers to take her place. Done!**
3. Lindsey will check in with Bill Mclver and Kim Nelson to make sure that the requested clarifications were made to the Marbled Murrelet survey protocols. **Done!**
4. Dick and Rachel will investigate conflict of interest policy and investment policy to determine whether and how they need to be updated. **Keep – Dick will reach out to Craig Harrison to review the document and see if it needs to be updated.**
5. The treasurers will begin the process of creating document retention policies and reimbursement policies. **Keep.**

6. Dick will reach out to the Ornithological Council to understand how the \$5000 budgeted in our ExCO budget to support them is used, whether it's still needed, and whether other organizations have returned to supporting OC. Dick will also see if a representative is available to present to ExCo, while Roberta will track down previous ExCo discussions about the grant to OC. **Keep with modification - Dick will reach out to OC to let them know that we plan to cut back to \$2500 unless we receive further justification.**

#### WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, & APPROVE AGENDA

Motion to approve the Agenda, moved and seconded.

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

#### 1. APPROVE 25 SEPTEMBER 2023 MINUTES – REPORT #1

Motion to approve the 25 September 2023 minutes, moved and seconded.

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

#### 2. TREASURER'S REPORT – REPORT #2

Updates:

- We have completed the onboarding of our new financial manager.
- We are working to integrate our budget with QuickBooks
- Starting to review 2023 income and expenses so that we're prepared to file taxes
- With the chairs approval, we've closed four bank accounts, the Conservation Fund, Student Travel Fund, Former Chairs fund and HELPS fund
  - We're still tracking all of those funds - they are still restricted funds, so nothing is actually changing.
- Changed membership rates on Wild Apricot and the website with the help of the Communications Committee.
- Created our first sponsorship invoice.
- Draft budget for next fiscal year for Marine Ornithology.
  - Hoping to get the MO budget integrated into the PSG budget to provide more transparency to ExCo
  - MO is just about breaking even
  - About 1/3 of the budget is provided by the endowment fund, which is \$8000, to help cover operating costs.
    - That does not include the honorarium, which is another \$8000.
    - The endowment fund is also covering PSG's expenses for the website and the listserv, which is another \$2000.
  - The endowment fund is covering quite a lot, and we're using very close to the maximum withdrawal right now.

#### 3. PSG FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS, EARLY CAREER SCIENTISTS (ECS), AND INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION – REPORT #3

- Want to talk about funding for various categories of people, students, indigenous people, and non- US and Canada scientists.
- We don't have anything budgeted, but there is general interest in trying to provide funding to people who otherwise would not be able to attend PSG meetings.
- Today would like to talk about a schedule over the next few months during which we might craft a document that will address ways in which we could raise money for this purpose.
- Congratulations to Jackie Lindsey and the Seattle Local Committee for securing a \$10,000 grant from the Packard Foundation for students to attend the meeting.
- Would like to start something now such that over the next 10 years, we could substantially increase participation from students, international researchers, indigenous people, and biologists who have particularly limited access to funds and would benefit strongly by attending Pacific Seabird Group meetings.
- We're the Pacific Seabird group. We're not the West Coast of the United States and Canada Seabird Group, and there are a lot of critically endangered sea birds of the Pacific Ocean – e.g. Chinese Crested Tern and the storm petrels of the Atacama Desert, and many others on Pacific Islands.
- Pacific Seabird group could contribute substantially to the furthering of Pacific scientists' careers and to the conservation of these birds.
- I would like to propose that at the February meeting in Seattle, we vote, for example, having a box to tick on a meeting registration form or a membership form that would say "I will contribute to provide funding to these various groups of scientists to attend PSG meetings.
- Chairs had meeting recently where we went over this in some detail and right now there are a lot of different categories of people who are eligible for awards.
  - We could streamline this and have a single budget or fewer budgets, and then allocate a certain percentage of whatever money comes in to the different groups of people.
- I would further like to propose now that our next meeting, a month from now, that we would extend the meeting to an hour and a half, with that half hour dedicated to general discussion of how we can operationally provide this money.
- COMMENT: The idea about adding a radio button or donation button in the registration for is something we wouldn't necessarily need to vote on – it's low hanging fruit and registrations are opening pretty soon. So I'd suggest just working with Justine to get that in the registration form.
- COMMENT: As far as extending the next meeting, we discussed having a more focused group that was going to come up with some recommendations in a separate meeting. That could be more productive to come to ExCo with a set of developed recommendations rather than trying to hash it out during one of these meetings.
  - RESPONSE: Rationale is that we want to get as many ideas as possible
  - RESPONSE: Could schedule the half an hour to discuss this topic at the end of the ExCo meeting and those who wanted to stay and discuss could stay and those who didn't could leave.
- COMMENT: There's an EID meeting coming up on the 30<sup>th</sup> - is funding going to be discussed during that meeting?
  - RESPONSE: We're going to be talking about the upcoming annual meeting, and we're going to operate under the assumption that we have the same funding that we had last year, not that we have like any new funding.
- COMMENT: About putting a button on the registration - the issue is, what is the button for? In the past there been some fairly heated discussions about whether this should be for students or for early career scientists, or for people from outside the country. We would benefit ourselves and any recipients of the money if we decided what the buttons should be for specifically.

- RESPONSE: We have three categories of travel awards, so the button could just say travel awards and that could go to any of the three categories as ExCo decides.
- RESPONSE: But in what proportions? We should decide that beforehand.
- RESPONSE: There are actually at least five different categories of aid that we give to people, and it is a bit confusing.
- RESPONSE: We could crib something together for this year and then change next year – it doesn't have to be perfect.
- COMMENT: The button would be a good thing, but I'm really interested in setting up something long-term that has a mechanism for increasing as the years go by.
- COMMENT: Could people decide which fund they want to donate to at the point of purchase? I do agree that it's pretty confusing for applicants to understand where they were supposed to apply and what was available, so it'd be great to streamline that.
- COMMENT: Streamlining this would also be helpful from the treasurer's perspective. If we can just link to the donations page, we have all of the categories we need except for and International Scientists award. In the past we've asked for people to either donate to the General Fund so that EXCO can choose how to allocate it.
- COMMENT: What if we just have one fund and are transparent about the allocation of the money within the categories. If someone wants to make a big donation and they don't like the the way we want to allocate the money, they can ask about it.
- COMMENT: The only issue is like you said, if people have really strong feelings about it, that would potentially make them not want to donate. Having specific categories would resolve that issue, but it would simplify it for us to just have one fund with percentages.
- COMMENT: I was looking at the web page and currently there are 5 categories: HELPS, student travel, PSG General Fund, former chairs fund, and the Craig Harrison Conservation Fund that is for student grants. There are two bins that we're talking about: international students/scientists and indigenous participation, and students and early career professionals. We could either lump all of it, or we could split out international and students/early career

#### 4. HELPS COMMITTEE UPDATE – REPORT #4

- I'm planning on stepping down for my role on the HELPS committee, and I'm looking for a new recruit.
- If anyone has any recommendations, please let me know.
- I've put out a general call to HELPS numbers already and have started reaching out to some folks
- I am planning on staying on through the annual meeting because this is our busiest time of year, so I'll be here in the support capacity.
- We're also thinking about putting together another USA Jobs webinar, which we did last year, that's focused on USA jobs for the wildlife sciences
  - Last year folks wanted more of a Q&A session, so that would be the focus.
- Opportunity to connect PSG members to biologists who are working within the federal system for CV review or feedback on their USA jobs applications.
  - Good way to foster mentorship.
  - If anyone on ExCo wants to be a speaker, please reach out.

#### REVIEW OF NEW ACTION ITEMS

1. Three action items from the last meeting are carried over (with some modifications):

- a. The treasurers will begin the process of creating document retention policies and reimbursement policies.
  - b. Dick will reach out to Craig Harrison to review the conflict of interest policy and investment policy and see if they need to be updated.
  - c. Dick will reach out to OC to let them know that we plan to cut back to \$2500 unless we receive further justification to keep the increased annual contribution.
2. New action items from this meeting:
- a. Juliet will work to get a radio donation button for travel awards added to the PSG annual meeting registration page.
  - b. Dick will lead a brainstorming discussion at the end of the next ExCo meeting with the goal of producing a document outlining funding mechanisms for increasing diverse participation at PSG meetings by the February business meeting.
  - c. Reach out to Laney at the HELPS committee if you are a federal employee (or know one) who would like to speak to students and early career scientists about USAjobs.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Motion to adjourn: moved and seconded.

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