

MINUTES OF THE PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING
25 August 2015 conference call: 1100-1230 (Pacific Daylight Time)
Amended and approved: 30 September 2015

Present (12):

Jane Dolliver (Secretary), Nina Karnovsky (Chair Elect), Stephanie Avery-Gomm (Canada Rep), Peter Hodum (WA/OR Rep), Yuri Albores Barajas (So Cal/Latin America/HI Rep), Stefan Garthe (Europe/Africa), Andrew Titmus (Student Rep), Robb Kaler (Alaska/Russia Rep), Christine Ogura (Treasurer), Stan Senner (Vice Chair for Conservation), Jo Smith (Past Chair).

Absent (3):

Anna Weinstein (No Cal), Samantha Richman (E Coast US), Kuniko Otsuki (Asia/Oceania).

Motion: Chair of call is Nina Karnovsky (Jo Smith proposes, Peter Hodum seconds)

Nays: 0, Abstains: 0

Passed unanimously

Motion: Accept the minutes with changes (Peter Hodum proposes, Stan Senner seconds)

Nays: 0, Abstains: 0

Passed unanimously

Christine identified on page 2 "IC" should be "OC" (Ornithological Council) and on page 3, Kathy (not Christine) was going to follow up with Doug on getting the final annual meeting budget.

Re: the 2016 Annual Meeting – we are still waiting to include a few more special sessions (submitted late) and have a new draft budget from Lindsay.

Motion: Approve the 2016 annual meeting budget (Nina Karnovsky proposes, Jo Smith seconds)

Discussion: The only part of budget that is not clear is the speaker costs. Two line items: plenary speaker, lifetime achievement award travel. Nina is in process of hearing back from the invited plenary speakers and will have a much better idea of costs for the those speakers soon. Speakers' budget includes travel and accommodations only, no honorarium. Plenary and award winners have registration and banquet ticket covered. This budget is \$8000 USD in the black assuming costs. The hope is always that the annual meeting budget makes a profit to cover PSG's operating costs (which is not finalized for 2015-2016). Given the calculated surplus in the 2016 Annual Meeting budget, this is something we should be able to work with. Christine suggested that for the costs that are still not certain (plenary speaker, lifetime achievement award travel) that a maximum be identified for this. Jo suggested not to exceed profit identified (\$7,974.79).

Nays: 0, Abstains: 0

Passed Unanimously

TREASURER'S UPDATE

Checking account \$68,841.55

Conservation account \$6,506.98

Student travel account: \$2,906.10

Paypal account: \$6,734.31

Endowment account: \$191,715.76

Still working with the new bookkeeper to resolve discrepancies between RegOnline and PayPal to fine tune income/expenses in order to inform drafting the FY2016 budget. The reason why this is taking so long is that the previous bookkeeper, who Lindsay thought was reconciling PayPal, had only been reconciling the bank accounts. RegOnline credit card transactions are paid through paypal. However, the two systems don't talk to each other in terms of reporting. So if a single member pays for meeting attendance at \$200, and annual dues at \$40, each of those transactions need to be sorted by hand and flagged in quickbooks by type of income (PayPal only records it as the total amount \$240). Looking into resolving this by paying by credit card transactions either through RegOnline or directly through quickbooks (as recommended by accountant).

A draft FY2016 budget (no numbers, but income/expense categories) was submitted for the June ExCo call. Christine is working on filling in the actual amounts with the latest figures. There is only one new item added to the draft FY2016 budget and this is for moving Quickbooks online (rather than currently using a desktop version), which would cost \$10/month. This would make it easier for the accountant, bookkeeper, and treasurer to work with the same Quickbook files at the same time rather than transferring copies back and forth by email and waiting on each other. Also, for the new treasurer that is coming on, we would not have to pay for software licenses (only have two at the moment) and would also allow the chair to be able to review and access (per the audit recommendation). Jo inquired if we move to Quickbooks online, would our bank account information be stored online and would this pose a potential security issue?. Christine said she would inquire.

Fiscal year change update – after talking to Lindsay Young and reviewing all the old Pacific Seabird Bulletins online (went as far back as 1995), it was confirmed that PSG's fiscal year has always been Oct 1 – Sept 30. If we went to a new fiscal year, it would cost \$1,000.00 to do the additional tax return (occurs because of the need to close out one tax year and start another). Christine will be out for between Oct 7-Nov 6 so if you have budget questions or need payments done, please keep this in mind.p.

The last two treasurer's have been in Hawaii, where PSG's bank accounts, PO Box, and accountant and bookkeeper are.. We're currently looking for new treasurer (who will probably live in a new state and will establish a new banking account, new credit card). Christine says this is one more reason to go to online quickbooks and she recommends moving banking and credit cards online as well..

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

With Lindsay and Christine, PSG's finances are in a much better state and solid. With both being on Oahu, there has also been a smoother transition and stability. Concern was expressed that the treasurer position is critical to continuing this and the question was posed should it be a longer term position? This might deter people from running.

Jo and Christine to put together documents that IRS says are the minimum for tax purposes.

To address the concern raised,, Christine suggested PSG could consider paying a bookkeeper to do all the day-to-day transactional work (but the bookkeeper can only be as effective as the guidance they are given so the treasurer still needs to work closely with them) or hire a part time PSG staff person to take on these duties.. Given past discussions about recruitment for ExCo and the rising complexity of managing PSG, it is worth having a separate discussion about the length of terms, time commitments and responsibilities of ExCo officers. Operating a non-profit is getting more complex with regulations. We should seriously consider a restructuring of PSG: how we make decisions and the board size. There are lots of positions to fill every year. We're not in good enough fiscal shape to propose a part-time staff person- don't have the consistent revenue to keep that position permanent (could consider an annual dues increase). We need to become simpler. AOU is much bigger org (have executive director, part-time business person, meeting planner) but they pretty much do the same thing as PSG – host an annual meeting.

Nina says this is a really great conversation: term limits, how to keep institutional memory, how to keep people motivated to run for positions.

Nina says we will really dig into this at the 2016 annual meeting.

Peter suggest soliciting feedback before-hand, from those who cannot attend the 2016 meeting.

PUBLICATIONS UPDATE

a. Letter to members. If anyone has feedback or wording, please let Andrew know. Similar letter would go to institutions. Christine suggested clarifying the refund only applies to those who paid for hard copies for 2015. It would also be good to stress after “can be provided electronically to members” that this will provide members with more timely information, new content, etc. (elaborate the benefits of moving to electronic). .

Jo has small wording changes that she will provide to Andrew.

Budget: Adobe products now available only as a monthly subscription fee, about \$50/month. The endowment committee has calculated \$9,461.95 as available for PSG to withdraw from the endowment without impacting the principal as required by the bylaw., \$6000 is what Tony Gaston has identified for Marine Ornithology. So the PSG proposed bulletin budget can be more robust. Christine recommends \$3k since this is the first year of transitioning to the electronic format and other expenses may arise. Jo agreed. Need to itemize out all the line items. Holly Freifeld had a designer who is open to doing another PS. Need to decide what we're doing re: 2015. Need to get all the items in for 2015-2016 PSG operating budget.

Motion: approve budget 3K for Pacific Seabirds Issue 42 2015 3K + 500 from the approved revenue from the endowment - as per the endowment policy. (Jo Smith proposed, Nina seconds)

Nays: 0 Abstentions: 0

b. Tony Gaston has made an executive decision that someone needs to take over as the managing editor to Marine Ornithology. Great opportunity for mid-career academic scientist that has tenure, or for research faculty, or permanent government scientist. According to Tony, this is a fairly light job, 20 hours/month. Other PSG members serve Marine Ornithology: Pat

Baird, David Ainley. Tony would act as mentor to smooth the transition. The best case scenario is that the transition occurs at the World Seabird Union. Expected term is 5 years, then re-evaluate.

ExCo members will send thoughts on good managing editor candidates to Jo

c. In PS Volume 41, some of the reports are organized by type of study (e.g., data products and services), some by geography (e.g., south-to-north, east-to-west). Regional reps want to change to a standardized format. Historically, the regional report comes from the person, no matter where they do their field research. Regional reps represent the members where they live. If this change occurs, there needs to be a preamble at the beginning of regional report that changes the focus to geography if this change is made.

Regional reps need to make the call for reports this week or next week at the latest.

Need to make sure all the regional reps send out the same message. There is concern that if the reports are geographically based, the “home country” will flag the “work” of individual researchers in other countries (proper permits, tax forms must be complete).

Peter Hodum will send Jane, Andrew, Robb and Stephanie an email to discuss changes to regional reports in light of changes to the entirety of Pacific Seabirds.

Regional reps to contact Jennifer Ma re: latest paid up members.

7a. Annette Henry stepped down after 4 years as website editor. In the interim, Jo has found Anne Francis, who can update website in current format. Robb volunteered and Jane would be on the website re-vamp committee. The contract with Anne Francis – to date, is at \$700 to do cleanup, post the 2016 annual meeting site.

If you have updates you need, please send to Jo to send to Anne in batches.

Jo will have Anne put up Stan’s conservation letters

7b. Code of Conduct Committee

Jen Zamon came up with draft of two months ahead of schedule – some policies in place if there are disagreements among members, or if there are professional conduct issues.

7c. Bylaws update – From Kathy, Doug has been hard to get a hold of.

Kathy needs to follow up with Doug. Bylaws change needs to go to vote for members ASAP.

7d. Recommendations for diversifying the endowment – please send to Christine.

Motion to adjourn (proposed by Peter Hodum, Stan Senner seconds)

Nays: 0 Abstains: 0