

NETWS Annual Business Meeting

Kearney Holiday Inn

28 Feb 2018, 4:00 pm

There were approximately 55 people in attendance at the meeting.

Agenda:

Intro/Call to Order

President Jenny Prenosil starts meeting with introductions of current board members; Past President Laurel Badura, President Jenny Prenosil, President-elect Matt Steffl, Treasurer Jessica Jurzenski, Secretary Mel Nenneman, and at-large board members Caroline Jezierski, John Denton, Shaun Dunn, and Shelly McPherron. Outgoing board members are Badura, Jurzenski (filling Adam Jones' Treasurer term), Dunn and McPherron (filling term vacated by Barbara Hayford).

Secretary's Report: Nenneman provided a summary of the 2017 Annual Business Meeting while the notes were projected on the screen for members to read. Bill Vodenhal moved to accept the minutes, Dunn seconded and the motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Note – Adam Jones resigned as Treasurer, and Jessica Jurzenski volunteered to fill out the remainder of his term as Treasurer. Jurzenski reported to membership that 2017 had been a good year for NETWS financially. Current status of accounts showed \$20,251.04 in checking, \$4,526.15 in CD, 4,526.47 in Saving account, for a total of \$29,491.66. Overall budget for 2017 was in the black by \$1,615.23. 2018 budget estimates have NETWS in the black by \$2546.50. Discussion items during Treasurers report: Mike Gutzmer suggested looking into putting funds from the CD into a safe mutual fund instead of a CD as it would get better return. Need to ask members/attendees at the meeting if Eventbrite was easy to use/worked well to determine if these benefits outweigh the fees for using this service. This topic should be addressed at the next board meeting so that the planning committee can decide if Eventbrite should be used for next meeting registration. Lanka asked about the line item in the budget that showed \$35 going to CMPS for memberships – thought it should be more if we have around 100 members. Badura suggested that funding items could be grouped a bit more instead of having many line items. Steffl suggested splitting donations versus sponsorships as the way this money can be spent is different. Lindvall thanked Jurzenski for stepping up to fill the Treasurer's position. Lindvall and Marilyn Tabor agreed to conduct an audit of the NETWS accounts. Prenosil asked for a motion to approve the Treasurers report as amended; Eric Zach so moved, Dunn seconded and the motion passed.

Committee Reports:

- Nominating - Past-president Badura said that she hoped all of our members saw the link to Survey Monkey to vote and information regarding candidates for the NETWS board posted to the website. Badura announced that Jessica Jurzenski was elected as Treasurer, and that Mike Gutzmer and Erin Considine were elected as At-large board members. NETWS is still seeking nominations for President-elect as no nominees were found prior to the Annual meeting. Two or 3 potential candidates were identified at the

meeting, and candidate bios and electronic voting will be coming soon to elect someone to the post of President-elect. Badura urged members to consider running for At-large board positions to become more active in NETWS.

- Membership - Committee chair Shaun Dunn reported that we currently have 97 members, and that this is down a bit from recent past membership rolls. This is likely due in part to lower NETWS registrations at the Annual meeting last year as we held the annual meeting in conjunction with the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference. Registration costs associated with this meeting made it more difficult for many to attend. Dunn thinks membership numbers should go back up after this year's meeting, although it seemed that student attendance was lower than usual. Lindvall asked how many people have become lifetime and legacy members. Still a low number of these (approximately 4). Perhaps need to find a way to better advertise that these options are available to our members.
- Programs – Committee chair Steffl reported that he appreciated the great help that he had setting up the meeting. Several subcommittees stepped up and helped the meeting come together well. Steffl said that the use of Eventbrite was nice for the program committee as it allowed people to register and pay ahead of time, and was quick and easy for the committee to track number of registrants, meals, etc. Cost to use Eventbrite was about \$8.00/ticket sold for a \$125 registration.
- Conservation Review – Eric Zach and Bill Vodenhal reported that NETWS had signed on in support of the Saving American Prairies Act, and had written letters of support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Federal Agencies Appropriations Bill. Upcoming issues of interest include following the Farm Bill legislation, which is currently in draft form in the House of Representatives. This bill is important as it contains provisions funding many conservation projects. Zach also said that will continue following the Recovering Americas Wildlife Act, which if passed would provide funding to help provide for habitat needs to keep common wildlife common, rather than trying to recover animals once they are rare.
- Information and Education – Mark Lindvall spoke about the information and education committee. Committee members appear to be Laurel Badura handling the website, Jessica Barrett managing Facebook and NETWS Google Group, and Mark Lindvall, Jason Clark and David Baasch working to produce the newsletter. Lindvall said the newsletter has 4 goals for the year: 1 - boost the rate at which members open the newsletter (currently has about 26% of newsletters sent out via email are opened). Mariah Simmons said that this is similar to the TWS open rate of 25%. 2 - include information from The Wildlife Society in NETWS newsletter, 3 – increase visibility on social media, 4 – put newsletter on NETWS website. Lindvall asked for help to potentially get NETWS on Twitter as he is not a twitter user. Zach said it may be possible to cross post Facebook and Twitter if we had accounts in both social media platforms. Deadline for getting materials included in the next Newsletter is 05 Mar 2018.
- Awards – Committee chair Badura announced that there were two nominations made to the committee this year. One nominee was not qualified because they are not a TWS/NETWS member. The second nominee was deemed not qualified for the award at this time. There was a successful nominee for the Joe Gabig Scholarship this year

(Heather Johnson, UN-K Trumpeter Swan research). She also asked for a member to step into the role of committee chair as Badura would like to step away from this role after many years of chairing the committee. Badura reminded members of their responsibility to run for board positions, serve on committees, and nominate their peers for awards. A good way for members to be more involved in the chapter is to volunteer for committees.

- Certification – Carl Wolfe is currently chair of this committee. Wolfe told members that now is a critical time to look at and consider becoming a AWB or CWD. Wants to use the newsletter to continue outreach to members regarding applying to become certified by TWS. Len McDaniel offered that being a CWB did carry some weight when it comes to testifying in court. Steffl threw out the idea that the chapter might consider offsetting some of the cost of certification, particularly for students interested in completing the application process.

Old Business

- Prenosil reminded members of the Google Groups email protocol (tell us who you are when you send an email to membership), and encouraged members to freely engage the NETWS membership through this medium.
- Prenosil updated members on the status of the APO. A draft of the APO for 2018 has been written and the board will be reviewing and voting on at a future board meeting.

New Business

- Feral Cat Research Grant – Dunn spoke about forming an ad hoc committee to work on assessing partner interest in moving forward with this research project. Basis for this research came from a TWS talk at the annual meeting that used kitty cams to provide data on cat/wildlife interactions, including cats killing and harassing wildlife, documenting bird alarm calls, etc. Hope to replicate this research in Nebraska, with NETWS providing some seed money to help get the project off the ground. Committee will explore partnerships and ideas for potentially doing this project. Data collected could be used for education and local engagement on the feral (and free roaming domestic) cat issue to show impacts of cats on wildlife. There are existing cat colonies in NE (UN-K, UN-L, and old Best Buy location in Lincoln) where feral cats are being fed (are these also TNR locations?). Discussion points brought up at the annual meeting: Badura encouraged student chapters to become involved as this provides an opportunity for student chapters to actively engage in an important wildlife issue. Question was asked if the study presented caused any of the TNR groups to change their actions based on results from the research. Steve Hicks asked if some money should be allocated to the ad hoc committee, and Prenosil and Badura both thought that it would be a bit premature at this point and should wait until the committee has worked out more details of the project. Chris Helzer and Greg Wright asked if the project would be more for research or outreach in informing the public about the hazards that cats pose to wildlife. Dunn said that project would involve research first and then using information for outreach, indicating that local data could be a powerful tool in talking to the public.

Badura said the importance of the project is to promote the value of wildlife versus the value of feral cats. Helzer suggested that should use the objectives of the project to help define what data should be collected as it could have implications on how to spend funds. A research project would likely be more costly in terms of kitty cams needed to capture enough data, while an outreach project might be able to utilize existing data supplemented with a few local examples. Thus should decide if primary goal is to replicate research project or outreach on a local level.

It was also brought up that it would be an excellent time for NETWS to establish a template or framework for how to use funds for research in the future.

- Some discussion raised about next year's annual meeting. Badura mentioned that for the programs committee it will be important to identify a location and an estimate of the date and cost as NETWS members working for the Federal Government now need to provide information on conference attendance 6 months in advance to get approval to go to meetings. Prenosil brought up before members the idea of considering other venues to host the meeting that could potentially lower costs. Said that the NE AFS meeting had rented the Izaak Walton league building and catered meals at a much lower cost than hosting meeting in a hotel/conference center.
- Other: Carl Wolfe mentioned that Howard Wiegers, the oldest lifetime member of TWS, was celebrating his 103rd birthday.
- Other: Steffl asked for volunteers to drive vehicles to transport people to the sandhill crane viewing blind at the Rowe Sanctuary on Thursday morning, and indicated that 6-7 vehicles would be needed.

Prenosil asked if there was any other business, and seeing none asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jessica Jurzenski moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Dunn, and the motion carried.

Pres. Prenosil asked if there was any other business. None was brought up, so she asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Badura so moved, Dunn seconded and the motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 10:50 am.

2018 NETWS Board Members

President-elect: TBD

President: Matt Steffl

Past President: Jenny Prenosil

Treasurer: Jessica Jurzenski (2018-2019)

Secretary: Melvin Nenneman (2017-2018)

At-Large members: Caroline Jerzenski, John Denton (2017-2018)

Mike Gutzmer, Erin Considine (2018-2019)

