

PSO Board of Directors' Meeting

November 20, 1999

The meeting was called to order at 1:07 p.m. by president Alan Gregory. Members present were Alan Gregory, Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee, Deuane Hoffman, Shonah Hunter, Katrina Knight, John Salvetti, Mary Jane Seipler, and Gene Zielenski. Also present was Carmen Santasania, president of the Pennsylvania Audubon Council.

Gene reported a balance of \$8,698.65 in the checking account as of November 12, 1999. All expenses and refunds for the annual meeting have been paid. Refunds were discussed, and everyone concurred that refunds will be made for any PSO expense such as registration but any fixed cost such as ordered banquet meals will not be refunded.

It was noted that Frank Haas has the leftover 10th anniversary pins, and he is selling them to any member that wants them.

Gene expects to file the necessary paper work for incorporation during the next two weeks. It was decided that our mailing address should be the same as that for *Pennsylvania Birds*. He also will be filing for non-profit status as soon as he has filed for incorporation.

Katrina asked how we might get more members to contribute to the newsletter. This was discussed at length with no real solution offered. The feeling is that most members are concerned that they will be ridiculed if they make a mistake or another member does not agree with them. Katrina reported that Paul Hess has agreed to do a column twice a year on birding literature. Another possibility would be a column on wildlife studies in the state. She has also added a Calendar of Upcoming Events which she hope to expand with the help of the membership.

The PSO website was discussed, and there was general agreement that it should be expanded if possible. Several suggestions were made as to where more space may be obtained on other servers. Deuane volunteered to discuss this with Frank.

A general discussion of the ways to expand PSO membership followed a comment that the membership numbers seemed small in comparison to some other state organizations. Some ideas presented were distribution of the brochure that Alan is revising, newspaper releases of PSO activities, and possibly discussing PSO on a radio program such as Scott Shalaway's nature program in western Pennsylvania.

The beginning and ending dates of a PSO membership were discussed. Gene made a motion that membership shall be for one year beginning from the time that dues are paid. This includes the current newsletter for that quarter or should a new newsletter be ready for publication, that newsletter should be sent to the new member. Katrina seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. It was noted that *Pennsylvania Birds* shall continue to operate on their own schedule for subscriptions.

Carmen gave a brief review of the coming legal action to be taken by Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future. This is a group of environmentally oriented organizations that have banded together to file a lawsuit against the Army Corps of Engineers that would question the Corps' agreement to allow the building of Interstate 99 using the "mountaintop route." The suit will enumerate the problems with

safety, costs, and environmental issues. It will say that the Corps ignored data that show that the valley route is much better. PSO may be asked to sign on to the suit by the group. Should this occur, the board members will be contacted by e-mail to vote on this issue.

Carmen also discussed the status of Heritage 21. The state senate has approved 623 million dollars over the next 5 years for Growing Greener. CARA has been passed by the U.S. Senate, but it is still in the House. There are some provisions in the bill which could be better, but as it stands it is better than nothing. It will probably be passed in an omnibus bill.

Montour Preserve will have a birding festival again next year, and PSO has been asked to be a co-sponsor. There was general agreement that this would benefit PSO, and approval was given.

The meeting then turned to the next annual meeting to be held in the spring of 2000. Deuane presented the preliminary information that he had gathered concerning the viability of having a meeting in Greene County. He found that there are several motels in Waynesburg that can provide accommodations and at least one which can serve as headquarters for the meeting. The Comfort Inn will provide a room that can hold over 50 people for \$79 per day. Waynesburg College, which is in town, will provide a meeting room that will hold more people at a cost of \$100 per day or a theater room for \$250 per day. Deuane will contact the college to see if they would provide dorm rooms even if none of their other facilities are used. The college can cater any meals that we might wish them to including the banquet. The other possibility is Rohanna's Restaurant at the nearby country club for the banquet and the evening program. The prices on the menu which Deuane obtained from the restaurant are comparable to prices we have paid at our other banquets. It was decided that lunch would be on our own. Deuane will also check to see if any of the motels will give us a package price for everything the entire weekend. There are at least three areas that can be used for field trips— Ralph Bell's farm, Enlow Fork area, and the state game lands in the southwestern section of the county.

Gene made a motion that the next annual meeting be held in Waynesburg, Greene County, on May 19, 20, 21, 2000. Roger seconded the motion, and the motion passed. Alan will post a general note to the PA Birds List Server to announce the date and location of the meeting.

The matter of speakers was then discussed with the following people suggested for possible banquet speakers:

Scott Shalaway
Jon Dunn
Paul Lehman
George Hall

Margaret volunteered to call Jon Dunn to see if he would be available for that weekend. There was general agreement that we could offer him up to \$700 plus expenses if necessary, but to find out what his usual fees are before offering him that much.

Other possible speakers and programs could be:

Ken Parks
Jerry McWilliams
shrike and barn owl reintroduction program at Moraine State Park
effects of deer overpopulation on birdlife
Cerulean Warbler Project coordinator from Cornell

shrike reintroduction program at Gettysburg — habitat modification on the Eisenhower farm
possibly other speakers from nearby universities

Shonah volunteered to contact Margaret Brittingham-Brant and Roy Ickes to see if they might have any suggestions or would like to present a program.

Possible ID speakers might be:

Deuane Hoffman
Jerry McWilliams

The board members agreed that four speakers is enough for Saturday afternoon and that we should not try to squeeze in five.

The possibility of inviting vendors to the meeting was raised. Everyone agreed that if vendors were willing to come that they would be welcome. They would be informed that there would be a limited amount of time available when the majority of the members would be free to browse. Mary Jane volunteered to contact CMBO to see if they have a list of vendors available.

The question of whether the PSO needs to have liability insurance was raised. It was suggested that possibly the registration form could contain a liability waiver which would have to be signed before the person could participate in any PSO activity. There was some concern that this might not hold up as a legal document. Also, should the PSO purchase indemnification insurance for the directors and insurance for the rented vans when they are used to transport members?

It was briefly discussed where the annual meeting would be held in the year 2001. Three possibilities were suggested:

Clarion County
Indiana County
Warren County

The next directors meeting was tentatively set for March 25, 2000.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:58 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger V. Higbee, Secretary