

## **FRIENDS OF HULLETT**

### **MINUTES FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

#### **Friends OF Hullett – Virtual Meeting (Microsoft Teams)**

**January 28th, 2025 @ 7:30 PM**

**Present:** Duane Inkpen, Mat Shetler, Chris Ambrose, Mario Coniglio, Mark Penhale, Ryan Bayne

**Regrets:** Barb Orchard, Steve Dalrymple

**Guests:** Justin Johnson, Ben Elliott

**Meeting called to order:** 7:30 pm

- Minutes from the November 26th meeting were approved.

#### **Treasurer's Report:**

- Year-end preparations are in progress.
- The year ended with a loss, as expected, but the 2025 budget reflects anticipated income.
- An HST refund of \$5,000 is expected.
- The \$20,000 market GIC matured with a low return of 1.67%.
  - Chris expressed dissatisfaction with RBC investments and will explore alternatives in the future, though no immediate action will be taken.
- Scott's transition is proceeding well.
- Mario inquired about budget variances, which Chris attributed to unbudgeted and discretionary expenses.

#### **Marsh Report:**

- Clean Water Projects
  - Buckthorn control and tree purchasing projects are underway.
- Bathouses
  - 30 bat houses will be deployed in the Marsh when received from Madill.
- Stewardship funding
  - Funding through the Invasive Species Action Fund provided through the Ontario Woodlot Association, support provided to OWA - \$2000 in-kind by FOH to host tours
  - Invasive Phragmites Control Fund used to control phragmites in the HPWA
    - ABCA is securing funding, FOH offering in-kind mapping and control for terrestrial phragmites in 2025 and aquatic control in 2026.
- Vanessa Palmer Award
  - The board voted to increase the award to \$500, eliminate the physical plaque, and improve advertising.

- *Motion to increase the Vanessa Palmer Award to \$500 and remove the physical plaque, replacing it with a virtual presence on the website.*
    - *Motion proposed by Mario, seconded by Mark. All in favor.*
- Peasant Challenge Draw
  - Winners were contacted.
  - The board discussed issuing a split receipt to Clinton Sporting Goods for donated firearms
    - Chris will investigate
  - The unclaimed 2023 generator will be offered at the dinner auction after contacting Sommers.
    - *Consensus to contact Sommers regarding use of the unclaimed generator for the auction.*
- Annual General Meeting
  - Kyle Dawn will be the speaker.
- Other Updates
  - New ad in Community Information Guide
  - Beeyard contract sent to Munro and funds have been received (\$200)
  - Flynn AG contract funds received
  - Potential co-op student interested and will be interviewed when staff are contacted.
  - Sara Kerr and Emily Dearing have expressed interest in working at the Marsh.
    - Waiting to hear back on out-of-province opportunities for Sara.
- Grants
  - Applications submitted to TD FEF and Central Huron Donation Fund.
  - OFAH Community Conservation Fund will be applied to when BOD agrees on a project (ex., Canoe launches, accessible hunting blind, or channel clearing).
  - OFAH Community Project Fund will be applied to with the goal of covering expenses for the Youth Waterfowl Clinic.
- Charity Auction and Dinner:
  - Richard Lobb will provide the PA system as Bluewater does not have one on hand.
  - To date 17 tickets remain unsold.
  - Firearms and crossbow purchased from Clinton Sporting Goods.
  - Canvassing for other items to begin shortly.
- Training
  - All staff completed WHMIS training.
  - Justin and Ben will pursue exterminator training.
    - *Motion to proceed with exterminator training for Justin and Ben.*
    - *Motion proposed by Mark, seconded by Mario. All in favor.*

#### **4. Mapping Updates:**

- Mat presented mapping updates, noting stable Agricultural land acreage (with some discrepancies), increased woodlot acreage, and decreased fallow field acreage (due to encroachment and labeling corrections/changes over time).
- Challenges with updated map layers forced him to use older ones, causing classification discrepancies.

- He recommended waiting for 2025 air photos to redo the mapping when they are available, likely in 2026, emphasizing the need for clear land type classification rules, mapping scale guidelines, and a conceptual landcover/habitat map of the HPWA.
- Mat suggested referencing county mapping standards.

#### **5. Key Performance Indicators (KPI's):**

- Five KPIs were identified for focus:
  - Agricultural field access
  - Meadow management
  - Canoe access and channel clearing
  - Knowledge transfer from Scott
  - Community outreach
- Mat will develop these KPI's and will collaborate with staff to produce a series of KPI's for review at a future meeting.

#### **6. MNR, Ducks Unlimited:**

- The operations agreement has been signed.
- A new CO, Richard dePaulsen, has been assigned to work alongside Drew.
- Trespassing at the gravel pit will be monitored by staff via trail camera.
- The annual operations meeting will be scheduled for April depending on DUC and MNR availability.

#### **7. Website, Newsletter, and User Guide:**

- Major website updates are planned.
- Newsletter will be distributed next week following updates on Vanessa Palmer and edits

#### **8. Pheasant Challenge Discussion:**

- The board discussed the Pheasant Challenge's sustainability due to rising bird costs and the fixed \$10 ticket price.
  - Pheasant hunting without tickets was a major concern, and previous attempts to mitigate these losses (*ex.*, county licensing) were discussed.
- Mark proposed a separate volunteer organization to manage the hunt and address revenue and promote ticket sales. Mario suggested a volunteer group *could* work if there was enough community interest.
  - Mat stressed the value of new perspectives from Mark and Mario, urging them to collaborate with Steve to explore improvements.
- Ryan noted regulatory constraints prevent mandated licenses. Chris argued the \$10 price is fine, the program is subsidized, and focusing on "bad players" is unproductive. Mark questioned the need for a sustainability discussion if the program is fully funded.

- Ryan clarified the agricultural contract covers *core* costs, while the pheasant program aims to offset expenses.
  - Duane explained dinner auction funds support the program and others.
- The current model will be maintained, but Mark, Mario, and Steve will brainstorm improvements.

#### **9. New Business:**

- **AGM:** The board discussed strategies for increasing attendance, including potentially mentioning the pheasant program's uncertain future in announcements.
- Justin proposed repurposing materials from dismantled pheasant pens and suggested advertising for summer positions early. *Consensus to proceed with advertising for summer positions.*

Meeting adjourned @ 8:48 pm