

Alberta Conservation Association



Minutes of the March 26, 2015 Board of Directors Meeting

Radisson Hotel and Convention Centre
4520 – 76th Avenue, Edmonton, AB
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

PRESENT

Patrick Long (Chairman) – Wild Sheep Foundation Alberta
Ken Ambrock (Vice Chair) – Public At Large, Northern Alberta Board Liaison
Brian Bildson (Secretary) - Public At Large, Business Representative
Adam Norris (Treasurer) – Public At Large, Regional
Tom Bateman (Past Chair) – Public At Large, Southern Alberta Board Liaison
Vince Aiello (Director) – Pheasants Forever Alberta Council
Bill Abercrombie (Director) – Alberta Trappers Association
Ken Bailey (Director) – Alberta Professional Outfitters Society
Mark Boyce (Director) – ACA / U of A Chair in Fisheries & Wildlife
Fred Calverley (Director) – Trout Unlimited Canada
Randy Collins (Director) – Alberta Fish and Game Association
Lee Foote (Director) – Academic Representative
Sandra Foss (Director) – Nature Alberta
Robert Gruszecki (Director) – Alberta Hunter Education Instructors Association
Travis Ripley (Director) – Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
Jaarno Van der Wielen (Director) – Public At Large, Regional

Todd Zimmerling – President & CEO, ACA
Debora Dueck – Recording Secretary, ACA

REGRETS

Chris Fowler (Director) – Public At Large, Regional
John Pattison (Director) – Public At Large, Regional
Treaty 8

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pat Long called the meeting to order March 26, 2015 at 9:00 AM.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Pat Long welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MEETING TIME LIMIT

MOTION # 04/15

Moved by: Bob Gruszecki
Seconded by: Lee Foote

Move that the March 26, 2015 agenda be accepted as presented:

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting is anticipated to conclude by 4:00 PM.

4. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

- a. December 11, 2015 - Board of Director's Meeting – Electronic Motion: 01/15EV
(Attachment A – Minutes of the December 11, 2015 BOD Meeting)

MOTION # 05/15

Moved by: Brian Bilson
Seconded by: Bob Gruszecki

Move that the Board of Director's agree that this is an accurate reflection of the votes placed and therefore ratify Electronic Motion: 01/15EV stating: "Move that the Minutes of the August 20, 2014 Board of Directors' meeting, be accepted as amended. Page 4. F&A Committee – correct 13.45 to 13.4%; Page 8. Add statement – One Board Member in attendance advised that he did not have a current WINCARD, thinking he did not require one as he was a senior. He will investigate and purchase a WINCARD to be within conformance".

MOTION CARRIED

- b. Special Meeting of the Member Groups – December 11, 2014
(Attachment B – Minutes of the December 11, 2014, Special Meeting of the Member Groups)
Only Member Group delegates to approve and vote on Special Meeting Minutes.

MOTION # 06/15

Moved by: Randy Collins
Seconded by: Fred Calverley

Move that the Board of Director's approve the December 11, 2014 Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Member Groups as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

5. BUSINESS ARISING

a. Review of Action Items

(Attachment C – Action Items)

Action Items were reviewed and updates were provided.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Chairman / Executive Committee

Pat Long, Chairman, provided a report to BOD on the activities of the Executive Committee.

- Executive Committee attended a meeting on March 25, 2015 with Minister Fawcett and Deputy Minister Bill Werry. Discussions involved Caribou issues, communication with staff on the ground and conservation offsets. Meeting went quite well.
- Executive Committee conducted the President and CEO Annual Performance Review. Very positive review, things have come a long ways and a lot has been accomplished in the last few years, goals have been achieved.
- Performance review process: Involvement with managerial staff, staff survey, statistics and Management Team input. Good process.

b. President & CEO

(Attachment D)

The President & CEO report was reviewed and highlights were discussed and noted:

- We are coming to the end of what has been a phenomenal year for ACA. Our revenues are up, and our cash flow is the best it has ever been (as of the end of February we still had not used our operating line for the year). The numbers of hunters and anglers in the province are up. The public survey we completed in the fall indicates that acceptance of hunting, fishing and trapping is up. Our levy increase has been approved and implemented and it has been strongly supported by stakeholders (review the levy discussion on Alberta Outdoorsman Forum, 90% positive).
- Our staff is extremely engaged and happy with ACA as a place to work. Our employee survey indicates that 100% of staff agree or strongly agree that ACA is a good place to work. We are interacting with more Albertans than ever before, as evidenced by the increase in our communications program (Facebook, Twitter, Constant Contacts, website visits, etc.) The Kids Can Catch event held on the February long-weekend hosted 647 people, mostly young families, many new Canadians and all very interested in fishing as a recreational activity.

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- Last, but not least, we have undertaken a number of successful projects in partnership with various member groups and I believe these projects have aided in improving our relationship with member groups significantly, to the point where I would say our interaction with member groups has never been better.
- Corporate Partners – The past three months the Alberta economy has been slowing down and we have seen a much slower response from potential corporate partners. Despite a fair bit of uncertainty going forward we were still able to secure a new partnership with Wheaton Toyota and we have other possibilities, most outside of the oil and gas industry.
- Discussion on opportunities for the various NGO's of other provinces (BC, Saskatchewan) banding together to discuss programs. Pres & CEO commented that other provinces programs are not like "ACA", they are more like the AFGA organizations in Alberta. Pres & CEO has provided information on ACA to other provinces if they call. Lee Foote suggested that the Pres & CEO talk to other leads to see if there is the opportunity where we can work together to move forward on initiatives.
- Discussion on a plan for a strategy in the event of a "Anti-Hunting" campaign arriving in Alberta. Possibility look at a coalition with other provinces to speak to Federal initiatives.

***ACTION ITEM:** Lee Foote and Randy Collins will prepare a white paper regarding the opportunities of forming a coalition with other provinces to speak to Federal initiatives ("Anti-Hunting" Campaign, Etc.).*

c. Operations Standards Review Committee

Mark Boyce has been requested by Environment Sustainable Development – House of Commons, to testify on licensed hunting and trapping in Canada, assuming that this is regarding excise tax on equipment to a special fund for education programs.

DUC has a hunter experience program – re: First time duck hunt. Mark Boyce and Lee Foote will be taking some U of A students on a first time hunt.

Wildlife Society Annual meeting is being held in Canada this year (Winnipeg), deadline for papers is April 18, 2015.

AGMAG – Mark Boyce attended the meeting. Re: Bighorn Sheep – proposed changes to regulations. Travis Ripley commented – only a proposal for discussion – no decision has been made.

d. Finance & Audit Committee
(Attachment E)

Adam Norris, Treasurer, presented the Financial Overview and Financials to February 28, 2015. Points noted:

- Levy revenues are \$661,879 higher than prior year actual amounts. As the majority of levy revenue has been received it appears that there will be a surplus in revenue of at least \$400,000.00 this fiscal year.

- Partner Contributions are lower by \$(256,727). Revenue from the Land Trust Grant was recorded in the prior year creating this variance in the current year. A large amount of funds are housed in deferred revenue to be recorded when spent in the next fiscal year.
- Miscellaneous revenue includes Conservation Site Guide and Magazine advertising, surface lease revenue, and ACA asset auction item proceeds. Revenue in the current year includes the Plover campaign as well as donations for Karvonen Film vignettes and amounts from Conoco Phillips.
- Revenues are \$975,424 higher than budgeted amounts. Levy revenue is over budgeted levels by \$1,179,668; this surplus will have a positive impact on overall results for the year. Partner revenue is lower than budget by \$(1,123,990) but is offset by amounts in donations, grants and miscellaneous revenue. As well there are funds that been received and not yet spent that are recorded as deferred revenue and as such will not appear in this revenue code in the current year. These funds amount to \$182,796.
- Operating expenses were \$(2,192) lower than previous year levels. Although individual expense categories vary, the overall expenditure is consistent with the prior year patterns.
- The organization is \$(1,904,522) under budgeted expenditures. The majority of this variance is explained within salaries and benefits, landowner agreements, construction and building services, temporary services, property maintenance, rentals and leases, travel, materials and supplies, grants and support payments.
- An operating surplus of \$3,575,304 exists in comparison to the prior year surplus of \$2,701,988. When adjustments are made to recognize realized and unrealized investment gains and losses, asset disposals, and removing revenue from donated land and allocated to land purchases, the final result ends in a surplus of \$3,510,134 for the period.
- Total land acquisitions are \$2,394,903 for the Sylvan Glen Site purchased from Shell funding, North Kamisak Lake, Salt Creek Conservation Site, South Pine Creek Site, Sundew Site, Whispering Timber Site, Albright 2 Site and Lac Cardinal West Expansion Site through Suncor funding, Escape Coulee, Silver Sage Expansion and Junction Lake through Habitat Securement Fund, Reinwood Conservation Site purchased with Creative Sentencing funds and partnerships and land donations of the Larches Conservation Site and North Pine Creek Site.
- ACA reported an accounting surplus of \$3,510,134, an amount that includes interest income, realized and unrealized results for investments or asset disposals. The realized loss on investments was \$(107,563); the unrealized gain on investments was \$20,390. Interest revenue was \$635,039, and the gain on asset disposal was \$22,003. Once these are removed from results, the true operational surplus is \$2,940,266 compared to prior year operational surplus of \$2,530,725.
- Current assets have increased by 30.6% from recorded levels at February 28, 2014 mainly from an increase in cash, specifically in Restricted Funds. The largest difference results from the Land Trust Grants that are held until spent on designated activities.
- The Endowment Fund balance is \$904,962 up from \$706,165 last year. Contributions to this fund were made by companies such as Total, Shell and Suncor and through creative sentencing funds. These funds transferred from bank accounts into holdings with Bissett Investments and appear as a separate line item as a long-term investment. This move will generate more interest income which will be held in the long term endowment account to facilitate growth.

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- The Habitat Securement Fund had a balance at prior year end of \$7,343. Transfers were made to replenish the fund to \$207,343. Transfers out to the end of the period were \$52,460 leaving a balance of \$154,883.

MOTION # 07/15

**MOVED BY: Adam Norris
Seconded by: Sandra Foss**

Move that the Board of Director's accept the Financial Overview to February 28, 2015 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

Recommendation will be made, that there be changes to some of the terminology for ease of understanding and that projection numbers be provided more clearly.

e. Communications Committee

Randy Collins Committee Chair, updated the board on the Communication Highlights submitted by the Communications Manager:

- Acting Communications Manager – Ken Kranrod attended the committee meeting and provided a update.
- Discussion took place at the committee level regarding branding and marketing of ACA and the Public Opinion Survey report.
- Communications Support – General Promotion – Assisting with promotion of ACA projects and events; RAP – New ads and developing design concepts for new trailer; 11th Western States and Provinces Deer & Elk Workshop and 12th Western Black Bear Workshop (Alberta 2015) – website, logos, registration system and activation of website; Corporate Partners – regular recognition of partners; Fish Stocking & Aeration Sites – Promotion of sites as well as ads regarding thin ice dangers; Pheasant Raise & Release project – assisting with design and promotion of project; ESRD Aquatic Invasive Species “Clean Drain Dry” Program – designed and hosting website for program
- Publications – 2015/16 Annual Operating Plan completed; Conservation Magazine – Spring 2015 issue completed, late May distribution; Discover Guide – completed, late May distribution; 2015 Strategic Business Plan –Draft completed; Annual Summaries – Ongoing.
- Events – Kids Can Catch- 647 attendees, very successful. Planning for 2015 events; Archery Days – planning for 2015 events; Waterfowl Warmup – planning for 2015 event; Taber Pheasant Festival – planning for 2015 event.
- iPhone App – 37,146 (up from 34,504). Social Media / Web – Facebook: 5,245 (up from 4,159); Twitter: 2,754 followers (up from 2,341); E-newsletter: Subscription list is at 83,044.

f. The ACA Grants Program Committee
(Attachment F-G)

Sandra Foss Committee Chair, advised that the adjudication process was completed in the last quarter.

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Committee Chair presented the proposed list of Research Grant applications recommended for funding:

MOTION # 08/15

**Moved by: Brian Bildson
Seconded by: Randy Collins**

Move that the Board of Director's approve the Research Grants proposed recommendations for funding in the amount of \$329,986.00 and that the funds be released.

MOTION CARRIED

1 Abstention- ESRD Representative
declared a conflict of interest.

Committee Chair presented the proposed list of CCEG (Conservation, Community and Education Grant) applications recommended for funding:

MOTION # 09/15

**Moved by: Adam Norris
Seconded by: Lee Foote**

Move that the Board of Director's approve the CCEG (Conservation, Community and Education Grants) recommendations for funding in the amount of \$901,901.00 and that the funds be released.

MOTION CARRIED

1 Abstention- ESRD Representative
declared a conflict of interest.

Committee Chair presented the proposed list of Grants in Biodiversity applications recommended for funding:

MOTION # 10/15

**Moved by: Ken Ambrock
Seconded by: Lee Foote**

Move that the Board of Director's approve the Grants in Biodiversity recommendations for funding in the amount of \$231,575.00 and that the funds be released.

MOTION CARRIED

1 Abstention- ESRD Representative
declared a conflict of interest.

MOTION CARRIED

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g. Recruitment Committee

Bob Gruszecki, Committee Chair provide an update from the committee meeting, with the following points noted:

- Committee elected a new Chair of the Committee – Bob Gruszecki appointed.
- Go forward plan, work on the position descriptions and bring results to the BOD for ratification. Reviewing the TOR's for the Member organizations, Board Liaisons, Non-Member Groups (Academic, Business Representative, ACA U of A Chair, PAL for the 4 quadrants of the Province).
- Discussion ensued around the existing terms of reference and included a discussion that addressed the concern to deal with 4 key areas: 1) Term 2) Measurement of performance and how to do that 3) Termination of a position or a Director holding that post, and how that can be done, 4) From a recruitment perspective, where that person might be recruited from.
- The potential need and value of an Exit Interview with a departing Board Member to capture suggestions/concerns/parting knowledge. Discussed where this responsibility should rest – Executive Committee or Recruitment Committee or a combination of both.
- Orientation process of new Board Members – who might be assigned this responsibility, Committee Level or Executive Committee. Concur that the process would be better served if it was expanded and a greater period of “education” for new members existed.
- Discussion around Past Member Participation – no consensus for a detailed process there was discussion about trying to realize a benefit from them if it was possible.

h. Governance Committee Report

Vince Aiello Committee Chair provided an update from the committee meeting, with the following points noted:

- Review existing policies and bring up-to-date.
- Review document list and identified responsibility for review, time line – review completed for the summer meeting. Some of the draft documents require more detailed review, some documents will be forwarded to staff and or legal advisor for content review. *ACTION ITEM: Deb Dueck directed to send draft documents to applicable committee via email.*
- HSF (Habitat Securement Fund)

MOTION # 11/15

Moved by: Vince Aiello
Seconded by: Bob Gruszecki

Move that the Board of Director's approve the recommendation from the Governance Committee that “the HSF (Habitat Securement Fund) no longer be an external grant, going forward that the HSF be an internal BOD fund”.

MOTION CARRIED

President and CEO provided a history of the Habitat Securement Fund:

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- Outside organizations/partners applied to the fund for land purchases.
- Changed the process that in order to receive funds ACA had to be put on the title.
- Have not had any requests to the fund from outside organizations in the past 5 years.
- Request that the process be cleaned up, "not a grant program", but an internal BOD fund for Habitat Securement.

ACTION ITEM: Todd Zimmerling and Vince Aiello will review the HSF TOR for accuracy and content.

Vacant Member Group Representative (Treaty 8)

Discussion on the how to deal with the issue of a Vacant Member Group Representative took place.

ACTION ITEM: Deb Dueck to forward electronic version of the document (briefing note) regarding Treaty 8 Membership on the ACA Board of Directors for discussion with their respective Member Group.

The Member Group is in contravention of the ACA Bylaws – would like an avenue to rectify this issue. Suggest that as a starting point the Chairman or another representative attend one of the Elder's tables and provide an update on ACA.

Discussion item at the June BOD meeting and a final decision to be reached.

i. Organizational Risk Report (Attachment H)

Organizational Risk Report was presented by Todd Zimmerling, President & CEO, no major risks were identified at this time.

j. Southern Board Liaison Report – Tom Bateman (Attachment I)

Tom Bateman submitted a report to the Board of Directors on the activities of the Southern Board Liaison for the period of December 2014 – March 2015, for review.

Highlights from the report:

- Across Southern Alberta there appears to be an increased understanding of ACA and the Member Groups.
- Lots of interest in Snow Geese.
- 22 people have contacted the SO Board Liaison interested in learning how to hunt. Will be connecting them with one of the mentor's.
- Very positive talk about Pheasant hunting in Southern Alberta.
- Mentors group continues to grow.

k. Northern Board Liaison Report – Ken Ambrock

(Agenda Item 6(k))

Ken Ambrock updated the Board of Directors on the activities of the Northern Board Liaison from December 2014 – March 2015.

Highlights from the report:

- Judged the Order of Bighorn Awards.
- Attended the WISE Foundation Awards and dinner.
- Attended the AFGA Convention in Lethbridge, there is an increasing focus on youth involvement in conservation, including youth participation in the resolution process.
- Attended the Order of the Bighorn Awards.
- Water quality and quantity issues in Northern Alberta – in travels hearing more and more concerns about water issues in our northern watershed. Have had discussions with Alberta Land Use Framework planning and water planning overseen by the Alberta Water Council.

l. Business Representative Report

(Attachment J)

Brian Bildson submitted a report to the Board of Directors on the activities of the Business Representative from December 2014 – March 2015.

Highlights from report:

- Lethbridge Office – President & CEO along with ACA Staff have had an opportunity to tour the DIRTT Facilities in Calgary. Next proposed step is to have Mike Rourke of Quiet Box Design to finalize interior requirements.
- Secured a \$5,000.00 donation from Harvest Energy Resources and \$4,500.00 donation from Compass Media In. allocated to satellite collars for the project (Wolverine).
- K-Library – Met with Ted Ritzer (Sound Media Consultant) yesterday to discuss options for Karvonen footage. Mr. Ritzer is working on a proposal, he has also found funding to fund his efforts. ***Brian Bildson will put Randy Collins in touch with Mr. Ritzer to discuss communications ideas.***

m. ESRD Representative Report

Travis Ripley, Ministers Representative provided an update from ESRD, key points as noted:

Commercial fishing closure – continue to process payments made to former commercial fishers

Proposed regulations – Some proposed regulations are undergoing debate. We continue to track and respond to concerns moving forward and have not made final decisions on any regulations for next season.

Consultation – We are exploring the consultation efforts we use to discuss fish and wildlife policies, hunting and angling regulations and other guiding documents. At the moment, I am planning for a spring Fisheries RT.

Fisheries (Alberta) Act Amendment – Bill 13 – the Bill underwent third reading and will likely receive royal assent soon. This Bill will require mandatory inspection stations to help prevent introduction of AIS to Alberta waters, primarily focused on zebra and quagga mussels

Wetland policy - Wetlands - In the fall of 2013, the Government of Alberta announced a new Wetland Policy for the province. The goal of the policy is to conserve, restore, protect, and manage Alberta's wetlands to sustain the benefits they provide to the environment, society, and the economy. The Alberta Wetland Policy will be implemented in the province's White (settled) Area on June 1st, 2015. Green Area (Crown Lands) implementation of the Alberta Wetland Policy will require additional elaboration and refinement of the tools identified above, and will follow in June of 2016. To support policy implementation, the Government of Alberta has developed a range of new and innovative tools and information products.

Predator Compensation – process with AFSC is working although a little clumsy. First cheque to ACA is processed this Friday by Service Alberta

Licencing – Looking to undergo a fee review – this will have some implications to ACA for certain licences but the intent is to work together through this review

Wildlife Ministers Meeting – Meeting held in Ottawa in February. Presentations made to Ministers from 4 sectoral groups including Industry, Conservation Community, Inuit / Aboriginal, Hunting and Angling Advisory Panel. Major focus of the meeting was on 2020 biodiversity targets, Species at risk (Caribou) and Invasive species.

7. Old Business

a. Predator Compensation – Update

ESRD has processed payment, should be received by ACA shortly.

b. Golden Ranches

President and CEO presented a "Golden Ranches Acquisition Proposal" to the Board of Directors.

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MOTION # 12/15

**Moved by: Sandra Foss
Seconded by: Brian Bildson**

The Board of Director's direct the President and CEO proceed with an Offer to Purchase on the Golden Ranches Property as per the proposal.

MOTION CARRIED

1 Abstention- ESRD Representative declared a conflict of interest.

8. Reports

a. 2015-2016 Annual Operating Plan (AOP)
(Attachment K)

The 2015-2016 Annual Operating Plan was presented for approval.

MOTION # 13/15

**Moved by: Ken Ambrock
Seconded by: Adam Norris**

Move that the Board of Directors' approve the 2015-2016 Annual Operating Plan (AOP) as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

b. 2015-2019 Draft Strategic Business Plan Update
(Attachment k)

The 2015-2019 Draft Strategic Business Plan Update was presented for approval.

MOTION # 14/15

**Moved by: Brian Bildson
Seconded by: Sandra Foss**

Move that the Board of Directors' approve the 2015-2019 Strategic Business Plan Update as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

***ACTION ITEM:** Board members are requested to review document in detail and provide any comments by April 10, 2015.*

8. New Business

a. Ratification of Electronic Motions
(Attachment N-0)

MOTION # 15/15

**Moved by: Sandra Foss
Seconded by: Ken Bailey**

Move that the Board of Director's agree that this is an accurate reflection of the votes placed and therefore ratify the following Electronic Motions:

Electronic Motion: 02/15EV – Funds to Close – Whispering Timber - SUNCOR
Electronic Motion: 03/15EV – Funds to Close – Albright 2 - SUNCOR

MOTION CARRIED

1 Abstention- ESRD Representative
declared a conflict of interest.

c. **Employee Survey**
(Attachment P-P1)

Employee survey documents were presented, reviewed and discussed.

d. **Public Opinion Survey**
(Attachment Q)

Employee survey documents were presented, reviewed and discussed.

9. **In-Camera**

MOTION # 16/15

**Moved by: Adam Norris
Seconded by: Sandra Foss**

Move that the Board of Directors' move to an In-Camera Session at 2:40 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION # 17/15

**Moved by: Sandra Foss
Seconded by: Brian Bildson**

Move that the Board of Directors' revert back to the regular Board of Directors meeting at 2:45 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

10. **Date and Location of Next Meeting**

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2015 Meeting Calendar (*Attachment R*)

The next scheduled BOD Meeting – June 11-13, 2015 in Lethbridge, AB

- Committee Meetings to be scheduled prior to BOD Meetings – Via Conference Call
- June 11, 2015 (Thursday) – Board Property Tour – 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM
- June 11, 2015 (Thursday) – SO Region Meet & Greet – 6:00 – 10:00 PM
- June 12, 2015 (Friday) – BOD Strategic Planning Meeting – 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
- June 13, 2015 (Saturday) – Regular BOD Meeting – 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

President & CEO requested that the August meetings be changes to the following dates due to a conflict with an ACA Event – Waterfowl Warmup Event.

August Meeting Dates Changes:

- August 18, 2015 (Tuesday) – Committee Meetings – As required
- August 18, 2015 (Tuesday) – ACA Annual General Meeting – 5:30 PM
- August 19, 2015 (Wednesday) – Regular BOD Meeting – 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION # 18/15

Moved by: Sandra Foss
Seconded by: Adam Norris

Move that the BOD Meeting be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED

The Board of Director's meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.



(Chairman)



(Secretary)