

**Alberta Conservation Association
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2023 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Four Points by Sheraton Sherwood Park
1005 Provincial Ave, Sherwood Park, AB**



In Attendance:	Bill Abercrombie Robert Gruszecki (Vice Chairman) Sandra Mellon (Treasurer) Chuck Priestley (Secretary) Vince Aiello (Director) Lisa Holdaway (Director) Robin Barnes (Director) Brent Watson (Director) Jeana Schuurman (Director) Ken Bailey (Director) Dr. Lu Carbyn (Director) Neil Keown (Director) Randy Collins (Director) Richard Mellon (Director) Rick Blakeley (Director) Sue Cotterill Dr. Mark Boyce (Director) Todd Zimmerling Lori-Jeanne Edwards Marlene Montgomery	Alberta Trappers Association Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Assoc. Business Representative Public at Large Northeast Region Public at Large Central Region Public at Large South Region Public at Large Northwest Region Alberta Bowhunters Association Alberta Professional Outfitters Society Pheasant Forever, Alberta Council Nature Alberta Alberta Backcountry Hunters and Anglers Northern Board Liaison Wild Sheep Foundation Alberta Alberta Wildlife Federation Representative Minister's Representative - FP, EPA ACA/UofA Chair in Fisheries and Wildlife President and CEO, ACA Chief Finance and Information Officer, ACA Recording Secretary, ACA
Regrets:	Fred Calverley Vacant Vacant	Trout Unlimited Canada ACA Academic Representative Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta

1. Call to Order

Chairman Bill Abercrombie called the December 14, 2023 meeting to order 9:00 AM.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Bill Abercrombie welcomed everyone to the meeting, round table introductions were made.

New South Public At Large Member, Lisa Holdaway gave a brief description of her benefit to the Board.

3. **Approval of the Agenda and Meeting Time Limit**

Addition to the Agenda

a. Board Positions

Todd Zimmerling suggested to the Board that they consider nominations over the course of the day, possibly have side discussions during the break regarding the various committees.

MOTION # 59/23

Moved by: Chuck Priestley

Seconded by: Neil Keown

Move that the Agenda and Meeting Time Limit be accepted as amended.

MOTION CARRIED

4. **Acceptance of the Minutes**

Electronic Motion: 53/23EV (*Attachment A*)

MOTION # 60/23

Moved by: Rick Blakeley

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 #53/23EV stating: "Move that the Minutes of the August 16, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting be accepted as presented".

MOTION CARRIED

5. **Review of Action Items**

(*Attachment B*)

Action Items were reviewed, and updates were provided.

6. **Committee Reports**

a. **Chairman / Executive Committee**

Bill Abercrombie announced that this will be his final year as ACA Chair and Alberta Trappers Association Representative. He also made mention of Tom Bateman's involvement with the Board and what an honour it is to know him.

b. **President and CEO**

(*Attachment C*)

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

- First crown lease has been received.

- Waterfowl Warmup will no longer occur due to costs.
- New Assistant Deputy Minister Shane Schreiber.
- Attended: JPC Meetings, Land Manager Darren Dorge's retirement party, Pheasants Forever shoot.
- Several meetings with Jeana and APOS.
- Mule deer study launched on August 30th, had close to 10,000 responses.
- Several meetings with Forestry and Parks.
- Met with Matt Besko regarding fisheries.
- September 21, met with Sandra Mellon, looking to see what we can do to change the habitat.
- Contacted by Ted Morton, he is writing his memoirs.
- October 25th, met with Sacha Investments, they are interested in partnering with us on the Pekowki Ranch.
- White Oaks Farms is changing over to regenerative agriculture.
- Staff has done a really good job of bringing on Corporate Sponsors.
- TransAlta meetings - currently attempting to get subdivisions approved.
- Royal Alberta Museum - Jeana Schuurman had offered to be included with the process.
- Burbot program going well. Concerns regarding the number of fish that an individual is allowed to keep, is it sustainable?
- ACA is not taking on any new aeration projects, we will still help municipalities start up, but we just do not have the resources to take it on ourselves.
- Fish stocking will be reduced due to ever increasing costs of close to 50% over the past 5 years. ACA is looking into putting perch into those ponds that we already know that the trout we are stocking are not surviving.
- Pheasant Release Program – Hoping to sign a contract with our Alberta producer to supply 10,000 birds, having no more than six producers would be ideal. Ultimately, our goal is to be able to release healthy birds that can fly.
- Food Water Wellness Project – Auditor General's people came to audit the project, Lori-Jeanne accompanied them to a pig farm.
- ACA has moved the Cochrane office to a new location.

c. Finance & Audit Committee
(Attachment D)

See attached for Financial Overview to October 31, 2023.

d. Communications Committee
(Attachment E)

- Lisa Holdaway, the new South Region PAL Member, has voiced interest in being a member of the Communications Committee.
- IHunter App – a number of hunters are participating, but there are still those that believe it will divulge their favourite hunting spots.
- Influencers may have their own agenda when promoting conservation.
- Getting other groups involved, i.e., The Legion has a Fishing for Veterans program.

e. **The ACA Grants Program Committee**

(Attachments F, G, H, I)

- i) Conservation, Community and Education Grants Project Submission Guidelines 2024-2025
- ii) Conservation, Community and Education Large Application
 - Committee recommends to the BOD to omit question 3 on page 5 and incorporate a summary of the question into question 2 which will now read “Summarize any Partner Funding Dollars (Please indicate if the partner funds are confirmed or pending approval. Confirmed partner funding (other agencies, fees charged to participants, etc.) should be listed in the budget).
- iii) Conservation, Community and Education Small Application
 - Suggest the deadlines for submissions be changed to November 1 – December 10 for the 2024/2025 cycle. Further discussion needed in order to bring to the BOD.

MOTION # 61/23

**Moved by: Neil Keown
Seconded by: Rick Blakeley**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors accept the recommendations of the ACA Grants Program Committee to adopt the Project Submission Guidelines and the two applications with the suggested edits made.

MOTION CARRIED

- iv) Grants Adjudicators
 - Committee members reviewed the list, it will be updated with omissions and additions.

f. **Operation Standards Review Committee**

Mark Boyce, Committee Chair provided an update from the committee meeting, points noted:

- Wild boar forum held in Airdrie; Hannah McKenzie is the GoA Pig Biologist. Alberta Pork would like to see a ban on wild boar farms in the province.
- Feral Equine management is another hot topic.
- Many groups are concerned that the AGPAC has not reconvened. ACA could offer assistance with getting this group up and running again. Sue Cotterill is discussing this internally with her group. AGPAC was set up as an advisory group to offer the best advice from the stakeholders to GoA. TOR must be clear as to what role members play and how information will be communicated.

ACTION ITEM: Brent Watson will contact all previous AGPAC user groups.

ACTION ITEM: Todd will get Mark carbon sample report from Wild Rose Ranch.

g. **Recruitment Committee**

(Attachments RECRUITMENT A, B, C)

- Will begin actively recruiting for the ACA Academic Representative Position. Hope to have the position filled by March 2024.
- ACA Board of Directors Profile Matrix is not actively being used recommend retiring the document.

MOTION # 62/23**Moved by: Randy Collins
Seconded by: Richard Mellon**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors Profile Matrix be deemed obsolete.

MOTION CARRIED

- Terms of Reference for the Business Representative Position form was reviewed, status quo.
- Minor wordsmithing made to the Board / Staff Relationship document.

MOTION # 63/23**Moved by: Richard Mellon
Seconded by: Rick Blakeley**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors Profile approve the changes made to the Board / Staff Relationship document .

MOTION CARRIED**h. Governance Committee**

(Attachments GOVERNANCE A, B)

ACTION ITEM: *Todd will get the proposed revisions to the by-laws prior to the March BOD meeting.*

- Two additional screening policies specific to volunteers were introduced, approved and recommended to be brought forth to the Board.

MOTION # 64/23**Moved by: Ken Bailey
Seconded by: Richard Mellon**

Move that the Screening of Board Committee Volunteers Form and the Screening of Board Committee Volunteers Procedure be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED**i. Public At Large Member Committee**

(Attachment J)

Committee Chair, Vince Aiello, commented that the PAL Member Quarterly Reports were fantastic. Lisa Holdaway, new South PAL Member, submitted her first report and has been circulating magazines. Chuck Priestley, Northeast PAL Member, has a YouTube channel called *Wild Food Pursued*, recommended to check it out. Discussed an incident where a hunter shot one of the pheasant release drivers while the driver was releasing birds, as a result ACA has put up warning signs. Another point brought up is that sites are being used to train dogs, it is difficult to deter this as sites are available to the public as a whole. Perhaps our groups can advise to refrain from using the sites during hunting season.

j. **Organizational Risk Report**
(Attachment K)

No serious Health and Safety incidents however there has been a couple of thefts. In the Northwest region some signs and posts have been removed. The Eagle Terrace property has had some trees cut down by the adjacent neighbour to be used for firewood.

k. **Northern Board Liaison Report**
(Attachment L)

Northern Board Liaison, Randy Collins, is distributing the Discover Guide to more people. Commented that the hard water season is a good opportunity for more engagement and is looking forward to attending ice fishing events.

l. **Director Emeritus Report**
(Attachment M)

Tom Bateman submitted his last report as Director Emeritus with ACA. Robert Gruszecki gave a brief summary of Tom's history with conservation in Alberta:

Tom is a long-standing conservationist supreme. Originally a Fish and Wildlife officer and part of the hunter education program created in 1964. When the W.I.S.E. foundation was created in 1982 Tom was hired on. He authored a book called "The Milk River Man". Among his accolades is a W.I.S.E. Award, The Order of Canada and The Order of Big Horn. Tom is a deep thinker, quick witted and pious. Despite all of his accomplishments he is always a true gentleman.

m. **ESRD Representative Report**

Sue Cotterill provided updates to the ACA Board of Directors (*Refer to attachment*).

7. **Presentations:**

CFIO – Lori-Jeanne Edwards; Finance and IT Risk Management highlights for 2023.

HR – Natalia McPhee; Harassment and Discrimination, Training and Development, Terminations and Insurance

EA – Marlene Montgomery; Board Honorariums and Expenses

8. **Reports**

a. 2024-2025 Draft Annual Operating Plan – (*Uploaded to BOD Website*)

MOTION # 65/23

Moved by: Rick Blakeley
Seconded by: Chuck Priestley

Move that the DRAFT Annual Operating Plan be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

9. **Old Business**

a. **Cyber Security and KnowBe4 Training**

Lori-Jeanne Edwards stressed during her presentation that cybercrime is a huge issue. ACA staff will complete security training on a continual basis.

10. **New Business**

a. **Election of Officers and Committee Appointments**

(Attachment N)

No further nominations from the floor. Executive Committee stands. All Board of Directors Members that expressed interest in sitting on committees accepted to said committees.

11. **Closed Session**

MOTION # 66/23

**Moved by: Rick Blakeley
Seconded by: Neil Keown**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors move to Closed Session at 2:20 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION # 67/23

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

Move that the ACA Board of Directors revert back to the regular meeting at 3:04 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

- Discussions regarding taking on the Minister's Special Licence for 2024.

MOTION # 68/23

**Moved by: Robert Gruszecki
Seconded by: Brent Watson**

Move that the ACA negotiates with the Government of Alberta to take on the Minister's Special Licence under the same AGLC agreement as we had in 2023.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION # 69/23

**Moved by: Ken Bailey
Seconded by: Rick Blakeley**

Move that the ACA Board of Directors approve the list of Grant Applicants for Research and Biodiversity for review by the adjudicators, with the exception of the review of Dr. Ruckstuhl's which will be investigated.

MOTION CARRIED

12. Date and Location of Next Meeting

March 21, 2024 – Four Points by Sheraton Sherwood Park

13. Adjournment

MOTION # 70/23

**Moved by: Sandra Mellon
Seconded by: Robin Barnes**

Move that the December 14, 2023 meeting of the ACA Board of Directors adjourn at 3:04 PM.

MOTION CARRIED



(Chairman)

(Secretary)