

## MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 8 PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

8 October 2024 Conference Call

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



**Present:** Juliet Lamb (Chair), Dan Barton (Chair-Elect), Dick Veit (Past Chair), Lara Brenner (Secretary), Lindsay Adrean (Vice Chair for Conservation), Sarah Ann Thompson (Northern California Regional Representative), Amelia DuVall (Washington/Oregon Regional Representative), Ariel-Micaiah Heswall (Asia/Oceania Representative), Kerry Woo (Canada Regional Representative), Alyssa Eby (Student Representative) [10].

**Absent:** Jerome Fort (EU/AF Representative), Jaime Ojeda (S. California, Latin America, Hawaii Regional Representative), Julie Skoglund (Treasurer), Anne Schaefer (AK/RU Representative), Julia Gulka (Non-Pacific U.S. States Regional Representative) [5]

**Others present:** Emily Runnells (HELPS Committee Co-Coordinator), Wieteke Holthuijzen (Communications Committee Co-Chair), Lauren Lescure (Membership Committee Co-Chair), Emma Kelsey (Code of Conduct Committee Member), Sonya Pastran (HELPS Committee Co-Chair), Marc Romano (Code of Conduct Committee Member), Tom Good (Code of Conduct Committee Member) [7].

### September 12<sup>th</sup> Action Items

- Membership committee will make a Google form to collect updated info about member location/region. – **Done**. Lauren sent out a survey and will send out another survey now that field season is over.
- ALL: recruit more volunteers for the elections committee. **Keep**
- Treasurers and chairs will investigate legal ramifications of changing purpose of the publication's endowment. **Keep**
- ALL: Recruit volunteers to help the Communications Committee with Twitter and other social platforms, as well as new co-leads for the committee. **Keep**.
- Reach out to Juliet with any speakers or groups that can speak on TEK with applications to seabirds at the 2025 conference. **Remove**.
- ALL: provide feedback to Julie, who will make changes to Document Retention Policy, Whistleblower Policy, and Reimbursement Policy and resubmit for a vote at the next PSG meeting. **Keep**.

- Ariel will work on a proposal for an Auckland annual meeting to vote on at a future ExCo Meeting. **Keep.**
- Julie will reach out to the Ornithological Council and ask them to present at an upcoming meeting or submit a report justifying their need for continued funding. **Keep**
- Julie will invite a representative from Marine Ornithology to submit a justification for increasing the honorarium amount. **Keep**
- Juliet will submit a discussion item about the future of the Helps/Participation/Access fund within PSG. **Done!**

Votes to approve agenda for October 8th meeting and minutes from September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, motioned, seconded and approved (10 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain)

## HELPS Committee Proposal - Report #2

- PSG HELPS provides sponsored memberships to early career scientists and students to improve inclusion and diversity within PSG.
- Sonya and Emily have taken over as HELPS Co-coordinators this year, and shortly after there were changes to some of the funding structures within.
- We've been collaborating with the EID committee and corresponding members to make sure we're not overlapping in our efforts.
- PSG HELPS usually gets an influx of applicants for sponsored memberships around this time of year as registration for the annual meeting is starting to ramp up.
- Our proposal is that we should have a cap of 30 HELPS memberships that we can give out this year to students and early career scientists who apply.
  - This would allow us to meet the needs and continue the good work that PSG HELPS has been doing over the years.
- We have been working with the treasurer on this proposal.
  - PSG doesn't have to charge itself the full cost for a complimentary membership
  - The actual cost to PSG of a membership for each member is about \$6.25.
  - Our current access fund budget is a little over \$5000.
  - If you add the proposed 30 HELPS memberships plus the 30 corresponding members that are allocated in our bylaws, we have a total of 60 Members, which is about \$375.00, so it's well within the budget.
- QUESTION: Do we need to coordinate this with the travel awards? Do we want to give the same individuals both awards, or try to avoid that, and how will the timing work out?
  - ANSWER:
    - At some point we want to compare the list of people who got travel awards to the list of the HELPS recipients, but the purposes don't really overlap.
    - Getting a HELPS membership is a financially smaller step compared to the travel.
    - We also have corresponding members, which is another category of sponsored memberships.
    - When we created this access fund, it was to bring all these things together. Now when people want to contribute to accessibility for any purpose, they can contribute to one single fund, and then we can distribute that among the different needs.

Motion to approve the HELPS proposal to cap memberships at 30 individuals this year, seconded and approved (10 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain).

### **Code of Conduct Training – Report #3**

- Our goal is to make sure that we're all on the same page with regards to how we address complaints related to the Code of Conduct so that if and when they come in, we all know what to do.
- Code of Conduct is available on the PSG Website and has the following goals:
  - Demonstrate professional conduct
  - Promote scientific best practices
  - Strengthen organizational integrity
- The code only applies to activities that are directly sponsored by PSG.
- Complaints identify which tenets of the code they thought were violated and provide evidence to the extent they can.
  - The victim can bring a complaint, or a bystander can with permission.
- A complaint has to be sent to the EXCO within 6 months of the event.
  - ExCo then reaches out to the person the complaint was about and allows them to provide a response
  - Response and complaint become part of the package that the ExCo assembles and sends to the Code of Conduct Committee.
  - The code of Conduct committee reviews the case and sends their findings to the ExCo.
  - ExCo uses the findings of the Code of Conduct Committee to decide how to respond to both the complainant and the respondent.
- QUESTION: How many complaints are made?
  - One or two per year, so far.
- QUESTION: Are the three chairs the people who handle the communications around the initial complaint?
  - Yes, the exception is if one or more of the chairs has to recuse themselves.
- Complaint package contains the original complaint, the notification that was sent to the respondent, their response, and a brief summary written by the chair.
- Code of Conduct committee is 6 to 8 PSG members in good standing,
  - Try to make the committee representative of the Diversity within PSG.
  - Staggered 3 year terms.
  - For each case, three members without conflicts of interest, review the case and draft an opinion.
- QUESTION: What constitutes being named in a complaint? Do bystanders have a conflict of interest?
  - Anyone who has witnessed the incident as a bystander recuses themselves.
- First thing to ask is whether the case is reviewable.
  - Incidents that violate the code but didn't happen at a PSG sanctioned event or platform are not reviewable.
  - Could also involve work that was funded by PSG.
- Then we move through the tenets of the code and decide which ones might have been violated.
- Then we recommend actions, although it's ultimately up to ExCo to decide what the actions are.
  - Actions can be for the respondent, the complainant, or the broader PSG community as well.

- We have no legal authority to report actions to employers or to the authorities. If we receive complaints that are more severe, we need to report to the relevant authority.
- Then we all sign the findings report.
- QUESTION: Do only members need to abide by the Code of Conduct? What about non-members attending PSG events?
  - All attendees/participants in listserv do – need to make this clear when registering for PSG events. Membership status will affect possible consequences.
- The Code of conduct is voluntary, but we've never been challenged on that.
- QUESTION: Should we ask complainants to identify the PSG Nexus in their complaint? Seems like that can be up for interpretation.
  - Yes, good idea
- We should do this training every year
- Committee has a subcommittee that is looking at the terms of reference and limits of authority for the code of conduct. We're hoping to bring suggestions for revisions to our full committee at our next meeting, and then we'll present that at a future ExCo meeting.

Motion to adjourn, moved and seconded (10 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain)