

Wisconsin Waterfowl Association
Board of Directors Virtual Meeting – Wednesday November 17, 2021

Board Members in virtual attendance: Ian Bartelmez, Mike Depies, Dave Elwing, George Ermert, Dennis Fleischer, Jim Freck, Joe Gonyo, Todd Schaller, Pat Smith, and Bruce Urben.

Unable to Attend: Russ Olson

Also virtually present: Kelcy Boettcher and Bruce Ross

Agenda:

- **6:33 PM – Meeting Convened**

- **6:35 PM – Financials Update**

BoD members received the financials via email and had no questions. The budget is roughly \$97,000 in the black before PPP forgiveness. WWA's lender, BMO recommends PPP approval.

- **6:37 PM – Budget Surplus**

The Executive Board discussed options for what to do with the budget surplus during the November 15 session and brought the discussion to the BoD. Discussed options were: Place a portion (amount TBD) in the endowment; Retain a portion (amount TBD) in a Rainy-Day Reserve; Fund needed upgrades (revamp website); Use a portion for major Class A purchases (ATV/UTV raffle items). Required action for the December BoD (Dec 15): Bruce Ross; Rob Monette, and Kelcy Boettcher will develop a projected FY22 budget; Committees will identify funding needs. Only after receiving this information can an informed decision be made WRT the budget surplus.

- **6:51 PM – FY 22 ATV/UTV Raffle**

In recent years Randy Hellbach purchased the vehicle being raffled as part of the year's ATV/UTV raffle and received a promissory note until it was paid off. Ian Bartelmez suggested opening an interest-bearing account dedicated to large purchases such as the UTVs/ATVs and other major end items. Dave Elwing suggested using the budget surplus to buy the ATV/UTV rather than place an undue burden on a member's personal account, especially because Randy expressed interest in WWA identifying a different funding stream for 2022. FY21 costs were 1st Place: \$9644 (ATV) & \$700 (trailer) plus, \$1250 (hunt – 2d place). Based upon the discussion the Board accepted and unanimously approved a nomination from George Ermert & seconded by Jim Freck to use WWA funds to purchase an ATV or UTV (preferably a UTV) for the FY22 ATV/UTV Raffle. Jim Freck and Randy Hellbach will explore costs and availability prior to December's BoD meeting.

7:00 PM – Chapter Retention of Funds (Internal Grant Initiative)

Dave Elwing presented the latest draft of the Development Committee's Chapter Retention of Funds initiative and recommended renaming it as the Internal Grant Initiative based upon proposed changes. In short, chapter that exceed their FY22 Super Goal status can identify local habitat or education mission related projects for which they desire WWA budget monies. The Board reviewed the proposed approval process and a "reimbursable grant" accounting process for payment and record keeping maintained at the state level. Discussion points focused on: 1) Ensuring the state account remains sufficient depth for normal operations and end-of-year staff bonuses; 2) Checks and balances to ensure projects maintain cost and schedule; 3) Total grant value chapters can receive; 4) Can chapter grants be used to support external organizations (BSA, high school trap teams, etc.); 5) Clarifications that grants can be used to purchase raffle prizes; 6) Supportability in the forecasted FY22 budget; and 7) Introduction of a "simplified" grant initiative during FY22 as a test program to resolve unforeseen impacts without severely impacting the FY22 budget and conduct a full rollout in FY23. Initially Ian Bartelmez motioned

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(2d by Pat Smith) to “Move the Internal Grant Initiative forward with a \$500 cap for FY22 projects. Prior to a vote George Ermert suggested waiting for a vote until the Board had a revised proposal to review and see what was really being agreed upon. Bruce Urben asked the members for their opinions regarding carrying the Bartelmez/Smith motion forward or tabling the proposal pending revisions. The Bod concurred with tabling the initiative. George Ermert motioned (Jim Freck seconded) a motion to “Table the Internal Grant Initiative until December’s Board meeting when a revised proposal could be presented.” The Ermert/Freck motion was carried. Dave Elwing will rework to initiative and present it during December’s BoD meeting.

- **7: 48 PM – Policy Maker of the Year Proposal**

The Policy Committee proposed creating a (Policy Maker of the Year (POTY) to annually review and recognize non-partisan recognition of a legislator who demonstrates and supports WWA’s goals. The BoD will review nominations and select a recipient. Discussion focused on: 1) Ensuring nominations are non-partisan; 2) Consider expanding beyond state legislators to include county or municipal elected officials and state, county, or municipal employees (DNR employees, specially); 3) Frequency of award (can be skipped if a suitable candidate is not selected). The Board asked the Policy Committee to refine the proposal and, ideally, present a FY21 nomination during December’s Board meeting.

- **7: 55 PM – Board of Director Terms and Vacancies**

Bruce Urben reported that Ian Bartelmez and Jim Freck’s terms as Board members expire in January 2022. Ian Bartelmez expressed interest to renew his Board membership; Jim Freck had not responded prior to November’s meeting. Additionally, two 3-year term vacancies and two one-year term vacancies can be filled. Bruce Ross and Bruce Urben identified three potential candidates throughout the year (B.J. Grassmann – active in Habitat Committee, Kim Shady – Fort Atkinson, and Rob Rosenberger – retired WI DNR Deputy Watershed Management Bureau Director & decoy carver). John Wetzel (Lacrosse area) was suggested during the meeting, as well. Of the four, B.J. Grassmann is the most likely to be available. Bruce Urben urged focusing on credentials versus simple availability. Bruce Urben and Bruce Ross will reach out to John Wetzel (retire WI DNR and Wisconsin Wetlands Association Board Member) to determine interest and availability. Board members were queried for candidates; no other candidates were suggested.

- **8:01 PM – Committee Updates**

Policy/Advocacy Committee (Bruce Ross presented) Committee’s focus has been on the Sandhill Crane legislation; actions included meeting with multiple legislators, opponents, and proponents. It does not appear that the Bill will pass a Senate vote unless language is adjusted. Bruce Ross, George Ermert, and Todd Schaller will meet with Senator Felzkowski, the Bill’s sponsor, on December 14th to discuss the bill, potential amendments, and how to keep it moving forward.

Membership Committee (George Ermert presented): George reported that: 1) Ian Bartelmez joined the Membership Committee; 2) WWA is getting more earned media coverage through the sandhill crane coverage; 3) Ian is getting WWA coverage on the Larry Smith Outdoor Show (podcast); and 4) WWA has over 4,000 social media likes.

Development Committee (Dave Elwing presented): The Development Committee reported that Bruce Ross, Kelcy Boettcher, and Russ Olson continue to work with the Planned Giving in a Box (PGB) technicians to develop WWA’s PGB website. They are also developing an email outreach to roughly 800 common viewers to announce Giving Tuesday (November 30th) options to

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support WWA (Amazon Smile, employer matching funds, sustaining membership option, and PGB). Regarding chapter development, the focus for Baraboo River Chapter's Meet & Greet remains advertising. Kelcy Boettcher and Marv Tibbitts developed and distributed fliers that link to the WWA Events page, and Dave Elwing created and sent out PSA requests to three radio media hubs. (Post meeting George Ermert suggested several additional free media coverage approaches and will create demographic-focused Face Book advertisements). Dave also reported that in addition to the Internal Grant Initiative, the committee worked on a Limited Activity Chapter based upon discussions from November's Chapter Chair Chat and that the committee began focusing on FY22 Goals.

Habitat Committee (Jim Freck presented): The Habitat Committee is developing a spreadsheet to track wood duck box locations and production across the state. Pat Smith inquired about how he can get some boxes. Kelcy Boettcher reported that boxes can be bought on the website, but that we are currently out of boxes. Bruce Ross reminded the members that wood duck box storage will be consolidated near Rhinelander where the coordinator resides.

Education Committee (Bruce Urben presented): The committee is working on several educational articles with the help of UWSP's Dr. Orlofsky and one of her counterparts. The Education Committee's FY22 goals will focus on Learn-to-Hunts, the EXPO, and multiple newsletter articles.

- **8:17 PM – Executive Director's Report.**

Based upon the BoD meeting's agenda, all significant items in the Executive Director's Report were already addressed during this meeting and further discussion was not required.

- **8:18 PM – State Budget**

The BoD will meet via Zoom on January 19th to discuss/approve WWA's FY22 budget.

- **8:22 PM – Inactive Chapters**

In light of the length of the BoD meeting, Bruce Urben introduced the Concept of a Limited Activity Chapter to the Board for thought and discussion during December's meeting. The concept of Limited Activity Chapters came up during November's Chapter Chair Chat. Within the past year at least two instances of active WWA members whose chapters are no longer active (Prairie du Chien and Wausau) conducted educational opportunities (mentored hunts and participated in a youth hunting Heritage Day) under the WWA banner without WWA's cognizance. Questions regarding liability and regarding insurance coverage by WWA's carrier immediately came to mind. Based upon what we know, these groups actions all point towards favorably educating the R3 segment that WWA wants to attract. However, this is the extent of involvement they want to perpetuate; they do not wish to be involved in being a fund-raising entity. Prairie du Chien's activities came to light because of a corporate matching fund donation earmarked for their event. Bruce Ross contacted the local POC and requested a WWA newsletter article to explain their activity, involvement, and to help categorize their activity. Questions arose regarding other types of activities that might be ongoing, fund accountability, and liability. Prairie du Chien's and Wausau's charters remain "active" (a correction from was presented during the discussion – an "inactive" charter designation does not currently exist). A "Limited Activity" charter might serve this matter the best; Bruce Ross and Kelcy Boettcher will research the matters and provide recommendations to the Board in December. Establishing a "Limited Activity" status protects the WWA members acting in good faith, while also spreading the word about WWA's existence and mission, and potentially rendering membership and

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chapter growth. Dave Elwing will finalize the draft Limited Activity Charter proposal for December's meeting, as well.

- **8:40 PM – In-Person State Meeting**

The in-person state meeting is scheduled for February 5th. The location remains TBD. Two locations are under consideration: 1) The Columbian in West Bend (Midland Wings Chapter's banquet location), and 2) Royal St Patrick's Golf Club near Wrightsville (Twin Cities Chapter's golf outing location). Bruce Ross and the staff will compare locations and costs and present a recommendation during December's BoD meeting.

- **8:45 PM – President's Recap/Action Items**

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

- 1) Budget Surplus – Bruce Ross and Kelcy Boettcher will present a draft FY22 budget during December's Board meeting. Committees will also provide their projected funding requirements.
- 2) ATV/UTV Raffle – A motion was approved to use WWA funds to purchase the FY22 ATV/UTV Raffle purchases. Jim Freck and Randy Hellbach will research and report prices and availability during December's Board meeting. The Board's preference is for a UTV.
- 3) Internal Grant Initiative – Discussion was tabled pending review at December's Board meeting. A \$500 per Chapter project test will be done in FY22.
- 4) Policy Maker of the Year (POTY) – Policy Committee will present a refined POTY proposal and, ideally, a nominate during December's Board meeting.
- 5) Board of Director Nominations – Make any additional recommendations to Bruce Ross and Bruce Urben
- 6) State Budget Meeting – Meeting will be conducted virtually on January 19th at 6:30PM.
- 7) Limited Activity Charter Proposal - Bruce Ross and Kelcy Boettcher will research the ongoing activities and provide recommendations to the Board in December. Dave Elwing will finalize the draft Limited Activity Charter proposal for December's meeting.
- 8) In-person State Meeting – Bruce Ross will provide allocation recommendation during December's Board meeting.

- **8:55 PM – Meeting Adjourned**

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