

NETWS Annual Business Meeting
Zoom Virtual Meeting
23 Feb 2021, 12:00 – 1:30 pm

2020-2021 NETWS Board Members

President-elect: Will Inselman (2020)

President: Shelly McPherron (2020)

Past President: Shaun Dunn (2020)*

Treasurer: Matt Gruntorad (2020-2021)

Secretary: Melvin Nenneman (2019-2020)*

At-Large members: Andrew Little*, Mercy Manzanares* (2019-2020)
Sarah Nevison, Jenny Prenosil (2020-2021)

*Indicates outgoing board member; position to be filled by vote of membership in Mar 2021

Shelly McPherron calls the meeting to order at 12:02 pm.

Meeting begins with board members introducing themselves with the position they hold on the board and the position they hold in their work lives.

Secretaries Report: Nenneman provided a summary of the 2020 Annual Business Meeting with the notes shared on the screen members to follow along. Summary highlighted topics that generated the most discussion at the previous meeting or new policy/changes in policy that were discussed at the meeting. At the end of this summary, Nenneman asked if there were any additions or discussion of the minutes as presented. S. McPherron moved to accept the minutes, seconded by S. Dunn, approved by voice vote.

Treasurers Report: Gruntorad reported that the 2020 budget had run into the red by \$572.78 due to issues with NGPC making registration payments through EventBrite for the 2019 and 2020 annual meetings. This invoice was recently paid, so although the budget was in the red on paper, with this invoice now paid the 2020 budget came out in the black. Overall the chapter continues to be on solid financial footing with a net balance of \$35,145.17.

For the 2021 proposed budget, Gruntorad pointed out several differences for this coming year due to having a virtual annual meeting and the associated costs. Income from registrations, booth exhibitors etc. was absent from this proposed budget, but costs were also reduced because there were no expenses for keynote speaker travel and lodging, catering, student rooms etc.

Shelly moved to accept the proposed budget, Jenny Prenosil seconds, approved by voice vote.

Committee Reports:

Nominating Committee- (chair Shaun Dunn) Dunn reported that he had found candidates to run for all open board positions but then had several drop out at the last minute. At the time of the annual meeting, there was one candidate for President-elect, a slate of candidates for the 2 open At-large board positions, and there was a need for a candidate for Secretary. Dunn asked for nominations for the Secretary position, and indicated that as soon as he had a candidate for all board vacancies voting would begin. (Jen Corman nominated herself as a candidate for Secretary).

Membership Committee- (chair Shaun Dunn) Dunn reported that membership has been surprisingly consistent despite the challenges of COVID. Currently NETWS has 93 members in good standing. Dunn was initially concerned that with all the confusion and uncertainty due to the pandemic that people would forget to renew memberships.

Programs Committee- (chair Will Inselman) Inselman reported that the virtual program seemed to come together quite well. He thanked the members of the programs committee for all the help in pulling the online meetings together (trivia night, silent auction, student lunch, photo contest, evening social). There were 149 registrants for the meeting. Inselman mentioned that the virtual conference did have several pros despite the drawbacks of not being able to meet in person (no travel/lodging expenses, don't have to deal with weather, can bring in speakers that ordinarily would be difficult to engage, potentially higher attendance). He suggested that in the future the annual meeting might include a combination of in person and virtual components.

Conservation Review Committee- (chair Eric Zach) Zach was unable to attend the meeting. McPherron shared that the committee had been busy, sending letters to support RAWA (Recovering Americas Wildlife Act), made comments regarding recent activities of the Nebraska Environmental Trust board, and sent letters to the Nebraska Legislature opposing LB 468 (Provide compensation by the NGPC for property damage caused by wildlife) and LB 469 (State intent regarding appropriations for NGPC). Both of the proposed Legislative Bills would effectively reduce the amount of funding that NGPC has available to provide for wildlife conservation in Nebraska.

NETWS board approved providing \$500 to support a conservation lobbyist. This money would go toward helping a group of natural resources organizations supporting a single lobbyist (NETWS is not hiring a lobbyist). Zach suggested getting a small committee together within NETWS to better track legislation.

Information and Education Committee- (chair Erin Considine) Considine said that the committee is seeking new members to help better serve NETWS, and that many hands make for a lighter lift for everyone. She said that could use help with social media as we don't get many posts from our Facebook account. Amanda Ciurej said she is willing to help with the newsletter. Considine plans to make updates to the NETWS website to make it more useful and up to date.

Awards Committee- (chair Andy Little) Little provided information on the awards that NETWS makes available to its members. The awards are: Professional of the year, Career Professional of the year, Joe Gabig scholarship and Student Poster awards.

Little did not get any nominations this year for any of the chapter awards. It was noted that submitting a name to the awards committee is *not* a nomination; there is information posted on the NETWS website that has the criteria for each of the awards and on how to make a nomination for these awards. Little said that he was continuing to work on updating the list of past award winners so that members would know who has won, and encouraged any past award winners or anyone knowing who has won these awards in the past to contact him with their information. The awards committee is also creating a new award called the Outstanding Student Chapter Member award. This will recognize a student who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in their student chapter. Award will be \$200 and a plaque.

Certification Committee- (chair Carl Wolfe) Wolfe expressed surprise and disappointment that it appeared that none of our members have applied for the NETWS reimbursement of their Certification application fee. He said getting half of your application fee reimbursed by the chapter is a very good deal. Dunn said that one member did take advantage of this and had gotten reimbursement for their application.

Wolfe pointed out that with many schools changing from a traditional letter grading system to either pass/fail or satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading systems that for certification getting a passing or satisfactory rating would still qualify that coursework toward certification.

Wolfe asked why more students were not applying for certification and the NETWS reimbursement. Dunn said he thought more students would apply for reimbursement as more found out that this benefit is available to them. Some students have applied for Certification but were not aware of the reimbursement policy and thus didn't apply for it. It was suggested that there could be a standing announcement in the newsletter stating that NETWS will provided reimbursement to members applying for certification as AWB or CWB. Ranglack (UNK) said that he discusses certification with all of his students. He said a hang up for some students is not meeting the coursework requirements because of transfer credits or other problems. To meet the certification requirements, some students would need to take additional coursework, and that students need to see the value of having certification to justify taking another class (and the additional time and expense). Little echoed Ranglack's concerns, and asked if Wolfe or Dunn would be willing to speak to students about certification. Wolfe said that certification should be seen as passing a Wildlife Bar exam, and that it provides a sound avenue for moving forward in a wildlife/natural resources career. He believes that becoming a certified wildlife biologist show that the individual demonstrates extra motivation and dedication to the field of wildlife.

Student Chapter Committees/Reports-

UN-L Kaitlyn Dozler introduced the officers of the UN-L wildlife club. She said due to COVID restrictions the activities of the club were greatly reduced this year. Several of the popular

activities were not possible (Niobrara River canoe trip, alligator night with Dennis Ferraro, Powell Christmas dinner, Morrell Hall visits). She said the club did hold 2 meetings per month, with one in person and one virtual. Activities this year included stream clean up of Dead Man's Run on campus, archery shooting nights for members, a tour of Nine Mile Prairie, and outreach to recruit wildlife and natural resource students to the club. She said that club member retention has been challenging because of COVID, as it is difficult to get students to commit to another virtual meeting. She said several board members are working on undergraduate research projects.

UN-K Ranglack (club advisor/mentor) said that their club also impacted by COVID and that students were reluctant to join extra virtual/zoom meetings. One project that the UN-K club engaged in was teaching foreign students how to fish. This spring the club will participate in the March Mammal Madness tournament as a fun activity to engage members. The tournament is a NCAA-style tournament featuring a hypothetical clash between two mammal species with the winner determined based on the skills and strengths of each species. Club members will fill out their own brackets and follow the competition. They are also setting up a student photo contest.

Wayne State- No one was available to represent Wayne State at the meeting.

Chadron State- Considine volunteered that Chadron faced issues similar to the other colleges, and that many of their normal activities were cancelled (bighorn sheep capture, bioblitz, deer check station, wildlife guzzlers). She said that they were working on planning some spring activities – a car smash to help relieve stress and some others in the works.

TWS Council – in the interest of time Andrea Orabona didn't say much other than to say she would love to hear from anyone that has questions or comments for TWS, and provided her email address (Andrea.Orabona@wyo.gov).

As time for the meeting was running short, there was a very brief rundown of items for Old Business and New Business.

Old Business: Two items brought up- the reinstatement of NETWS assistance to student chapters in the form of providing hotel room(s) for students attending in person annual meetings and the NETWS Strategic Plan.

New Business: The chapter will continue to work on student engagement. Little said he plans on developing a survey with a student to distribute to Nebraska universities/wildlife clubs on how to improve student engagement with NETWS and attendance at annual meetings. McPherron welcomed ideas and topics for the 2022 annual meeting from the membership.

McPherron asked if there were any other items for discussion from membership, and hearing none voiced (or raised in the chat), she moved to adjourn the business meeting. Motion seconded by Dunn, and motion carried by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 1:27 pm.

2021-2022 NETWS Board Members

President-elect: Andy Little (2021)*

President: Will Inselman (2021)

Past President: Shelly McPherron (2021)

Treasurer: Matt Gruntorad (2020-2022)

Secretary: Jen Corman (2021-2023)*

At-Large members: Sarah Nevison, Jenny Prenosil (2020-2021)

TBD*, TBD*(2021-2022)

*These board positions will be filled at the close of the elections on 23 March 2021

2021 NETWS Award winners

No nominations were received for the NETWS Career Professional, Professional of the Year, or the Joe Gabig Scholarship, so none of these were awarded this year. There was no Student Poster session this year because of the annual meeting was virtual.

Photo contest: Wildlife (non-captive) – Jen Corman

Wildlife (captive or trail camera) – Ben Wheeler

Plants and Scenery– Ben Wheeler

Human/Wildlife Interaction– Ben Wheeler

Best in Show – Ben Wheeler

2021 Auction Items List

Auction Item	Donated By:
Beaver Pelt Painting	Steve Satra
Hammer Double Reed Custom Duck Call	?
Muzzleloader (.54 caliber)	Carl Wolfe
Nebraska Whiskey (Lemon and cinnamon)	Lazy RW
Prairie Plains Tallgrass Prairie Seed Mix (1 ac)	Prairie Plains Resource Institute
Cardinal Drawing by Jeanine Lackey	Jeanine Lackey
Grain Place Organic Produce Basket	The Grain Place
Great Plains Book Collection	?
Iridescent Wild Turkey Feathers Photograph by Gerry Steinauer	Gerry Steinauer
Northern Squall Snow Goose Print	?
Sharp-tailed Grouse Decoy made by Len McDaniel	Len McDaniel
Shirley Snyder Jam Collection	Shirley Snyder
The Classic Botany Book Collection	Carl Wolfe
The Classic Waterfowl Book Collection	Carl Wolfe
The Easy Chair Reader	Carl Wolfe