TWS – Western Section Executive Board Meeting Minutes

Double Tree Hotel, Sacramento, CA November 2, 2012

In attendance:

Board members: Linda Leeman, President; John McNerney, Past President; Doug Bell, President-Elect; Don Yasuda, Section Representative, Membership Services; Janine Payne, Secretary; Rhys Evans, Professional Development Committee Chair; Armand Gonzales, Conservation Affairs Committee Chair; David Wyatt, Student Affairs Committee Chair; Jessica Martini-Lamb, San Francisco Bay Area Chapter Representative; Laura Patterson, Sac-Shasta Chapter Representative, Linda Connolly, San Joaquin Chapter Representative, Karin Petrites, UC Davis Student Chapter Representative.

<u>Staff</u>: **Cynthia Perrine**, Program Director; **Candace Renger**, *Conference Registrar*, *Newsletter Coordinator*.

<u>Via phone</u>: **Kevin Cooper**, *Central Coast Chapter Representative*.

President Leeman called the meeting to order at 10:00.

Roll Call and Introductions - Leeman

Review of Meeting Minutes – Payne

McNerney moved to approve the minutes. Bell seconded. The motion passed unanimously. In the future, we will try to approve minutes via email prior to our meetings to improve meeting efficiency.

Review of Action Items – Payne

The Board discussed the new procedure regarding action items. Leeman feels that it is working well to include them in the reports. Eventually, she would also like people to update them directly on Google docs so that we have an updated live document to refer to during the meeting.

Action items were updated prior to the meeting. Action items in need of more discussion were discussed in greater detail. The optical recognition project for scanning older Transactions documents into a searchable format is turning out to be a lengthier process than McNerney had anticipated. He suggested that we may need to be willing to revisit the payment schedule for student hires. Leeman asked Wyatt for his opinion about creating a "seed money" fund to help newly forming student chapters.

From this discussion arose the topic of board outreach to student chapters.*Wyatt will contact faculty advisors to check on status of UCSB student chapter. (AI) Perrine shared the Cal Poly Student Chapter's desire for more board connection and recommended someone from the Central Coast Chapter reached out to them. Perrine has it in her draft scope of work to work on outreach programmatically and will collaborate with Wyatt to maximize our outreach efforts.

<u>Highlights from the Chapter, Committee, and Officer Reports – Leeman:</u>

Highlights from TWS Conference Portland – Bell, Evans, Payne, Perrine et al

Several board members shared their experiences at the national conference in Portland. Wyatt said his students enjoyed the conference immensely. Evans and Wyatt made some suggestions for improving the networking events. Perrine commented that the conference center setting lent itself well to family participation and also gave attendees options for networking in common spaces when the events got too loud. Bell shared impressions of the Leader's Lunch and said he was impressed with the student chapter of the Pennsylvania University of California's student chapter and thought the event was well organized. Perrine shared that TWS is considering creating a national workshop program and are looking at our Section's workshop model for reference.

Leeman attended the Chapter Support and "Advocacy 101" meeting. TWS is trying to respond better to the needs of subunits. Since they get similar questions from all subunits, they are trying to provide a coordinated effort and a forum to discuss strategic planning.

Evans said that Barbara Peters' resume workshops were successful, serving a total of 105 participants. Hooper's "How Not to give a Scientific Paper" had 90 people in the room. Evans thanked the chapters for sponsoring the "Women in Wildlife" mixer and Student Conservation Association and Peace Corps tables. Payne gave a brief recap of the Early Career Professional Working Group's meeting and upcoming activities. Yasuda pointed out that in some situations early career professionals have an even harder time paying to attend our conferences than students and recommended that we keep that in mind. Leeman and Yasuda wondered what we could do to help. Some ideas suggested were conference sponsorships or to encourage employers to let new employees attend professional events. Yasuda added that from a membership standpoint early career professionals are at a place where they can really use our support, and are also at a point where we frequently lose people.

Wyatt asked if UC Davis could let Sacramento State members be members of their student chapter and in return UC Davis Chapter members would also become members of the Sac Shasta Chapter. Yasuda said that this would require a membership vote to change their bylaws. Petrites will check on this. Yasuda reported that TWS approved a student chapter for American Public University but the bylaws state that you need the approval of your section to form a new chapter. Since an online entity does not have a section, it does not technically follow the rules, but we also need to be responsive to changing nature of education.

Martini-Lamb said that SF Bay Chapter has not been able access the membership database. Yasuda suggested they check permissions with Jeremiah and let him know if she doesn't get a response so he can follow up with Darryl Walters. Jeremiah took another job and is now working on a part time contract basis.

Continuing Business:

2013 Annual Meeting – Bell

Bell stated that he was very pleased that people are so organized and said how much he appreciated their efforts. He then gave a detailed update on conference planning progress. So far we have more posters than sessions and over 100 abstracts submitted. Please encourage people to submit their abstracts so that we can make selections and allow people time to apply for funding.

We already have seven speakers for the Plenary Session. There was some discussion regarding speaker timing and Perrine suggested he consider having moderated panel discussions so we can prepare questions and ensure they are answered. One idea was to collect questions from the membership. Leeman added that having a strong moderator will be more conducive to having a productive conversation. John Perrine would be a good candidate for this.

Bell has secured Lily Raff McCaulou, author of "Call of the Mild", as the speaker for the banquet. Joe DiDonato is going to be the MC for the raffle. Perrine talked about the Hunter Education Workshop she is putting together for conference professionals. We already have the liability insurance in place; she asked if we will need supplemental insurance. *Perrine will check with Mike Chapel regarding supplemental insurance. (AI)

Executive Board meeting logistics for the Annual Conference were discussed. We will have a Tuesday afternoon board meeting and Friday afternoon post-conference meeting. There was a discussion about volunteer compensation. For every 4 hours people volunteer they will get ½ off student registration. For every 8 hours they volunteer they will get the full student registration rate.

Registration rates were discussed. There is a \$35 difference between the early and late registration fees. Candace feels strongly that if the daily rate is too low, we won't have people register for the entire conference. Session chairs are given guidance to remind speakers to register. Gonzales asked about reducing conference registration costs to help offset students and professionals coping with difficult financial times. The Board talked about the various funding sources for student conference attendance, including: sponsorships, student travel grants, and volunteer registration reimbursement. Leeman reminded everyone that although our last conference was profitable, we still need make a profit this year because next year's conference in Reno is unlikely to make a profit. Patterson suggested we consider lowering our rates for next year's conference when people might have a harder time getting reimbursed for out of state travel from their employers. According to Candace's research, comparatively, our registration rates are still much cheaper than most professional conferences. McNerney also pointed out that we have not received negative feedback regarding registration fees in the post-conference surveys.

As an organization holding a meeting in a public facility, we have the obligation to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. This year we will be adding an additional \$5 surcharge to the registration for a contingency fund. We will be collecting the money to be held in reserve in case we have a request to provide interpretive services. If one of our attendees has a hearing disability, will we need to provide interpreters at the rate of \$200 per hour. We may not need to use it, but we need to be prepared for any scenario. We will be adding this surcharge to all events going forward until we reach a set amount.

John made a motion to approve the 2013 conference draft budget as proposed with the amendment of the 60% reduction of conference fee for a single day attendance on Wednesday.

Bell seconded. Ten voted in favor. Gonzales opposed. He feels that the registration rates, particularly the student rate, are too high. The motion carried.

Yasuda reviewed equipment needs. He has 8 laptops checked out; we need 7. He is solid on laptops but still needs projectors. There is money in the budget for Yasuda to purchase a new projector for the Section and Professional Development will also be purchasing one for the Section 7 Workshop.

Break for lunch.

Leeman called the meeting back to order at 13:53.

New Western Section Logo – McNerney

We have selected Sarah Yarwood's design. McNerney has been working with her to make some refinements and is hoping to have the final product by mid-November so we can get it into the program. He is thinking about having some type of official logo introduction at the conference, perhaps a static display at the plenary. * Yasuda will follow up with National to determine if we need to expand our boundary before HI can expand theirs. (AI)

TWS-WS Transactions – Leeman, Perrine

Earlier this year our Transactions Editor, David Wright, resigned. He made a valiant effort to reinvigorate interest in the Transactions but we still have a ways to go. At our Summer Executive Board meeting we talked about a possible format change. Recently, some people have expressed interest in being the new Editor. Leeman would like form a task force to focus on viability and to figure out a way to make it go forward in a way that is relevant for our members. She was very excited to announce that Brian Cypher and John Perrine have expressed interest in starting an ad hoc committee to look into the best way proceed. Neither one would like to step in as Chair, but would like to co-chair a sub-committee. They both believe we need to change the name, which may be controversial. They would like to put together a survey of the membership and use that information to propose what the new Transactions would look like. Cynthia Perrine has put it in her scope of work for the coming year to assist with that. She will also help them with online platforms such social networking, contract permitting.

Bill Tietje had also expressed interest in helping. Leeman urged everyone to let her know if they have anyone else to recommend. She would love to infuse some new energy into Transactions and does not want to see them die. Once a sub-committee is formed, Perrine suggested we put a solicitation out to the membership. The Transactions Editor position will remain a vacant, appointed position. Since John Perrine and Cypher will not attend board meetings, we will still need someone to serve as a liaison. McNerney will serve as the interim Chair of the Transactions Committee. Yasuda said ad hoc committees can operate at the President's discretion. Perrine asked if Tietje could possibly help us get the current manuscripts published, while we figure out the viability and future course of Transactions. *McNerney will follow up with Tietje to see if he's willing to do this. (AI) Kevin will talk to Tietje and send his contact info to McNerney. (AI) Payne has coordinated with Wright to upload all transactions to Google drive. *Payne will share the Transactions folder with Cynthia Perrine. (AI)

Yasuda will take Candace's boxes of old Transactions and bring them to the conference to give away.

2015 Annual Conference venue search – Leeman

Candace and Leeman have been looking at a San Jose location called Dolce. It's a historic mansion with large space that would fit us well. The location has a lot of outdoor areas. The rooms are nice although a little expensive. However, they do meet the state's reimbursement rate. They haven't received the revised contract back yet so they are still not sure if it's going to work out.

New Business:

Conservation Affairs letter – Gonzales

Gonzales send a draft letter to Allboard which has already been reviewed and vetted by the Conservation Affairs Committee. One of things they need to resolve is audience. It was initially intended to be sent to decision makers in need of quality scientific advice, at any level from State Legislation to City Council or Planning Commissions. They drafted a fairly generic letter drawing from TWS' policy and position statements. Gonzales asked the Board for advice on whether we should we proactively send it out to people, or put it on our website and make it available for chapters to send out to people in their geographical area. He then asked what we should do in the event someone takes us up on our offer. How will we determine which expert will respond? We need to be set up with a mechanism to react quickly.

One thing Gonzales took away from last year's discussion with Terra Rentz was the idea of increasing our visibility and relevance in our geographic region. Not necessarily doing advocacy, but providing a good source of scientific information related to wildlife. Leeman asked people to please review the letter and think about it. Gonzales would eventually like board approval to send out the letter. In the interim, please comment on the content of the letter or share ideas on how to find experts and implement it. Gonzales reiterated the need to direct people to our policies and position statements. *All: please review the letter and provide feedback or comments to the CAC. (AI)

Vacant board positions - McNerney, Leeman, Yasuda

Our treasurer, Craig Bailey, has resigned. John McNerney has offered to be our new Treasurer and will take over in January. Unlike most sections who elect a Treasurer, the Western Section chose to make it an appointed position due to the continuity problem. Mike Chapel has acted as our bookkeeper and de facto auditor doing reconciliation. Bailey expressed some concerns of redundancy between the roles of the bookkeeper and Treasurer. Chapel is contract staff and not attending board meetings, but mainly double checking the books and writing the checks. Chapel has offered to help by performing some traditionally Treasurer-type duties, but will not be coming to board meetings. His opinion is that his role of bookkeeper eases the workload of the Treasurer. Leeman asked the Board if having a bookkeeper and a treasurer is a model that we would like to pursue. It is essential to have good communication between the two. Candace suggested that Mike should track the budgets so that one person is tracking all of the budgets through QuickBooks. Perrine pointed out that people creating budgets have line items approved by the board that aren't showing up on QuickBooks. Previously, the Section had an Executive Secretary and Bookkeeper and an appointed Treasurer. When McNerney takes over he will track expenses and approve payments, which should be easy due to his experience as President.

We are also looking for a Western Section Representative to Council which is an elected position. TWS runs the elections. Don has now served two terms and is not eligible to serve again. We are responsible for coming up with two nominees by January 15th. Perrine nominated Leeman, who respectfully declined. Perrine nominated Evans. Evans suggested Standley. *Yasuda will call Standley to invite him to run. (AI)

McNerney has been working very hard on vetting possible candidates for President-Elect. He is waiting to hear from several people who are mulling it over. He will have it narrowed down to two candidates in time for our winter newsletter.

Announcements:

Perrine will send the Membership Survey to Allboard soon. She asked everyone to please participate in the discussion so we can send it out by December.

Candace is considering a possible new newsletter format.

Wyatt has proposed a field trip to the Sutter Buttes and will serve as the guide.

Yasuda would like someone to train as AV.

McNerney moved to adjourn. Evans second. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned 15:16.

Respectfully submitted,

Janine Payne Secretary