**Nebraska Chapter of The Wildlife Society**

**Quarterly Board Meeting**

**February 27, 2023**

**Notes**

NETWS Board

President-elect: Erin Considine

President: Andrew Little

Past-president: Will Inselman

Secretary: Jennifer Corman

Treasurer: Matthew Gruntorad

At-large board members: Sarah Nevison, Larkin Powell, Chelsea Forehead, Jon Soper

Attendance: Erin Considine, Jennifer Corman, Chelsea Forehead, Matt Gruntorad, Will Inselman, Andy Little, Sarah Nevison, Larkin Powell, Jon Soper, Shelley Steffl

Andy Little called meeting to order at 7:20 pm CT at the Fyre Modern Grill in Kearney, NE.

Secretary’s Report – Jen Corman

Summary of May 2022 Quarterly Board Meeting. Soper motioned to approve minutes. Nevison seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Treasurer’s Report – Matt Gruntorad

See the attached 2022 End of Year Report. The Board-approved report included two errors: an omission of $5 in interest and a line item for $500 in lobbying expenses, although the chapter did not spend anything on lobbying this year.

See the attached 2023 Proposed Budget:

* Proceeds from the annual meeting’s auction are estimated at $500.
* Estimated income from annual meeting registration for about 80 people is $6000.00.
* Ducks Unlimited donated a framed print of a duck stamp for the annual meeting auction. Proceeds from that print will be designated for the CD account for the Joe Gabig Scholarship fund.
* Grunotrad will write a check for $800 to the Chadron State College student chapter to cover the cost of the hotel rooms for students attending the annual meeting.
* Gruntorad will write a check for $400-800 to the Wayne State College student chapter to cover the cost of the hotel rooms for students attending the annual meeting, depending on how many rooms they use.
* NETWS needs to conduct an audit. It has been two years since the last audit. Eric Zach and Jess Jurzenski have done it before. Gruntorad will ask them to audit again.
* Inselman speaking on behalf of Carl Wolfe: we should be budgeting to reimburse for 100% of certification costs for all students and professionals. Do we need to increase that amount line item in our budget?
	+ Discussion about value of CWB to professionals and Nebraska professionals in particular. Is certification worth the $155 cost? ($115 for AWB)
	+ The value of TWS membership and the value of certification are two different conversations to have.
	+ Professors do not want to give students a false confidence about what certification will do for them.
	+ Certification matters for biologists working for private consulting companies because those professionals need documentation. In other states certification might matter more because they have more private consultants, more complex natural resource management contexts, and fewer partnerships.
	+ NETWS needs to do more advertising to make sure the membership knows about the certification reimbursement. We do not effectively communicate with our membership because we don’t have a good way to contact them.
	+ General consensus is that a full reimbursement for certification costs is a valid use of funds and the Board needs to implement better communication with its members in general.
* Considine motioned to approve the Treasurer’s Report. Soper seconded. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Committee Reports

* Membership Committee – Shaun Dunn – not present
* Nominating – Will Inselman
	+ No one wants to be president-elect. Considine and Inselman have some specific people in mind that they can ask to run for president-elect and Board members will mention the call for president-elect nominees multiple times during the annual meeting.
	+ Inselman will review the by-laws for procedures in case we cannot find a president-elect right away.
	+ Discussion about time commitment for the president position. Some chapters have extended the length of the position to three years? People are generally afraid to commit for even the one or two years, so extending the term length may discourage potential volunteers. A co-presidency may be beneficial, to split the work load and make that commitment less intimidating.
* Program Committee – Erin Considine
	+ The annual meeting starts tomorrow! Everything is ready to go.
	+ Gruntorad and Steffl will each have a key for registration desk, lock box, and facilities access.
* Conservation Review Committee – Eric Zach – not present
	+ Inselman signed the letters for LB400 and LB456 as the past-President of NETWS.
	+ Central Mountains and Plains Section leaders are willing to sign letters for the chapter if no one on the Board feels comfortable doing so due to employment restrictions on lobbying.
	+ Eric Zach is resigning from the committee because he has accepted a position in Colorado. Little nominated Matt Steffl as the lead for the Conservation Review committee for now. The Board will ask at the annual business meeting if anyone is interested in leading the Conservation Review committee.
* Information and Education Committee - Erin Considine
	+ Amanda Ciurej is ready to retire from the newsletter. Considine and Ciurej are not sure the newsletter is an effective way to interact with the membership. The chapter can discuss this topic at the annual business meeting.
	+ Does national TWS have a position for social media through which we could funnel our social media?
	+ Could integrate with Conservation Review Committee. People seem to like receiving sound bites that allow them to efficiently take in legislative and policy information because it is hard to navigate that world effectively as an individual. Membership might appreciate that policy perspective and emphasis in our communications. That sort of task would be a lot of work for an individual, so we may not have that capacity in our volunteer positions. NETWS would need someone who is a communications specialist for an agency or organization who is paid to monitor and summarize relevant legislation and policies on natural resource management. Alternatively, NETWS could recruit a retiree or someone the chapter can pay or reimburse for their time spent doing this.
	+ Considine suggested working with the Communications school at UNL. Perhaps NETWS could contribute to a stipend for a student who can meet NETWS communications needs? Could be integrated into a capstone project. The first year will be the toughest, until the chapter streamlines the process for communication flow.
* Awards committee – Andy Little
	+ NETWS will be awarding a plaque to each of the two award recipients. One awardee will be calling in or Skyping in from his snowboarding trip.
* Certification Committee – Carl Wolfe – not present

Student Engagement – Sarah Nevison

* Some student chapters will not be attending the annual meeting. NETWS needs to make student participation completely painless and barrier-free.
* Little noted that no UNL student chapter members are attending. When talking to students, they expressed they had no incentive or interest to attend.
* NETWS needs to interact with student chapters more. During the annula meeting, NETWS needs to connect students to professionals throughout the length of the conference and not only during a designated student-professional lunch. Forehead and Considine are doing an excellent job working with the Chadron State College student chapter.
* Advisors are important for incentivizing students to participate in NETWS meetings. Senior students are also influential in communicating the value of attending the annual meeting. The Covid-19 pandemic meant that two years of students did not experience attending conferences and meetings in person, so we lack that senior student influence this year.
* Many schools in Nebraska do not have a TWS student chapter, but may have students interested in participating in TWS independent of an official student chapter.
* This topic will be discussed more at the annual business meeting.

Strategic Plan

Mel Nenneman will provide the CMPS update at the annual business meeting. Little will email the CMPS Strategic Plan to board members. CMPS and NETWS would like to find ways to work together and synergize the Strategic Plans. The initial discussion needs to focus on major gaps and weaknesses in NETWS and CMPS that need to be addressed over the next few years. The Strategic Plan should be short-term enough that the results are tangible. CMPS is aiming for something like a checklist where outcomes are clearly achieved or not achieved.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

CMPS is putting together a DEI Committee. Members should let Considine know if they are interested in participating on the committee.

Incorporation of the Nebraska TWS chapter

National TWS is now requiring each state chapter to incorporate, mainly for liability protection. National TWS is offering support throughout the process and has hired a company to handle the paperwork and procedures for each chapter.

Inselman motioned to adjourn meeting. Soper seconded. Unanimous approval by voice vote.

Little adjourned the meeting at 8:47 pm.