

Wisconsin Waterfowl Association
Board of Directors Virtual Meeting – Wednesday, August 18, 2021

Board Members in virtual attendance: Mike Depies, Dave Elwing, George Ermert, Jim Freck, Joe Gonyo, Russ Olson, Todd Schaller, and Bruce Urben.

Unable to Attend: Ian Bartelmez, Dennis Fleischer, and Pat Smith

Also virtually present: Kelcy Boettcher and Bruce Ross

Agenda:

- **6:35 PM – Meeting Convened**

- **6:36 PM – Financials Update**

BoD members received the financials via email and had no questions. Funds are ~\$90,000 ahead of budget. ATV raffle is in the black. Chapters are generally achieving Super Goal status. HRP remains paid up. Bruce Ross & Kelcy Boettcher are working to close out the 2020 compilation.

- **7:00 PM – Executive Director’s Report**

Bruce Ross opened with discussions regarding whether an in-person BoD meeting should be held, and if so, where. Board members concurred that an in-person meeting prior to the end of 2021 was not feasible. An in-person/overnighter in conjunction with the annual meeting in January is likely.

One more Director is needed to fill out the Hall of Fame (HoF) team. Current HoF team members are Ian Bartelmez, Loren Voss, and John Regan. Resolution is needed NLT September’s meeting. Nominations are solicited between 15 October and 15 November.

As directed during the July BoD meeting, Bruce Ross contacted an attorney (Zachary Bemis of the legal team Godfrey & Kahn) to review WWA’s Class A raffle procedures; initial feedback is positive. Bruce Ross will meet Mr. Bemis on August 20th to discuss the review. Bruce will present the findings/recommendations to the BoD during our September meeting.

- **6:54 – Planned Giving Discussion**

Bruce Ross and Russ Olson provided a “Planned Giving-in-a-Box” engagement plan and identified organizational/responsible parties for each task within the plan, as well as target audiences when the plan moves into its execution phase. Based upon this evening’s discussion the BoD agreed that sufficient details were addressed to proceed with the “Planned Giving-in-a-Box” initiative. Dave Elwing introduced a motion that the BoD adopt “Planned Giving-in-a-Box” and authorize expenditure of the \$6,000 needed to move forward. Mike Depies seconded the motion and all members present voted in favor of adopting the “Planned Giving-in-a-Box” initiative.

- **7:08 PM – EXPO Update**

Bruce Ross informed the Board that with only nine days to go, planning goes well, but that a lot of details remain. He acknowledged and thanked Todd Schaller, Bruce Urben, and George Ermert for their efforts in volunteer management, logistics, and WWA staff/BoD coordination, respectively. Currently there are 56 indoor booths, 20 outdoor booths, 29 seminars, the duck & goose calling competition, the state duck stamp competition, and a wide variety of youth and adult activities. The EXPO received between \$10,000 to \$15,000 in pro bono marketing allowing it to be \$4,000 in the black prior to opening its doors. Roughly 300 tickets are already sold and

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hopefully up to 1,000 people will be in attendance. The EXPO is 1.5 years in the making. Organizational goals which define success are: 1) Better connections to the waterfowling industry, and 2) Increased membership and achieving a higher WWA profile/recognition within the state.

George Ermert will release an email on August 19th to assign BoD and Staff to assigned tasks. WWA booth shifts will be 7AM to noon and noon to 5PM. We will man (2) booths – one inside & one outside. The inside booth will be informational, and the outside booth will sell ATV and other Class A raffle tickets. Several BoD members will assist set-up on Friday (10AM start time). Vendors will have access from noon to 8PM.

- **7: 30 PM – Committee Updates**

Membership Committee (George Ermert presented): George reported that WWA will be featured in four morning segments about the state shoot and WWA's mission. He also informed the Board that WWA will be featured on a new podcast, "The Wisconsin Sportsman."

Development Committee (Dave Elwing presented): The 6 August Wausau area "Meet & Greet," yielded a start-up 4-man committee with Abe Shinnars as the Chairman. He's moving forward with plans for a fall Class A deer gun raffle and potentially a Pizza Ranch fund raiser (plus he already has calendars out for sale. Based upon discussions during the kick-off Chapter Chair Chat (11 Aug), we will try a similar "Meet & Greet" approach to bolster the Baraboo Chapter's ranks. Similar to Wausau the targeted venue is the Reedsburg Outdoors Club. Dave Elwing will accompany Marv Tibbetts (the Baraboo Chairman) to the club's business meeting on 6 September. The Committee will host the September Chapter Chair Chat on 8 September; the topic will be "Retaining WWA Funds at the Chapter Level." The final point of discussion was regarding the lack of knowledge of opportunities to participate in DNR-led duck and goose banding events. The Development Committee will work with the Education Committee to develop a way to better inform WWA members of such opportunities.

Habitat Committee (Jim Freck presented): Habitat committee plans to assess eight potential projects during September. They will also reach out to chapters for wood duck box data. Jim asked if updated WWA brochures were available; Bruce Ross showed the Board the tri-fold update that he and George Ermert are working on for the EXPO.

Education Committee (Bruce Urben presented): The Fond du Lac area LTH was canceled by its organizer due to the DNR's late decision making and the organizer's busy schedule. The Green Bay LTH (15 & 16 Oct) remains a "GO" and has 3-4 openings. Work continues with Dr. Orlofske (UWSP) to secure a grant for the avian parasite study in 2022. Dr. Orlofske also continues to update the UWSP Museum of Natural History in which WWA will be highlighted. DNR grants to introduce diversity into waterfowling and potential benefits to WWA were discussed. A total of \$125,000 in grant money is available; it is usually distributed in small amounts. WWA received such about six years ago for female youth and single mothers. Unfortunately, the chapter planning to conduct to effort folded and the money had to be returned. The Board agreed that it was worth looking into and the write-up from six years ago could be used as a starting point for format and content.

Policy/Advocacy Committee (Bruce Ross presented): The Policy committee did not meet due to the many other July and August activities. The Policy committee will look into the validity of a Ducks Unlimited-generated counter-petition that Dave Elwing received and forwarded to BoD members. DU's petition counters a petition submitted by several anti-hunting groups to the Department of Interior and US Fish & Wildlife Service to prevent or sharply regulate

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transporting of live or dead animals, fish, and eggs across international and allegedly state boundaries. Lastly, tracking progress of the DNR's Waterfowl Management Plan was discussed. The 10-year plan is in its second year; all agreed that WWA has an obligation to review the plan's objectives and assess progress.

- **8:10 PM – President's Recap/Action Items**

Bruce Urben's recap of the evening's agenda, action items, and decisions includes:

- 1) The Financial Report was reviewed and accepted by the Board. The budget is in good shape (\$90,000 in the black, HRP is paid in full, the ATV raffle is in the black and all events are doing very well) and Bruce Ross and Kelcy Boettcher will complete the 2020 compilation. Russ Olson reemphasized the significance of paying off WWA's backlog to HRP and the debt of gratitude we owe Peter Ziegler for allowing us 13 years' grace period to pay off the debt.
- 2) No face-to-face BoD meeting will be held prior to January's Annual meeting.
- 3) One more Director is needed to complete the HoF team.
- 4) Bruce Ross will present the Class A legal review findings/recommendations to the Board during September's meeting.
- 5) All members present unanimously voted in favor of adopting the "Planned Giving-in-a-Box" initiative.
- 6) George Ermert will email EXPO assignments the Board members.
- 7) The Board received reports from each committee.

- **8:15 PM – Meeting Adjourned**

The next board meeting will be Wednesday 15 September from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM via Zoom.

Bring all ATV tickets (sold and unsold) to the EXPO.