

Alberta Conservation Association

Minutes of the December 9 , 2021 Board of Directors Meeting



Courtyard By Marriot, Edmonton West
10011 – 184 Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5S 0C7
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
Fred Calverley (Director) – Trout Unlimited Canada
Randy Collins (Director) – Alberta Fish and Game Association
Brian Joubert (Director) – Nature Alberta, ACA Academic PAL Representative.
Neil Keown (Director) – Alberta Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Chuck Priestley (Director) – Public At Large – NE Region
Travis Ripley (Director) – Alberta Environment and Parks
Brent Watson (Director) – Alberta Bowhunters Association

Todd Zimmerling – President & CEO, ACA
Debora Dueck – Recording Secretary, ACA
Lori-Jeanne Edwards – CFIO, ACA

VIA ZOOM: Vince Aiello (Director) – Public At Large (CE Region)
Mark Boyce (Director) – ACA / U of A Chair in Fisheries & Wildlife
Perry McCormick (Director) – Pheasants Forever Alberta Council
Sandra Mellon (Treasurer) – Public At Large, NW Region
Richard Mellon (Director) – Wild Sheep Foundation Alberta

REGRETS: Ken Ambrock (Director) – Public At Large, Northern Alberta Board Liaison
Jeana Schuurman (Director) – Alberta Professional Outfitters Society
Richard Stamp (Director) – Public At Large, SO Region
Vacant – ACA Business PAL Representative
Vacant - Treaty 8

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bill Abercrombie called the meeting to order December 9, 2021 @ 9:02 AM
Chairman Bill Abercrombie welcomed the board members to the meeting.

Conserving Alberta's Wild Side

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MEETING TIME LIMIT

MOTION # 51/21

Moved by: Brent Watson
Seconded by: Randy Collins

Move that the December 9, 2021 agenda be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

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

3. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

a. August 18, 2021 Board of Directors' Meeting – Electronic Motion: 48/21EV (Attachment A – Minutes of the August 18, 2021 BOD Meeting)

MOTION # 52/21

Moved by: Brent Watson
Seconded by: Robert Gruszecki

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' agree that this is an accurate reflection of the votes placed and therefore ratify Electronic Motion: 48/21EV stating: "**Move that the Minutes of the August 18, 2021 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:

- Discussions stemming from the Executive Committee Meeting will be revealed during the regular Board Meeting.
- Had a great hunting experience this past fall, toured many of the ACA Conservations sites in Southern Alberta. An opportunity to speak to other hunters and residents, very positive comments received.
- ATA AGM and grand opening in Dapp, AB.

- Thank you to departing member Greg Shyba whose term has ended on the ACA Board of Directors. ACA expresses their appreciation for your contributions to the board.
- Greg Shyba thanked ACA, advising that it has been great and that he will still be working behind the scenes in the conservation world.

b. President & CEO
(Attachment C)

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

It has been a fairly busy fall for ACA staff with a significant amount of field working being completed and working on plans for next year. Although we did head back into the offices in late summer, changes in COVID restrictions resulted in ACA closing down our office again, with most staff working from home for most of the fall. In addition, in an attempt to provide the safest possible working environment ACAA brought in a vaccine policy that required proof of double vaccination as of December 1, or ongoing proof of a negative PCR test (assuming individuals had no medical or religious exemption). No ACA staff requested an exemption; however, the proof of vaccination policy resulted in termination of one staff member for breach of H&S policy and a second staff member being placed on unpaid leave as of December 1. All other staff are now fully vaccinated.

Refer to the President and CEO Report for updates in all the program areas.

c. Finance & Audit Committee

c-1 Financial Overview to November 30, 2021 - (Attachment D)

Sandra Mellon, Treasurer, presented the Financial Overview to November 30, 2021 points noted:

Total revenue increased from the prior fiscal year by \$ 22,699

- Levy revenues are \$ (485,721) lower than received in the prior year.
- Resident Fishing license sales have decreased by \$(685,555) or 12.2% (approximately 37,462 less licenses over the prior year).
- Partner Contributions are \$446,919 higher than received in the prior year.
- Miscellaneous revenue is \$ 27,318 higher that prior year, included is advertising fees for the Conservation Guide and magazine, event sponsorship/registration and rental revenue.

Revenue are \$765,535 higher than year to date budgeted amounts.

- Levy revenue was higher than budgeted levels by \$340,788.
- Partner revenue is higher than the year-to-date budget by \$358,074.
- Grants and funds are under budget by \$ (119,422).

Operating expenses (expenses that are controllable by management) were \$ 1,060,294 above previous year levels. Although the individual expense categories vary, the overall expenditure is consistent as COVID significantly impacted the operation the first few months of the prior fiscal.

The organization is \$(2,025,430) under budgeted year to date expenditures.

An operating surplus (excess of revenue over expenditures for management-controlled items including actual interest revenue which is outside of management control) of \$5,270,923 exists compared to the results of the prior year where a surplus of \$6,308,518 was recorded.

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 \$5,753,932 for the period compared to \$7,346,502 in the prior year.

ACA reported an accounting or total organizational surplus of \$5,753,932, 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 gain on investments was \$54,905; the unrealized gain on investments was \$414,478,550. Investment income was \$23,467. Exchange rate gain was \$19,314. Loss on disposal of fixed assets was (\$93,461), this included the disposal of two easements for a total of (\$95,600).

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 \$5,270,923 compared to a prior period operational surplus of \$6,3008,518.

Cash Flow Statement

- Cash flows from operating activities resulted in a cash increase of \$3,755,111. Inflows were used to maintain operating expenditure with amounts that are not restricted.
- The net cash balance after asset purchases, dept repayment and other operating cash uses is \$7,105,166. Of this amount, \$642,121 is restricted and not available for operating expenditures, which includes the In Trust, Restricted and RAP accounts. USD funds available for use are \$500,000 USD.

Statement of Financial Position

As an overview of the financial position as at November 30, 2021, ACA reports:

- Current assets have increased by 15.5% from recorded levels at November 30, 2020. Accounts Receivable is comprised of receivables from partners and contributors.
- The Endowment Fund balance is \$3,275,750 up 8.5% from last year. Half of 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 minimum match the rate of inflation for the previous year).

- Equipment purchases this period were \$394,175. Land was purchased in the amount of \$246,000 (HSF \$221,000, AFGA \$25,000) related to East Reno Conservation Property. Land donations were received in the amount of \$73,500, related to the Benoit Conservation Site. AFGA transferred 50% ownership to ACA for multiple properties in the amount of \$3,569,000.00. 43,649 total acres are held by ACA.
- The total fair market value of the investments is \$3,887,628 representing an increase of 12.2% over the fair market value at November 30, 2020.
- The Habitat Securement Fund has a balance of \$711,645 as of November 30, 2021. \$350,000 was added to the fund as per the AOP and \$221,000 was used from the 2020/21 carry forward balance related to the East Reno Conservation Site. The land team has anticipated the full use of the funds in the fiscal 2021/2022.

d. Communications Committee

Randy Collins, Committee Chair provided update, points noted::

- Refer to page 14 of the President & CEO report for the full Communications update for this quarter.
- Lots of activities over the last year.
- Appreciate the creativity and assistance of the Communications department in assisting the Members Group.
- The RAP truck for AHEIA was completed.
- ACA 25th Anniversary Book – producing a book in recognition of ACA's 25 Anniversary.
- Hunter Access Survey launched this past week. Board members are asked to let others know.
- Randy Collins advised that he has been chair of the committee for a few years and is choosing to step down. A new committee chair will be appointed at the next committee meeting.

e. ACA Grants Program Committee
(Attachment E & Handout)

Randy Collins, Committee Chair provided update, points noted:

- August 2021 – reviewed the granting cycle and process for the past year.
- Research Grants Applicant list has been provided for information, reminder that this document is CONFIDENTIAL.
- Biodiversity Grant Applicant list has been provided for information, reminder that his document is CONFIDENTIAL.
- Would highly recommend that any interested board members sit in on the adjudication process.
- List of adjudicators has been provided for information.
- CCE Grants – recommend that Chuck Priestley be appointed as head of the committee for the granting adjudication process.

f. Operations Standards Review Committee

No committee meeting scheduled.

g. Recruitment Committee

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

- CE PAL recruitment process completed, 6 applications received, 4 interviewed
- Vince Aiello appointed to the role of CE PAL.
- Interest from some of the unsuccessful applicants in being involved in ACA in some capacity.
- NE PAL – Reappointment.

MOTION # 52/21

**Moved by: Robert Gruszecki
Seconded by: Randy Collins**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' reappoint Chuck Priestley to the position of NE Public At Large for an additional 3 year term.

MOTION CARRIED

- **Discussion on a new project – encouraging/enticing youth to be more involved. *ACTION ITEM: Robert G. and Brian J. to discuss further.***

h. Governance Committee Report

Committee Chair Brian Joubert advised that no committee meeting was scheduled.

i. PAL Member Committee

(Attachment F)

Sandra Mellon, provided an update from the meeting that was held, points noted:

- PAL Member quarterly reports were provided for information, reviewed and discussed.
- Greg Shyba's last meeting – extend a Thank you for his contributions for the past six years.
- ***Discussion item for the BOD 2022 Strategic Planning meeting – Opportunities for reaching other organizations, groups and youth.***

j. Organizational Risk Report

(Attachment G)

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

k. Northern Board Liaison Report

- No report provided.

m. Director Emeritus Report

No report provided.

n. AEP Representative Report - Verbal

Deferred to after lunch.

7. Old Business

a. MOU and Program Agreements (Attachment H1-H3).

- **ACTION ITEM:** *Todd Z. to discuss termination of delegation in relation to having a longer term with (Page 11, 7 (iii) of the MOU with Travis Ripley. Agreements can be executed after discussion.*

Richard Mellon and Sandra Mellon left the meeting @ 10:45 AM.

b. U of C Fisheries Chair Introduction – (Attachment I)

U of C proposal provided for review and discussion.

- Concerns with getting what is needed on the fisheries management in the province.
- Consensus to not move forward with the proposal at this point in time. Revisit at a future date, possibly look at other options to establish a connection with academics. Greg Shyba will report back at a future date.

MOTION # 53/21

**Moved by: Greg Shyba
Seconded by: Randy Collins**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' table the U of C proposal until June of 2022, at which time the board will revisit

MOTION CARRIED

c. CWD Proposal – (Attachment J)

CWD proposal provided for review and discussion:

- Positive reviews received from peer reviewers.
- Grant agreement developed. Requested change regarding intellectual property, change "is entitled to" to "has the option".
- Saskatchewan Government and Alberta Government has agreed to provide funds.

MOTION # 54/21**Moved by: Robert Gruszecki
Seconded by: Grey Shyba**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' proceed with the proposal as amended. "ACA has the option to receive up to 50% of the profits."

MOTION CARRIED

ACTION ITEM: Follow up on a joint announcement regarding the CWD Vaccine Research.

8. Presentation: 11:45

CFIO – Lori-Jeanne Edwards and HR Manager – Natalia McPhee were in attendance to provide updates to the board members.

9. AEP Representative Report - Verbal**Wildlife:**

- Engagements on wildlife topics (allocation) have been set for December 2021. These will be online webinars held during the evening.
- Alberta is investing time and resources into the predator compensation pilot program, working with the Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association. The ACA has been involved in some preliminary work and the GoA may be seeking additional input as the pilot program develops further.
- Modernization of the Wildlife Act and Regulations – we have received advice on several proposed changes to the Act and Regulation and are preparing for changes to occur in 2022. More announcements on this action to come.
- Wood Bison regulation was passed that protects disease free wood bison herds in northern Alberta
- Mule Deer Stakeholder Committee will be meeting in January to re-initiate the work to update the Mule Deer Management Plan
- Grizzly Bear status review is underway, based on the new information and population estimates, anticipated to be completed in 2022
- The branch is initiating a fee review for wildlife fees and will involve further engagement on ideas for a fee structure.

Fisheries:

- Engagements on fisheries regulations will be held in January 2022 (webinar)
- Recent work on the Bow River has identified a need to work collaboratively with anglers on a cumulative effects program, no underway with the Calgary River Users Alliance
- Native Trout Recovery program continuous its success with a focus on managing habitat, harvest and hybridization
- GoA is considering possible amendments to the Provincial fisheries regulations in 2022 (these are separate from the annual sportfishing regulations).

Conserving Alberta's Wild Side

General:

- The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies is considering a review of the North American Model for Wildlife Conservation at an upcoming meeting in spring 2022
- The Alberta Order of the Bighorn Awards was a great success and AEP appreciates the sponsorship from ACA and AHEIA.

10. Reports

a) Draft Annual Operating Plan 2021-2022 (Uploaded to BOD Website)

Draft Annual Operating Plan 2021-2022 was presented, reviewed and discussed

MOTION # 55/21

**Moved by: Randy Collins
Seconded by: Brent Watson**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' approve the Draft Annual Operating Plan 2021-2022 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

b) Grants Annual report 2020-2021 (Uploaded to BOD Website)

Grants Annual report 2020-2021 was provided for information.

9. New Business

a) 2021 ACA Fisheries & Wildlife Chair Report (*Attachment K*)

2021 Fisheries & Wildlife Chair Report was provided for information.

Discussion: Province to increase irrigation expansion program in AB. Concerns with the conversion of nature grasslands and the need for an environmental impact study. ***ACTION ITEM: Travis Ripley will discuss subject with his colleagues.***

b) ABA Submission for discussion (*Attachment L*)

ABA items for discussion submitted, reviewed and discussed.

c) Electronic Motion #49/21EV – CE PAL Appointment (*Attachment M*)

MOTION # 56/21

Moved by: Greg Shyba
Seconded by: Robert Gruszecki

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' agree that his is a accurate reflection of the votes placed and therefore ratify Electronic Motion: 49/21EV stating:

“Move that the ACA Board of Directors’ ratify the unanimous recommendation of the Recruitment Committee to accept Mr. Vince Aiello into the vacant Public At Large position for the Central Region.

MOTION CARRIED

d) Electronic Motion #50/21EV – Thor Conservation Site HSF Proposal (*Attachment N*)

MOTION # 57/21

Moved by: Fred Calverley
Seconded by: Brent Watson

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' agree that his is a accurate reflection of the votes placed and therefore ratify Electronic Motion: 50/21EV stating:

“Move that the ACA Board of Directors’ approve up to \$168,825.00 (One Hundred and Sixty Eight Thousand, Eight Hundred and Twenty Five Dollars) from the Habitat Securement Fund to purchase the Thor Conservation Site (Bueckert). SE 03-002-06—W4M (160 Acres). Located in the Sage Creek Focus Area. In partnership with other conservation organizations.

MOTION CARRIED

e) Election of Officers and Committee Appointments (*Attachment O*)

For the position of Chairman

- Sandra Mellon nominated Bill Abercrombie.
- Bill Abercrombie accepted the nomination.
- Seeing no other nominations, nominations cease, **Bill Abercrombie** is appointed by acclamation to the position of **Chairman**.

For the position of Vice-Chairman

- Bill Abercrombie nominated Robert Gruszecki.
- Robert Gruszecki accepted the nomination.
- Seeing no other nominations, nominations cease, **Robert Gruszecki** is appointed by acclamation to the position of **Vice-Chairman**.

For the position of Treasurer

- Robert Gruszecki nominated Sandra Mellon.
- Sandra Mellon accepted the nomination.

- Seeing no other nominations, nominations cease, **Sandra Mellon** is appointed by acclamation to the position of **Treasurer**.

For the position of Secretary

- Bill Abercrombie nominated Jeana Schuurman.
- Jeana Schuurman accepted nomination.
- Chuck Priestley self-expression of interest.
- Seeing no other nominations, nominations cease.
- Ballot vote carried out.
- **Chuck Priestley** is appointed by ballot vote to the position of **Secretary**.

MOTION # 58 /21

Moved by: **Fred Calverley**
Seconded by: **Brian Joubert**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' agree that the ballots be destroyed.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION # 59 /21

Moved by: **Chuck Priestley**
Seconded by: **Randy Collins**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' accept the names put forward for the Standing Committees as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

11. Closed Session

MOTION # 60/21

Moved by: **Fred Calverley**
Seconded by: **Randy Collins**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' move to "Closed Session" @ 2:59 PM

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION # 61/21

Moved by: **Fred Calverley**
Seconded by: **Brent Watson**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors' revert back to the regular board meeting @ 3:07 PM

MOTION CARRIED

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

- a) BOD Calendar Event List (Attachment P) – provided for information
- b) 2021 Meeting Calendar (Attachment Q)

The next scheduled BOD Meeting – March 23 & 24, 2022– Edmonton, AB

- **March 23, 2022 (Wednesday) - Committee Meetings will be scheduled.**
- **March 24, 2022 (Thursday) – Regular BOD Meeting**

12. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION # 62/21

Move that the BOD Meeting be adjourned.

**Moved by: Robert Gruszecki
Seconded by: Brian Joubert**

MOTION CARRIED

The Board of Director's meeting was adjourned at 3:10 PM.



(Chairman)



(Secretary)