

Alberta Conservation Association

Minutes of the June 10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting



9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Walking Eagle Inn & Lodge
4819 – 45th Street, Rocky Mountain House

PRESENT: Bill Abercrombie (Chairman) - Alberta Trappers Association
Robert Gruszecki (Vice-Chairman) – Alberta Hunter Education Instructors Association
Sandra Mellon (Treasurer) – Public at Large Business Representative
Chuck Priestley (Secretary) – Public At Large Northeast Region
Mark Boyce (Director) – ACA / U of A Chair in Fisheries & Wildlife
Randy Collins (Director) – Northern Liaison
Gordon Burton (Director)– Alberta Professional Outfitters Society
Neil Keown (Director) -Backcountry Hunter and Anglers - Alberta Chapter
Richard Mellon (Director) – Wild Sheep Foundation Alberta
Sue Cotterill – Minister’s Representative, Government of Alberta
Fred Calverley (Director) – Trout Unlimited Canada
Ken Bailey (Director) – Pheasants Forever
Robin Barnes (Director) – Public at Large Northwest Region
Brent Watson (Director) – Alberta Bowhunters Association
Rick Blakeley (Director) – Alberta Fish and Game Association
Vince Aiello (Director) – Public At Large Central Region
Lori-Jeanne Edwards – Chief Finance and Information Officer, ACA
Todd Zimmerling – President and CEO, ACA
Debora Dueck – Executive Assistant, ACA
Marlene Montgomery – Recording Secretary, ACA

REGRETS: Vacant – Nature Alberta
Vacant – Public at Large Academic Representative
Vacant – Indigenous Board Liaison
Vacant - Treaty 8

Call to Order:

Bill Abercrombie (Chairman) called meeting to order at 8:53 AM.

Conserving Alberta's Wild Side

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Bill conveyed his appreciation to the staff for all their efforts at the Raven River site visit.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MEETING TIME LIMIT

MOTION # 22/23

Moved by: Neil Keown
Seconded by: Fred Calverley

Move that the June 10, 2023 agenda be accepted as amended.

MOTION CARRIED

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

4. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

a. March 24, 2022 Board of Directors' Meeting – Electronic Motion: 07/23EV

(Attachment A – Minutes of the March 23, 2023 BOD Meeting)

MOTION # 23/23

Moved by: Ken Bailey
Seconded by: Sandra Mellon

Move that the ACA Board of Directors agree that this is an accurate reflection of the votes placed and therefore ratify Electronic Motion: 07/23EV stating: “**Move that the Minutes of the March 23, 2023 Board of Directors' meeting, be accepted as presented**”.

MOTION CARRIED

b. Extra BOD meeting – May 25, 2023 minutes

(Attachment B – Minutes of the May 25, 2023 Extra Meeting of the Board of Directors)

MOTION # 24/23

Moved by: Neil Keown
Seconded by: Randy Collins

Move that the ACA Board of Directors agree that this is an accurate reflection of the votes placed and therefore “**Move that the Minutes of the March 23, 2023 Board of Directors' meeting, be accepted 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

Bill Abercrombie, Chairman, expressed his appreciation of the conduct of yesterday's meeting and how the special meeting held on May 25, 2023 was handled.

b. President & CEO

(Attachment D)

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

- Mark Boyce's Hunting Access Presentation.
- EPA match grant monies meeting for sage grouse, perhaps now that the election is over, we can make some headway with this.
- Performance reviews have all taken place.
- Attending banquets and dinners.
- Potential site acquisition from TransAlta.
- Stakeholders' meetings.
- Project reports are accessible on the ACA website.

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

c. Finance and Audit Committee

- Met with Jared Harmata with Kingston Ross Pasnak (auditors)
- Amortization due to new computer software
- Higher travel costs due to "business as usual" after COVID
- Additional 1 page comparison pre COVID

ACTION ITEM: President & CEO to work with government to accelerate film collection and Canmore property transfer.

2023/2024 DRAFT Audited Financial Statements - *(Attachment E)*

The Draft Audited Financial Statements to March 31, 2023 were provided to the BOD for discussion and approval.

MOTION # 25/23

Moved by: Robert Gruszecki

Seconded by: Ken Bailey

Move that the ACA Board of Directors approve the Draft Audited Financial Statements to March 31, 2023, as amended.

MOTION CARRIED

Final Audit Findings - *(Attachment F)*

The Final Audit Findings Memorandum 2022 was provided to the BOD for review and acceptance.

- Robert G. “worthy of comment, no adjustments, very clean audit”.
- Auditor expressed comment – professional and cooperative (Todd and Lori-Jeanne).

MOTION # 26/23

Moved by: Neil Keown
Seconded by: Brent Watson

Move that the ACA Board of Directors accept the Final Audit Findings 2023, as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

Request for proposal for Auditor went out, 6 pulled the RFP from the website but only KRP submitted a quote. The submission is for \$2,000 more than our current rate of \$25,000.00.

MOTION # 27/23

Moved by: Ken Bailey
Seconded by: Richard Mellon

Move that the ACA Board of Directors accept the Request for Proposal for \$27,000.00 annually for the next 3 years by Kingston Ross Pasnak.

MOTION CARRIED

d. **Communications Committee** – Did not meet

e. **ACA Grants Program Committee** – Did not meet

f. **Operations Standards Review Committee**

April 3 Access Workshop (provided for information) – (Attachment G)

- Mark Boyce is here to field requests
- We’ve received a lot of complaints regarding grazing leases on public lands, lease holders treat it as their own property. Perhaps we need to invite leaseholders to stakeholder meetings.

g. **Recruitment Committee**

Neil Keown provided an update from the meeting that was held, points noted:

- i) Recommend that Lisa Holdaway be our new SO PAL representative.

MOTION # 28/23

Moved by: Ken Bailey
Seconded by: Vince Aiello

Move that the recommendation from the Recruitment Committee be accepted and that Lisa Holdaway be appointed to the position of South Public at Large Representative.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) BOD020-Rev0-0200612 – Academic Rep Job Description (Attachment H)
ACTION ITEM: Neil Keown will revise the document and bring to the August 16, 2023 BOD meeting.

iii) BOD021-Rev0-20200612 – Business Rep TOR/Job Description (Attachment I)

MOTION # 29/23

Moved by: Randy Collins
Seconded by: Brent Watson

Move that the edits made to BOD021-Rev0-20200612 – Business Rep TOR/Job Description be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

iv) BOD022-Rev0-20200612 – Board Liaison Rep Job Description (Attachment J)

MOTION # 30/23

Moved by: Sandra Mellon
Seconded by: Brent Watson

Move that the edits made to BOD022-Rev0-20200612 – Board Liaison Rep Job Description be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

g. Governance Committee Report

Governance Policies for approvals:

i) BOD007-Rev2-20190628 – Board Staff Relationship & Comm (Attachment K) – add signature block and sign off annually.

MOTION # 31/23

Moved by: Randy Collins
Seconded by: Chuck Priestley

Move that the edits made to BOD007-Rev2-20190628 – Board Staff Relationship & Comm be accepted as amended.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) BOD012-Rev1-20150819 – BOD Pre-Screening Policy (Attachment L)

MOTION # 32/23

Moved by: Neil Keown
Seconded by: Gordon Burton

Move that the edits made to BOD012-Rev1-20150819 – BOD Pre-Screening Policy be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

- iii) BOD012-IF-Rev1-20150819 – Questions for Screening of Directors and Senior Staff (Attachment M)
Add checkboxes to all questions. Question # 8 – add “chair”

MOTION # 33/23

Moved by: Richard Mellon
Seconded by: Rick Blakeley

Move that the edits made to BOD012-IF-Rev1-20150819 – Questions for Screening of Directors and Senior Staff be accepted as amended.

MOTION CARRIED

- iv) BOD016-1F-Rev0-20130815 – Individual Board Members Roles Responsibilities and Functions (Attachment N)
v) BOD028-Rev0-20230610 – Appointment of Member Group Representative Process (Attachment O)
- h. PAL Member Committee**
PAL Member Quarterly Reports (Attachment P)
PAL Policies/TOR for approvals (Attachment Q)

MOTION # 34/23

Moved by: Richard Mellon
Seconded by: Vince Aiello

Move that the recommendation from the PAL Member, that the following document has been reviewed with no revisions required and will be maintained for an additional 3 years. After which time the document will be brought forward for review by the committee.

BOD013-Rev0-20180815 – Public At Large Work Plan

MOTION CARRIED

j. Organizational Risk Report
(Attachment R)

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

k. Northern Board Liaison Report
(Attachment S)

Report submitted by Randy Collins; made mention that post COVID things are looking way up.

l. Director Emeritus Report

No report provided.

m. AEP Representative Report - Verbal

Alberta Fish and Wildlife Management Update

June 10, 2023

Fish and Wildlife Stewardship Branch (FWSB) and the Hunting and Fishing Branch (HFB) Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)

- Last year Alberta operated 5 watercraft inspection stations:
 - A total of 8032 watercraft were inspected by staff.
 - 5206 of these watercraft were deemed high risk due to their point of origin.
 - Inspectors intercepted 19 mussel-fouled boats
- This year again, Alberta is again operating 5 watercraft inspection stations: Cold Lake, Vermilion, Medicine Hat, Coutts, and Carway. These locations are selected to prevent the highest risk of invasive mussels entering Alberta from the east and south.
- The program is expanding monitoring capacity through a collaborative research project with the University of Alberta using eDNA techniques to detect presence of AIS in Alberta waterways. The project is targeting twelve invasive species including, plants, crayfish, fish/fish disease, and invertebrates.
- Flowering Rush – Lake Isle: The program is currently in year two of the five-year herbicide response effort. It is the largest scale flowering rush response project in Canada (eight years of engagement and consultation before implementation).
- Prussian Carp: FWSB is assessing netting efforts from the Blood Indian Reservoir to determine feasibility and success as a management option. There are also new detections in the North Saskatchewan watershed, FWSB is evaluating response options.
- FWSB is developing a plan to address the ongoing expansion of Prussian Carp in the province The plan will guide and describe the decision-making approach for appropriate management actions.
- Goldfish: Goldfish occurrences continue to increase in stormwater management ponds. Response at these locations continues to be a priority.
 - We appreciate our partners embracing and sharing our “Clean, Drain, Dry Your Gear and Don’t Let It Loose” campaigns (Kevin did the clean drain dry re: whirling disease the other night)
- Purple Loosestrife: FWSB is continuing a collaborative project with the Municipal District of Wainwright to use herbicide control in Engstrom pond, south of Wainwright, to prevent purple loosestrife being transferred to the Battle River, where response would be exponentially more difficult.

Wildlife Disease

- Developing an ongoing program to mitigate risk to bighorn sheep from infectious bacterial pneumonia (M. ovi), with immediate focus on the Sheep River area.

Landuse/Habitat

- Watercourse Crossing management: FWSB is working with Water Policy to update the Watercourse Crossing Code of Practice, and with AB Transportation and other partners to refine watercourse crossing remediation planning.

Fisheries Updates

- HFB supported the ACA kids can catch event again this year with a licence for participants to harvest up to 50 walleye at Wabamun Lake.
- HFB and FWSB are expanded the walleye stocking program to the north this year with two wild gamete takes. Goose, Minnow, Winagami and Crane lakes were stocked with fry this year.
- HFB increased the purchase allowance of SHL licences for walleye from 2 to 5 this year

Low Flows/High Temperatures

Conserving Alberta's Wild Side

- This year we are already seeing that the high air temperatures combined with lower-than-expected snowfall in 2023 have resulted in depletion of all measured snow pillows in southern Alberta mountains.
- Streams in southwest Alberta are already experiencing extremely low, and often warm flows. This is approximately one month earlier than would occur in an average year.
- It is expected this will result in decreasing flow conditions and rising water temperature conditions which will result in conditions that pose threats to fish and fish populations.
- Both branches are working together to assess the conditions in consideration of application of time of day restrictions (ToD).
- The emerging concern beyond ToD, is the extremely low flows that are occurring across ES1 and ES2. FWSB South Region is looking into this further and how we may respond.

Licensing

Updated information from the HFB on hunting and fishing sales metrics:

- The Special Licence application period is for the first week of the application period (May 30 – June 4). The remaining licence types are a comparison of March 15 – June 4). March 15th is when HFB starts the new licence year sales so it is good comparison of licence sales over the same time period (2022 vs 2023).

Licence Type	2022	2023	Difference
BG Special Licence Applications	59,665	56,581	-3,084
Resident Wildlife Certificate (includes, youth/senior)	25,327	24,347	-980
Resident Fishing	110,406	116,880	+6,474
All Fishing Licences	117,807	127,954	+10,147
Walleye SHL Applications	16,090	12,433	-3,657

Species at Risk

- Recovery Planning in progress:
 - wood bison
 - Little brown myotis and northern myotis bats
 - Recovery plan review for Sage-Grouse
- Status Reports
 - Updating the wolverine status report which will include a modeled population estimate for the boreal region.
- Recovery Implementation
 - Caribou Section 11 implementation
 - Collaborating with ACA on piping plover survey work
 - Burrowing Owl monitoring – regions are undertaking a pilot for trend surveys
 - Habitat modeling for wood bison with a focus on the Wabasca population
 - Acoustic monitoring to assess the success of northern leopard frog reintroductions
 - Multiple implementation programs in the South Region (Ord's kangaroo rat, western spiderwort, prairie rattlesnake)

- The Native Trout Recovery Program is comprehensive, including stream temperature modeling and monitoring, continued WSCT broodstock development, 3-trout recovery action plan development, and Athabasca River basin native trout population and genetic assessments. ACA is involved in many of these actions as a partner on the Native Trout Collaborative.
- Lake Sturgeon – developing Survey123 app for citizen scientists to enter data and planning for a South Saskatchewan River survey in 2024
- Short Jaw Cisco – collaborating with partners on developing eDNA assays

7. Old Business

a. Senior's fishing licences

Rick Blakeley will lead a panel to research this issue. Seniors, it appears, want to be counted and recognized.

8. Reports

No Reports

9. New Business

a) Cyber Security

Lori-Jeanne Edwards, CFIO informed the Board that ACA had a phishing attack on May 25th, 2023. Thankfully it was resolved within 15 minutes. As a result, ACA is implementing cyber security training for all staff and Board members. Currently ACA is testing multifactor authentication which will eventually include all staff and BOD members.

THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK! If you're unsure of something send it to the helpdesk!

b) Electronic Motion #05/23EV – Sadie Conservation Site

Funds to close – Ratification (*Attachment T*)

MOTION #35/23

**Moved by: Neil Keown
Seconded by: Vince Aiello**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors agree that this is an accurate reflection of the votes placed and therefore **“Move that the electronic votes be accepted as presented”**.

MOTION CARRIED

c) Electronic Motion #06/23EV – MSL Raffle

Ratification (*Attachment U*)

MOTION #36/23

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

Move that the ACA Board of Directors agree that this is an accurate reflection of the votes placed and therefore **“Move that the electronic votes be accepted as presented”**.

MOTION CARRIED

1 abstention – EAP Representative

ACTION ITEM: Revision of bylaws from Todd Zimmerling and Legal. Classification to make really clear who has voting rights. To be completed by no later than July 26th, 2023.

d) *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* (M. ovi) plea from Richard Mellon – M. ovi is 100% preventable, it comes from domestic sheep and is extremely deadly to wild sheep. Suggest that MSL monies be used toward this.

ACTION ITEM: Sue Cotterill will find out the status of the previous working group in 2019/20 and contact Richard Mellon with findings to discuss path forward.

10. Closed Session

MOTION #37/23

**Moved by: Richard Mellon
Seconded by: Gordon Burton**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors move into Closed Session at 2:09 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION #38/23

**Moved by: Chuck Priestley
Seconded by: Rick Blakeley**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors revert back to the regular meeting at 2:19 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

Minister's Representative requested to have the floor again:

Environmental Enforcement Branch

- Executive Director of the Environmental Enforcement Branch - Bradley Clark (head of conservation officers) is interested in meeting the ACA Board or talking to the Chair to introduce his group and provide an overview of what they do.

Order of the Bighorn

- We will be looking for an opportunity to brief the new Minister.

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

- Alberta hosting annual meeting – first time in 35 years it has been hosted in Canada
- Gov members - Federal, state, provincial, territorial agencies; + affiliate and contributing members
- Sept 23-27 in Calgary

Opportunities for sponsorship (and booths) – contact Sue or visit

<https://www.afwaannualmeeting.org/sponsor.html> for more information

MOTION #39/23

**Moved by: Sandra Mellon
Seconded by: Neil Keown**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors move into Closed Session at 2:28 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION #40/23

Moved by: Gordon Burton
Seconded by: Robert Gruszecki

Move that the ACA Board of Directors revert back to the regular meeting at 2:47 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

11. Date and Location of Next Meeting

- a) BOD Calendar Event List (Attachment V) – provided for information
- b) 2023 Meeting Calendar (Attachment W) - provided for information

The next scheduled BOD Meeting – August 15 – 16, 2023 in Sherwood Park, Four Points by Sheraton

- **August 15, 2023 (Tuesday) – Committee Meetings**
- **August 15, 2023 (Tuesday) – ACA Annual General Meeting**
- **August 16, 2023 (Wednesday) – Regular BOD Meeting**

Dr. Mark Boyce made mention that Jim Allen's health is failing and would appreciate visitors.

The Board of Directors presented Debora Dueck, who is retiring at the end of the month, with a gift and expressed their sincere gratitude for her years of service to ACA, she will be missed.

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION # 41/23

Moved by: Gordon Burton
Seconded by: Richard Mellon

Move that the BOD Meeting be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED

The Board of Director's meeting was adjourned at 2:52 PM.



(Chairman)



(Secretary)