

NETWS Board Meeting
Kearney Holiday Inn
28 Feb 2018, 9:00 am

Agenda:

Intro/Call to Order

President Jenny Prenosil starts meeting with a roll call of board members. Present are Matt Steffl, Laurel Badura, Jessica Jurzenski, Mel Nenneman, Caroline Jezierski, John Denton, Shaun Dunn, and Shelly McPherron. Also attending are CMPS board members Andrea Orabona, Jim Hays, Stephanie Ferraro, Shelly Dice and Adam Ahlers. CMPS Council Representative Bob Lanka attended, as well as Mariah Simmons from TWS. Long time NETWS member and Newsletter editor Mark Lindvall attended.

Secretary's Report: Nenneman sent out the minutes from the 06 September 2017 Board meeting shortly after the meeting. Nenneman read through a summary of these notes. The new business topic of feral cats generated further discussion during the Secretaries report; this discussion added to new business. Jurzenski 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 asked if the board needed to vote on budget at the board meeting as it was not clear that this needs to be voted on at the board meeting. The budget does need to be approved by membership and the board. We should be voting to approve past budget numbers at the board meeting, and conducting an audit at the end of the year to insure the budget is sound.

Jurzenski recommended deferring a vote on the budget until after she could get fully into the banking system and had time to fully review the accounts. Jurzenski was still in the process of getting the necessary signatures and paperwork completed so she can fully access the NETWS accounts. There was a brief discussion of where best to house NETWS accounts. Badura (as Secretary/Treasurer of CMPS) went with Wells Fargo as they are a big bank with branches almost everywhere so that when a new treasurer comes in it is easier for them to visit a branch to deposit checks, sign paperwork, etc. Jezierski offered that Credit Unions may also be a good option to consider. Badura asked what the CD is making, and Jurzenski said she would check the status of the CD.

Other financial discussion: Jurzenski reported checking account is in good shape right now, with approximately \$20K, and that she would be depositing \$1000 into the Chapters savings account soon. The savings account serves as the Chapters rainy day fund, and we'd like to have enough to cover the costs of our annual meeting saved. Steffl commented that we might want to increase the rainy day fund as a 3 day meeting can run close to \$10K for costs. Steffl said for this meeting the total costs were around \$11K, and the income was nearly the same, and we'd gotten just shy of \$3K in donations, so the budget for the meeting is looking good. Frisch suggested may want to consider other venues (Izaak Walton league, others) that would be cheaper to rent.

Badura said history of the development of the APO in the NETWS was when E. Munter was President, one goal was to encourage students to come to the meeting. Lanka said other chapters in the CMPS are exploring options to use funds Chapter funds for student memberships and other student incentives. Dunn asked about potential funding for research projects, and specifically how we might help fund a feral cat project.

Committee Reports:

- Nominating - Past-president Badura said that we will have new board members, but that survey had been up for less than 30 days. Jess Jurzenski was the only candidate for Treasurer, and there were three candidates for the 2 at-large board positions. Still looking for candidates for President Elect. There was some discussion about how to proceed with voting for Pres-elect. It was suggested that we could take nominations at the business meeting and vote at the business meeting. Lanka said whatever we do we should follow our bylaws. Plan was to recruit candidates for Pres-elect at the business meeting and then vote via survey monkey to allow all members a chance to vote.
- Membership - Dunn reiterated that NETWS didn't get as many renewals at the annual meeting in 2017 held in conjunction with the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference, and there was a small drop in membership as a result. Dunn did get a pretty good response in membership renewals after the last newsletter. Current membership is at approximately 97. At the time of the meeting, Dunn was not sure how many members will renew/join with the use of EventBrite for registrations since there was not a way to pay membership with the registration fee. Badura asked about getting a check from NETWS to cover CMPS memberships for those members not paying through TWS memberships.
- Programs – Steffl did not have much to report other than the meeting had come together well, and welcome to Kearney. Thanked other members who had stepped up to help pull the meeting together.
- Conservation Review – The board had signed three letters in the past year.
- Information and Education – Mark Lindvall spoke about the information and education committee. Committee members appear to be Laurel Badura handling the website, Jessica Barrett doing Facebook, 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. Jerzenski mentioned that Facebook use has gone down and wondered if we might be able to use Twitter to get the newsletter out. Lindvall said he would look for help with this as he is not a twitter user. It was said that there is a way to link Facebook and Twitter. Idea of advertising on local radio was brought up, but seemed that the consensus was that this would only work if we were promoting a specific event.
- Awards – There were two awards nominations. 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. Looking for a new chair for the awards committee as Badura would like to step away from this role after many years of chairing the committee.

- Certification – No update was given. Carl Wolfe is current chair of this committee. Suggestion was made that perhaps professionals that are certified biologists could go to universities to provide assistance writing the application. Dunn suggested that this might be a good workshop for next year. Jurzenski suggested that a certification application workshop could also work on a regional level (CMPS).

Old Business

- Prenosil indicated that the Google Groups email protocol seemed to be working well and that people were using the protocol when posting to the Google Group. Probably need to remind members to use the protocol when sending messages in the NETWS Google Group.
- Prenosil has gotten comments back from committees regarding the APO. These comments will be shared with the board so that they can be incorporated into a revision of the APO, with a goal of approving the APO at a subsequent board meeting.

New Business

- Request for letter of support for United States Forest Service biologist Greg Wright. In his position at the USFS, Wright covers the Bessey Unit of the Nebraska National Forest near Halsey and the McKelvie National Forest southwest of Valentine. Planning at the state level supported moving the biologist position to Valentine, and planning had progressed as far as locating office space for the position in Valentine (NRCS offices in Valentine have space available) and Wright has built a house in Valentine. The move has run into lack of support at the National level. A letter of support of the move is requested to be sent to the National USFS office. Badura asked if the letter could support the move from a biological perspective, and supports providing a letter of support. Badura asked if Steffl and Lindvall could draft a letter to send to the board.
- Jerzenski asked if the board would consider signing a letter of support for the Nebraska Cooperative Research Unit housed at UN-L. The President's budget proposal would eliminate funding for Coop units. Coop units provide a great deal of wildlife research and training for new wildlife professionals, and are an important partnership between universities, USFWS and state agencies. Letter would be sent to the Nebraska congressional delegation. Jerzenski indicated that she could draft a letter.
- Feral Cat Research Grant – Dunn will bring up the feral cat research idea at the membership meeting and look for support for an ad hoc committee. Jerzenski suggested that the board create a protocol/structure within NETWS for using handling funding requests and using funds to support research. Lindvall cautioned against getting too far into funding research as it is expensive. Dunn said for the feral cat issue was thinking more of a discrete amount that would be used as seed money to fund project. Other discussion regarding this project included the mention that some groups that support TNR are now taking feral cats to place on farms or other housing options (rather than

free roaming in cities; doesn't sound like this is necessarily better for wildlife). It was also pointed out that in addition to the wildlife issues (predation, harassment of wildlife by cats), there is also a human health component since cats can be disease vectors (e.g. toxoplasmosis). Jerzenski asked if there is a TWS working group on this topic (not answered at meeting), and Adam Ahlers asked about potential privacy issues related to kitty cams; was thought that the privacy issues would be addressed by researchers leading the project. Discussion also included locations of feral cat colonies at UN-L and UN-K, and another large colony in Lincoln. Mariah Simmons asked NETWS to keep her posted on progress with this topic. Most of this discussion relates to a previous board meeting and the idea of potentially replicating a study that used kitty cams to assess the impact on wildlife of both domestic pets allowed to roam freely and feral cats in trap-neuter-release (TNR) colonies. Dunn suggested that NETWS consider the possibility of replicating this research in a large community in Nebraska to provide an opportunity for student research and to provide an opportunity to educate the public about the impact of free roaming cats on wildlife. NETWS would not fund the project entirely, but perhaps could provide some starter money to provide some interest from potential partners. Badura suggested that Brian Peterson from University of Nebraska – Kearney might be a good contact and that UN-K has a cat colony. Prenosil mentioned that this could be an avenue to tap into undergraduate research funding at UN-K or UN-L. UN-L has the Undergraduate Creative Activities and Research Experience program (UCARE) and UN-K has a Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities program (URCA) that may be able to partially fund a project. This could also be an opportunity for several student chapters to collaborate among schools. There was also a bit of discussion about the type of collar to use (what type of data gets collected) and how to retrieve data from the collars. Free roaming pet cats are much easier as the owner can attach and remove collars, while free roaming feral cats would need to be captured at least twice. No vote was taken on this issue, but the board generally seemed in favor of moving forward with this possibility. Next steps should probably include determining an amount of money NETWS is willing to set aside for a project, and contacting student chapters and/or chapter mentors to determine if there is interest in this type of research.

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.