

Alberta Conservation Association

Minutes of the August 19, 2020 Board of Directors Meeting



Four Points by Sheraton Edmonton South/ Teleconference
7230 Argyll Road, Edmonton, AB
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

- PRESENT:
- Bill Abercrombie (Chairman) – Alberta Trappers Association
 - Robert Gruszecki (Vice Chairman) – Alberta Hunter Education Instructors Association
 - Greg Shyba (Secretary) – Public At Large, CE Region – Via Conference Call
 - Sandra Mellon (Treasurer) – Public At Large, NW Region
 - Ken Ambrock (Director) – Public At Large, Northern Alberta Board Liaison
 - Mark Boyce (Director) – ACA / U of A Chair in Fisheries & Wildlife – Via Teleconference
 - Fred Calverley (Director) – Trout Unlimited Canada – Via Teleconference
 - Randy Collins (Director) – Alberta Fish and Game Association
 - Robert Grandjambe (Director) – Indigenous BOD Liaison
 - Brian Joubert (Director) – Nature Alberta
 - Perry McCormick (Director) – Pheasants Forever Alberta Council – Via Teleconference
 - Matt Mellon – Wild Sheep Foundation Alberta
 - Chuck Priestley (Director) – Public At Large – NE Region
 - Travis Ripley (Director) – Alberta Environment and Parks
 - Jeana Schuurman (Director) – Alberta Professional Outfitters Society
 - Brent Watson (Director) – Alberta Bowhunters Association – Via Teleconference
- Todd Zimmerling – President & CEO, ACA
Debora Dueck – Recording Secretary, ACA
Lori-Jeanne Edwards – CFIO, ACA
- REGRETS:
- Richard Stamp (Director) – Public At Large, SO Region
 - Vacant - Treaty 8

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bill Abercrombie called the meeting to order August 19, 2020 @ 9:05 AM
Chairman Bill Abercrombie welcomed the board members to the meeting, round table introductions were made of those participating in person and via teleconference.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MEETING TIME LIMIT

No additions noted.

MOTION # 22/20

Moved by: Robert Gruszecki
Seconded by: Randy Collins

Move that the August 19, 2020 agenda be accepted as presented

MOTION CARRIED

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

3. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

- a. June 12, 2020 Board of Directors' Meeting – Electronic Motion: 07/20EV
(Attachment A – Minutes of the June 12, 2020 BOD Meeting)

MOTION # 23/20

Moved by: Ken Ambrock
Seconded by: Matthew Mellon

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' agree that this is an accurate reflection of the votes placed and therefore ratify Electronic Motion: 01/20EV stating: "Move that the Minutes of the June 12, 2020 Board of Directors' meeting, be accepted as presented".

MOTION CARRIED

5. BUSINESS ARISING

- a. Review of Action Items
(Attachment B – Action Items)

Action Items were reviewed and updates were provided.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Chairman / Executive Committee

Bill Abercrombie, Chairman, provided a report to BOD:

- Chair advised that he has spent most of the summer working in the Eastern Slopes, commented that he had never seen so many people out on the landscape. Albertans not previously connected with the outdoors are looking towards that for activities.

- Member Groups – Chair feels that ACA has a responsibility to our member groups and should recognize if they require assistance in some capacity.

b. President & CEO
(Attachment C)

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

- The summer has been moving along very well, all things considered. Staff have adapted well to COVID restrictions on field work and we have maintained our 50% occupancy for the offices, resulting in staff working one week in the office and the next week at home. At this point it appears that this will be our new normal, at least for a while longer. We have put some significant effort into our Harvest Your Own website to try and take advantage of the interest that has been generate in outdoor activities, as a result of COVID.
- Relationships/Partnerships: Despite the COVID issues that have impacted everyone, we have continued to have significant success in meeting and talking with corporate partners that want to continue to support conservation. Of particular significant success is a very recent commitment from Capital Power to ECOgift several quarter sections of land to ACA and AFGA. In addition, we continue to meet on a regular basis with AEP to develop HPCO's for the 2021/22 year, and to look for ways in the current year to help promote hunting, angling and conservation efforts across the province.
- Sponsorship / CPIC: We recruit new sponsor/partner dollars for ACA projects with a focus on multi-year commitments as Corporate Partners in Conservation.
- Corporate Involvement in Events: Worked to maintain and increase financial, in-kind and corporate volunteer contributions at ACA-led and affiliated events. Kids Can Catch – all events for Summer 2020 have been cancelled until further notice due to Covid-19 precautions, except for Chaparral (Calgary), Grande Prairie and Taber which held their events using various modified protocols to ensure participant safety; Waterfowl Warmup – Event planned for August 20, 2020 and currently is at full capacity (albeit half normal capacity due to COVID-19 precautions). All net proceeds go to support the Report A Poacher program. Harvest Your Own – Father's Day contest complete, Aspiring Huntress contest currently running, cooking event scheduled for Taber Pheasant Festival, and prize packages continue to be donated by corporate partners.
- Grants: Business Development applies for and supports project leads in applying for grants. Summary of the grants submitted in the fiscal year, as per the President & CEO Report.

c. Finance & Audit Committee

Financial Overview to July 31, 2020 - (Attachment D)

Sandra Mellon, Treasurer, presented the Financial Overview to July 31, 2020 Points noted:

- Total revenue increased from the prior fiscal year by \$ 2,981,910.
- Levy revenues are \$ 2,956,848 higher than received in the prior year. Fishing license sales have increased 30.6% (approximately 60,586 additional licenses over the prior year). Wildlife Certificate revenue was collected

Conserving Alberta's Wild Side

during the draw season (in the past collected in mid-August – mid-September), a change over the prior year and as a result an additional \$1.67 million of revenue was recognized in June. Hunting license sales for residents have increased, with the largest increase in game bird with a 239% increase over the prior year.

- Partner contributions are \$ 81,791 higher than received in the prior year.
- Miscellaneous revenue includes advertising fees for the Conservation Guide, magazine, event sponsorship and raffles.

Revenue are \$ 2,419,135 higher than year to date budgeted amounts.

- Levy revenue was higher than budgeted levels by \$2,619,604, of which approximately \$1.67 million is a timing difference.
- Partner revenue is lower than the year-to-date budget by \$ (71,178).
- Grants and funds are under budget by \$ (159,291). The Predator Compensation revenue is included in this line and is billed on a quarterly basis. Also, Syncrude funds for Biodiversity is included in the budget but recorded in Partner Revenue.

Operating expenses (expenses that are controllable by management) were \$ (398,621) below previous year levels. ACA management is practicing restraint in spending from the start of the fiscal year until enough information on anticipated levy inflows can be determined as well as overall impacts of COVID-19. This delay in work where it made sense will create timing variances that may recover as the year goes on. Although individual expense categories vary, the overall expenditure is consistent.

The organization is \$(1,732,162) under budgeted year to date expenditures. COVID-19 has impacted the ability for ACA to conduct planned work for April, May and June, resulting in multiple categories being under budget. As the year continues it is likely that these costs will catch up as the province continues to move through the re-opening phases. Explanations of the major item variances as noted in the Financial Overview report.

An operating surplus (excess of revenue over expenditures for management-controlled items including actual interest revenue which is outside of management control) of \$5,122,690 exists compared to the results of the prior year where a surplus of \$1,742,159 was recorded. Part of the surplus is a result of timing of levies for wildlife certificates, which were received in June this year compared to mid-August to September in the prior year. This demonstrates the results of continued focus on expenditure reduction due to COVID 19 as well as project realignment due to COVID 19.

When adjustments are made to recognize realized and unrealized investment gains and losses, asset disposals, investment income and removing revenue from donations that was allocated to land purchases, the result ends in an accounting surplus of \$5,883,733 for the period compared to \$1,829,752 in the prior year. Management continues to focus on advertising and promotion related to fishing and hunting to increase levies.

ACA reported an accounting or total organizational surplus of \$5,883,733, an amount that included interest income, realized (actual changes from sold investments) and unrealized (changes in book value due to cost versus market fluctuations) results for investments and asset disposals that are not in management control. The realized loss on investments was (\$3,836); the unrealized gain on investments was \$751,888. Investment income was \$11,903 and gain/loss on disposal of assets was \$811. Exchange rate gains incurred were \$61.

Once these are removed from the total organizational results, the true operational surplus that is in direct control of management (including the interest revenue which is outside of management control) is \$5,122,690 compared to a prior period operational surplus of \$1,742,159.

Cash Flow Statement

- Cash flows from operating activities resulted in a cash increase of \$4,136,382. Inflows were used to maintain operating expenditure with amounts that are not restricted.
- The net cash balance after asset purchases, debt repayment and other operating cash uses is \$4,622,660. Of this amount, \$562,498 is restricted and not available for operating expenditures. No further USD funds were purchased this period.

Statement of Financial Position

As an overview of the financial position as at July 31, 2020, ACA reports:

- Current assets have increased by 147.6% from recorded levels at July 31, 2019. Accounts Receivable is comprised of receivables from partners and contributors.
- The Endowment Fund balance is \$2,887,873 up 35% from last year. Half the increase in the fund on a yearly basis due to interest and gains (not including increase because of additional principle investment) is directed towards enhancement and/or management of ACA lands, and half is retained to grow the fund on an annual basis (to allow for monies to be removed from the fund the interest and gains retained must at a minimum match the rate of inflation for the previous year).
- Equipment purchases this period were 2,831. Land was purchased in the amount of \$461,250 (HSF Enviro Can \$425,000, \$36, 250 Scheerschmidt) related to Timber Ridge Expansion.
- The total fair market value of the investments is \$3,321,346 representing an increase of 6.0% over the fair market value at July 31, 2019.
- The Habitat Securement Fund had a balance at prior year end of \$243,347. A transfer of \$200,000 at fiscal yearend March 31, 2020 was made to replenish the fund increasing the balance to \$443,347.

d. Communications Committee

Randy Collins, Committee Chair provided update, points noted:

- Different kind of year. Communications department has met the challenge to get information out and get out on location occasionally.
- Have been assisting member groups in various capacities.
- Fall magazine preparation.
- HYO project / website / podcasts.
- TPF – 10 year anniversary.
- ACA 25 year anniversary.

Recommendation that the BOD Members follow member groups on the facebook page to stay informed. Suggestion to enhance social media exposure on information posted for new hunters – eg., “what to do if you would an animal”. “How do people / hunters / anglers find the information they may be looking for?”

e. ACA Grants Program Committee

Randy Collins, Committee Chair provided update, points noted:

- Administrative changes have been dealt with (Biodiversity administration).
- Grants – no change in priorities.
- Discussion on adjudication committee make up.

MOTION # 24/20

Moved by: Robert Gruszecki
Seconded by: Mark Boyce

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' agree that the grants adjudication committee include 2 BOD Members and 1 Staff Member, without increasing the size of the committee.

MOTION CARRIED

Adjudicator Random Selection: *ACTION ITEM: BOD is directed to forward any potential adjudicators to Todd Zimmerling. Todd Zimmerling will forward a preliminary adjudicators list when selection process gets closer.*

Project Agreements: 3 year payment deferral clause in light of COVID. Option to rollover funds until the next year when the applicant thinks the project will be completed.

Granting Funds available: Discussion that the granting fund allocations be reviewed by the BOD annually.

MOTION # 25/20

Moved by: Sandra Mellon
Seconded by: Brian Joubert

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' agree that there be no change to the funding allocations for the CCEG and Research Grants program for the coming year.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION # 26/20

Moved by: Chuck Priestley
Seconded by: Randy Collins

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' agree that an annual review of The Granting Program with managements recommendation as to the funding levels be conducted.

MOTION CARRIED

ACTION ITEM: Details and timing of annual funding allocations to the grants program to be figured out by administration.

Use of Proceeds

Discussion on current financial position, partners and member groups are experiencing a liquidity crisis. ACA is made up of member groups – if member groups are weakened, we are all weakened. Now would be the time to extend a helping hand to the member groups.

Propose that ACA provide a one-time opportunity to assist some of the grant applicants/organization by releasing 20% of the allocated grant funds. Conditions would include: only those already in the system can apply; must have successfully applied to the federal program for subsidy; if project proceeds - status quo; if project is deferred – use program until the project can be done; if project is deferred – no funds. Could be contemplated for future years. Re-analyze next year. Further discussion on options and opportunities ensued.

ACTION ITEM: President & CEO and CFIO to investigate the opportunity to release some allocated grant funds to assist applicants, proposal to be forwarded to the BOD for approval.

f. Operations Standards Review Committee

Mark Boyce, Committee Chair provided update, points noted:

- Carbon Project – in the last year of this research, interesting data and results.
- Boar – project has ended.
- CWD – Mule deer taskforce created.

g. Recruitment Committee

Robert Gruszecki provided an update from the meeting was held, points noted:

- Reviewing the process to fill roles
- Discussing content of BOD since December 2019
- Consistent message “no rush to fill either position”, look at what assets may be existing.
- Academic Representative – committee is working on the TOR, possible renaming to more descriptive role of social sciences/dimensions.
- Final job description will be developed in conjunction with the candidate.
- Committee recommendation to the BOD the Brian Joubert be appointed to this position, if interested.
- Brian Joubert – agreed to a tentative acceptance in the role of Academic Representative. Will discuss with employer in regard to new job requirements.
- Business Representative - Considered re-design of the position: diversity on the board; communication/marketing; fundraising; expertise to allow ACA to exercise the use of wild game, etc.
- ***ACTION ITEM: BOD to provide input as to what areas need to be capitalized on in the role of the Business Representative to assist the Recruitment Committee .***
- No urgency on filling this role, committee will revisit once comments are received from the BOD.

h. Governance Committee Report

No committee meeting conducted.

i. PAL Member Committee

Committee Chair Sandra Mellon provided updates from the meeting, points noted.

- Draft PAL Member Terms of Reference was presented for review.

MOTION # 27/20

Moved by: Ken Ambrock
Seconded by: Randy Collins

Move the recommendation from the PAL Member Committee, that the draft PAL Member Terms of Reference be accepted as amended.

MOTION CARRIED

ACTION ITEM: Administration directed to brand and issue document number for the PAL Member Terms of Reference.

ACTION ITEM: Administration directed to resend the Work Plan to PAL Members.

j. Organizational Risk Report
(Attachment K)

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

k. Northern Board Liaison Report

Ken Ambrock, Northern Board Liaison provide an update on his activities from June 2020 – August 2020, points noted:

- Wet summer, lake water levels are up.
- Not a lot of people out fishing in the NE Region.
- Game populations – deer, moose, geese and ducks, numbers are up.
- Lots of garter snakes.
- National Rifle Association – approached by people about the disbanding article.
- Wild boar, cougar, fox and bears sighted.

l. Indigenous BOD Liaison Report

Robert Grandjambe, Indigenous BOD Liaison provided an update on his activities from June 2020 – August 2020, points noted:

- Discussed benefits of representation in the north.
- Refer to June report for ongoing activities.
- Community and businesses are in support of ongoing discussions.
- Where is the focus to make alliances? BOD direction requested.

- Bringing back meat to distribute into the community, maybe ACA can allocate funds to contribute to this type of program.
- Sharing dialogue and looking at other opportunities.
- Would welcome feedback on information previously shared and define purpose of this position on the BOD.
- Working on a program to enhance information on Wood Buffalo.
- Sandhill cranes (no checks this year); lots of pelicans; moose and bison are on the rise; wolf population is low.

m. Director Emeritus Report

No report provided.

n. AEP Representative Report

COVID update - AEP

AEP reorganization – Director positions

- Dave Park, Fish and Wildlife Policy
- Sue Cotterill, Species at Risk Stewardship
- Matt Besko, Wildlife Health and Licensing
- Dave Hervieux, Regional Operations NW
- Paul MacMahon, Regional Operations NE
- Vacant, Regional Operations South

Wildlife Regulation Amendments

- Support conservation, increased hunting opportunities, administrative updates, APOS relief

Short-term priorities

- Addressing issue with Cormorants
- Monitoring and evaluating changes to a number of provincial fisheries
- Focus on species recovery (species at risk)
- Update species management plans – starting with Mule Deer
- Walleye spawning camps start up
- Investments into our hatcheries
- Fisheries (GFAR & FMR) consultation and engagement underway

Long-term focus

- Licensing fee review / consolidation
- Strategies (fish, wildlife, SAR)
- Regulatory reform (including policy)
- Partnerships

Other updates:

- AFWA meeting upcoming – relevancy of F&W, International Relations Ctte

- Relevancy report finalized and posted on FishWildlife.org
- AFWA comment on post 2020 biodiversity targets
- Inviting federal representation on issues to address at upcoming meetings (IUCN, CITES)
- CCFAM – Federal Policies and regulations, NAISC
- Licensing – WC sales met with some concern by hunters, sales are up this year (roughly 30%).

7. **Old Business**

a. **RAP Proposal**

- Previous discussion - Justice and Sol Gen want to take back the RAP Program in its entirety.
- ACA BOD decided that ACA should keep the RAP Program.
- After further discussion with AEP the RAP program will be staying with ACA.

b. **Golden Ranches - *Update***

- Waiting on ruling from CRA regarding ECOgift portion of project.
- Currently in stand by pattern. AHEIA supports moving forward as planned once things are ready to go.
- ACA is currently assessing ongoing maintenance concerns.

c. **JPC / MOU - *Update***

- JPC meetings are going well, next meeting is scheduled for September.
- Review of HPO's – outcomes that both groups can achieve.
- Draft MOU is in review.

8. **Reports**

a. **Draft Annual Report 2019-2020**

The AR 2019-2020 was presented for review and approval.

MOTION # 28/20	Moved by: Robert Gruszecki Seconded by: Greg Shyba
Move that the ACA Board of Directors' approved the 2019-2020 Annual Report as presented.	
MOTION CARRIED	

9. **New Business**

a. **Electronic Motion: 06/20EV – Sale of Lethbridge Lot**
(Attachment G)

MOTION # 29/20	Moved by: Randy Collins Seconded by: Fred Calverley
Move that the BOD agree that is an accurate reflection of the votes placed and therefore ratify Electronic Motion 06/20 EV, stating:	



"Move that the ACA Board of Directors' accept the Offer to Purchase for PLAN 0715287; Block 5; Lot 7, 3633 – 30th Street North, Lethbridge AB in the amount of \$570,000.00 (Five Hundred and Seventy Thousand Dollars)."

MOTION CARRIED

10. Closed Session

No closed session required.

11. Date and Location of Next Meeting

2020 Meeting Calendar (*Attachment H*)

The next scheduled BOD Meeting – December 9 & 10, 2020 – Edmonton, AB

- December 9, 2020 (Wednesday) Committee Meetings
- December 10, 2020 (Thursday) 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM Regular BOD Meeting

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION # 30/20

Moved by: Ken Ambrock
Seconded by: Randy Collins

Move that the BOD Meeting be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED

The Board of Director's meeting was adjourned at 3:28 PM.



(Chairman)



(Secretary)