

## MINUTES OF THE APRIL 10 PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

10 April 2024 Hybrid Meeting and Conference Call

1:00pm-2:00pm (Pacific Standard Time – UTC-8)



**Present:** Juliet Lamb (Chair), Dick Veit (Past-Chair), Dan Barton (Chair-Elect), Lara Brenner (Secretary), Lindsay Adrean (Vice Chair for Conservation), Sarah Ann Thompson (Northern California Regional Representative), Julie Skoglund (Treasurer), Jaime Ojeda (S. California, Latin America, Hawaii Regional Representative), Ariel-Micaiah Heswall (Future AS/OC Representative), Jerome Fort (EU/AF Representative), Julia Gulka (Non-Pacific U.S. States Regional Representative), Anne Schaefer (AK/RU Representative), Alyssa Eby (Student Representative) [13].

**Absent:** Kerry Woo (Canada Regional Representative), Amelia DuVall (Washington/Oregon Regional Representative) [2]

**Others present:** Katie Stoner (EID Committee Co-Chair), Kirsten Bixler (Former Treasurer), Anna Vallery (Communications Committee Co-Chair), Wieteke Holthuijzen (Communications Committee Co-Chair), Laney White (HELPS Committee Co-Coordinator), Rachel Sprague (Former Chair), Pamela Michael (Former Treasurer), Peter Hodum (Conservation Fund Committee Co-Chair), Emily Runnells (HELPS Committee Co-Coordinator), Sonya Pastran (HELPS Committee Co-Coordinator)[10].

### REVIEW FEBRUARY 20th, 2024 ACTION ITEMS

- Everyone should help recruit more volunteers for the elections committee. **Keep.**
- Treasurers and chairs will investigate legal ramifications of changing purpose of the publication's endowment. **Keep.**
- Treasurers will investigate whether non-voting members of ExCo can be covered by our insurance. **Done – and they can be!**
- Everyone should help recruit volunteers to help the Communications Committee with Twitter and other social platforms, as well as new co-leads for the committee. **Keep.**
- Comms committee will move the listserv to Google Groups by February 25<sup>th</sup>. **Done!**
- LoCo will investigate if there's room in the budget for a bonus for Justine. **Done – there is not.**
- Lindsay Young will submit a report to discuss a joint meeting between WSU and PSG in the future. **Remove.**
- OC will submit a proposal to permanently increase PSG's contribution to OC to \$5000. **Remove.**
- Treasurers will begin the process of creating document retention and reimbursement policies. **Keep.**

- Board of Trustees will review and update the investment policy. Done – voting on it at this meeting.

#### REQUEST FROM THE CONSERVATION FUND COMMITTEE TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE GRANT AWARD – REPORT #1

- Over the last few years we've noticed a decrease in the number of expressions of interest and even fewer applications for funds through the conservation grant
- We're wondering if the limit of \$2000 may discourage people.
- We thought that if we upped it to a maximum of \$4000 that might engender more interest and more applications.
- We have the resources and we want those resources to go toward applied seabird conservation work .
- If this is approved, I've got some ideas about trying to broaden the awareness of the fund as a resource
- QUESTION: What's the goal amount to be dispersed annually?
- ANSWER: There isn't a set amount. We award grants on a first come first serve basis. It's a function of the fundraising we do, which we're constantly trying to replenish. But at this point, we've got close to \$18,000 because we haven't awarded a grant since 2022, and that's certainly not serving the purposes of the Conservation Fund in any way, shape or form.
- QUESTION: Are there other constraints that we should think about addressing? For example are the criteria too strict, or is the application form too long?
- ANSWER: The process is intentionally pretty simple. It's a very short application, just an initial contact to express interest and to communicate the general idea to see if it would be relevant or not. We've never gotten any feedback that that was a disincentive, but a lot of it is about awareness and making sure folks know that this fund exists.
- I'll send a message out later this week to the PSG listserv announcing the change.

Motion to increase the maximum award amount for the Conservation Fund to US \$4000 as stated in the report.

Moved and seconded.

13 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

Motion passes unanimously.

#### REVISED ENDOWMENT FUND POLICY – REPORT #2

- PSG has an investment policy that is posted on the website, but it was from 2015 and it needed to be updated.
- The three treasurers reviewed the investment policy, and we also had the other two endowment fund trustees review it, and we have made a few suggestions.
- Whenever this is approved, we'll post it on the website again.
- QUESTION: In the last sentence, talking about increasing the maximum withdrawal, is that covering what we talked about at the meeting? I.e. being able to increase the withdrawal amount to put toward similar other uses, or is that a separate thing?
- ANSWER: Yes, that is something that we talked about at the ExCo meeting in February. We're typically limited to withdrawing 6% of the total endowment fund every year, and that is in order to protect the principal. We don't generally exceed that, but we do in the handbook allow greater than 6% to be withdrawn from that fund. So we're just codifying that in our investment

policy because the endowment fund is so far above the principle that we have agreed to protect.

- QUESTION: But the endowment fund is still being used exclusively for publications?
- ANSWER: Yes. We want to investigate the purpose of our uses for this fund and find out where the line is on what is considered a publication. So for instance, for the next meeting in Costa Rica, maybe translation services for having our abstract book in both English and Spanish would be covered. But would it cover real-time translators at the meeting as well?

Motion to accept the edits to the PSG Investment Policy as written in the report.

Moved and seconded.

13 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

Motion passes unanimously.

### PSG STATEMENT ON HPAI – REPORT #3

- We had a symposium at our most recent annual meeting led by an international group covering what's been going on in the past few years with highly pathogenic avian influenza.
- One of the main products of that group was a statement highlighting the importance of the seabird community working together to address HPAI, as it's going to become more of a concern and more of an opportunity for collaboration over the coming years.
- Their idea was that PSG would publish this on our website and potentially also get it out as a press release or something similar.
  - The Conservation Committee would take the lead on that.
- Today we have to approve that statement going out on behalf of PSG.
- COMMENT: It would be good if the statement could mention the importance of international data sharing. If we want to further understand the transmission and circulation of this virus, we will need to encourage data sharing, even sample sharing.
- QUESTION: Is there a specific place where you would recommend adding that within the statement?
- ANSWER: Maybe in the sixth bullet point, which mentions international coordination.
- COMMENT: Would also be great to get ideas about the best way for PSG to publicize this statement.
- QUESTION: What is OneHealth? Should that be defined in the statement?
- ANSWER: OneHealth is an approach to disease ecology and health management that treats wildlife, livestock and human health as interconnected with one another. It's kind of more of a philosophy than an explicit organization. Does this need to be defined? It was intended for a general audience.
- COMMENT: It may be less well known in some countries.
- COMMENT: We could just hyperlink a web page that defines OneHealth. There's the one health Institute at UC Davis.
- COMMENT: That would work for our website, but then if it goes out in any other form, we might have to add a little mini definition.

Motion to approve the PSG HPAI statement as written.

Moved and seconded.

13 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

Motion passes unanimously.

#### REVIEW DRAFT PSG LISTSERV GUIDELINES – REPORT #4

- PSG recently transitioned our listserv over to a Google group.
- One of the reasons we transitioned was because our long-time moderator left us. The moderation responsibility has now transitioned from this independent external moderator, Verena Gill, over to our Communications committee.
- We also felt that the listserv needed more moderation. There have been some discussions on the listserv that have been difficult to contain, and may have alienated people within the group.
- We wanted to adopt a standard policy describing what is and isn't acceptable for listserv communication, and have moderators that can review the content and make sure that everything that's going on the listserv represents PSG and is sticking to the purpose of the listserv.
- The first document lays out the purpose we're hoping the Google group will serve, and what kinds of posts are acceptable versus unacceptable.
- We're not in a position yet to vote on this, but I wanted have a discussion within EXCO to see how people felt about what was in those both the policies and guidelines.
- By the time we get to our next meeting, we can vote on a finalized set of guidelines.

#### REVIEW DRAFT PSG LISTSERV MODERATION PROCEDURE – REPORT #5

- We were hoping for some input on whether this procedure makes sense, whether it seems transparent enough for people that are experiencing it on the other end, and whether it's likely to be successful in achieving our goals.
- QUESTION: I would like more info on the process for the panel who are going to be approving the messages. It says there's a panel of three and then it says that any moderator can accept. Does that mean both accept or reject?
- ANSWER: The idea with having multiple moderators was for each of them to be able to operate independently to a certain degree. If someone's out in the field, you still have other people that are able to moderate messages. There's a little bit of redundancy in there, but the other benefit is having a panel structure so that if there emails that are borderline or that someone's not sure about, there are people that they can consult with and make a decision together.
- COMMENT: The only moderators right now are the Communications Committee. I haven't added in the EID representative yet or the secretary.
- COMMENT: We can create another slack channel for the panel review if there needs to be a discussion.
- QUESTION: On the day-to-day, how does it actually function? What are the logistics of approving posts? It seems like a lot of work to me. Could there accidentally be duplicated effort?
- ANSWER: There's no way to double-approve a post. And it seems like the workload is manageable for three people. It's been really easy to do so far.
- QUESTION: Have you had to deal with any posts where you weren't sure and consulted the other person yet?
- ANSWER: So far, so good. Everybody's been positive. But it's only like a matter of time - eventually something's going to come along that may require some additional consultation. If we're still feeling unsure, we can reach out to EXCO and follow the protocol as written out.

#### COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE – REPORT #6

- We have been working hard on website updates, including working with the local committee for the upcoming joint meeting, which involves communications across two different societies.
- We're going to send out one more reminder for the post meeting survey. So far, we have around 58 responses. Normally we try to shoot for at least 1/3 of attendees at the meeting, so I'm hoping that one last reminder will get us across that line.
- Our second issue of Pacific Seabirds is in the works. We need help maintaining a list of member updates and relevant events.
- We have an early career scientist who's interested in getting involved with the Communications Committee and potentially starting a PSG TikTok for educational purposes. I don't know if this is a voting item, and if it is I can put together a report. The volunteer wrote an outline of his thoughts for the platform.
- QUESTION: Does anybody remember if we voted on adopting other social media platforms?
- ANSWER: It's not in the bylaws, and I don't think there's a need to vote on it, unless it were either contentious or cost money.
- COMMENT: I bring it up because I'm worried TikTok is contentious, although our approach would be the same as it is for other social media platforms.
- QUESTION: More than 30 states have banned TikTok for state employees and the federal government has banned TikTok for federal employees. There's a bill in Congress by September forces their Chinese parent company to divest or lose access to the US market. Is it worth investing in that much?
- ANSWER: We're assuming that it just gets sold to a US Parent company and continues on.
- COMMENT: Back to Pacific Seabirds, for the online version we are compiling and sharing the regional reports in a different way. Once we have the next issue published, we'll be really curious about your experience going through the new regional reports. It's going to be searchable and you can filter reports by region or by species. We're going to have a map with it as well. We hope that it will improve sharing information in general across PSG and encourage more people to submit regional reports.
- COMMENT: Regional representatives should put some thought into the best ways to establish communication with the members in your region. Updating the regional reports and making them more accessible and more user friendly is one way to do that. Amelia also set up a slack channel for the Washington/Oregon region that they've been using to communicate.

#### REVIEW OF NEW ACTION ITEMS

Two new action items from this meeting:

- Chairs and Conservation Committee will work to finalize and publicize the PSG HPAI statement with edits as discussed during the meeting.
- Everyone should send the Communications Committee any member updates and relevant events.

Four action items carried over from last meeting:

- Everyone should help recruit more volunteers for the elections committee.
- Treasurers will begin the process of creating document retention and reimbursement policies.
- Treasurers and chairs will investigate legal ramifications of changing purpose of the publication's endowment.

- Everyone should help recruit volunteers to help the Communications Committee with Twitter and other social platforms, as well as new co-leads for the committee.