

**Blomidon Naturalists Society
Minutes of Annual General Meeting
Monday November 16, 2020**

The meeting was held using Zoom

1. Meeting called to order by Soren Bondrup–Nielsen at 7:35 PM with over 30 people in attendance. He gave some background information on the strategic plan that had been previously circulated. Before we started the meeting, there were two natural history observations. Richard Stern reported that there were up to 13 short-eared owls at Grand Pré, along with four northern harriers, and flocks of snow buntings. George Forsyth noted that the Wolfville Christmas Bird Count will be going ahead, but with Covid-19 there would be no after-count get-together, although we could do one on-line. Soren then led us through a Powerpoint presentation to cover the rest of the meeting.

2. Moved by Larry Bogan/John Burka that the agenda be approved. **Motion Carried.**

3. The minutes of the 2019 AGM had been previously circulated. Moved by Richard Stern/Bea Lewis that the minutes of the 2019 AGM be accepted. **Motion Carried.**

4. Soren Bondrup–Nielsen reported on a number of main issues: the monthly presentations, which had switched from in-person to using Zoom; Victoria Ivey being the recipient of the Merritt Gibson Natural History and Environmental Award; the two law suits (species at risk (completed), and Owl's Head (in progress)); the publication of the new wildflower guide; the hiring of a bookkeeper; obtaining a grant to hire Riley Scanlan as Program Coordinator; and the strategic planning session undertaken by the board.

Judy Lipp gave an update on the 2020 activities of the Flying Squirrel Adventures as well as a brief history of the group.

5. Soren noted that George Alliston was unable to present the Nominating Committee's report due to a family emergency. Soren noted that there were two board members who were stepping down this year: George Alliston and Jean Timpa. He thanked them all for their contributions.

The committee had prepared the following slate. For those that did not know him, Omar Bhimji is the climate change coordinator for the Town of Wolfville..

President—Soren Bondrup–Nielsen
1st Vice-President—Jean Gibson Collins
2nd Vice-President—VACANT
Treasurer - Howard Williams
Secretary – Patrick Kelly
Past President – Kent Williams

Directors:
Omar Bhimji
John Burka
Carolyn Green
Emily Legrand
Judy Lipp
Riley Scanlan

6. Soren made three calls for any additional nominations from the floor. There were none. The slate was acclaimed.

7. Moved by Patrick Kelly/Larry Bogan that Fred Chipman be appointed as auditor for the next fiscal year, subject to his willingness to accept the nomination. **Motion Carried.**

8. Soren gave the financial report and noted that the change in assets was due to reducing the value of our large stock of unsold books to zero. This was done on the recommendation of our bookkeeper, and following normal practice in the publishing industry. Most of the investment fund is now in two GICs with the Valley Credit Union, which come due in 2021 and 2022. The remainder is in a high-interest savings account, also at Valley Credit Union. George Alliston and Soren has been to the Valley Credit Union to see about investing the funds but they were not really interested as the amount was not deemed large enough.

9. Soren reviewed the main points of the discussion paper. There will be a questionnaire, related to the discussion paper, that will go out to all members in the near future. There was a discussion on membership fees and whether there would be an issue with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies if we removed them.

It was suggested that a fund could be set up for donations towards the cost of the newsletter. Soren noted that there is a grant from Kings County to help with the costs of such things but we had missed the deadline this year. We will be applying next year. Patrick Kelly had calculated the cost of the newsletter (without a grant) if it was to cover its costs. Based on whether it was printed two, three, or four times a year, and if the number of subscribers ran from 60 to 100, the annual cost would be in the range of \$35 to \$70. A lower membership fee would mean more members which could lower the cost per person. The newsletter is a record of the Society's activities, but maybe an annual issue would suffice.

It was noted that field trips was where people meet in a much more casual environment which helps to form an attachment to the Society and to give a feeling of belonging. We should have more of them. Attendance has been hit or miss. The recent roadside clean-up only had four people show up, while two trips lead by Soren and another on mushrooms were oversubscribed and about 50% of the people on the trips were younger and not BNS members.

It was noted that the funding to pay for the lawyers for the lawsuits was entirely legal for a charity.

If people wished to donate, it was suggested that CanadaHelps would be a good way to do it. That way people can make donations based on their ability, anonymously if they wish. CanadaHelps also issues immediate tax receipts for one-time donations, and for those who want to donate an amount monthly, a tax receipt is issued at the end of the year.

10. John Burka moved that the meeting adjourn at 9:28 PM

Patrick Kelly
Secretary