

RRF Board Meeting
October 20th 2013 Bariloche, Argentina
Minutes

Present: President Ruth Tingay; Directors Rob Bierregaard, Rick Harness, Jerry Niemi, Torgeir Nygard, Jemima Parry-Jones & Miguel Saggese; JRR Editor Cheryl Dykstra; Incoming Treasurer Jessi Brown; Conference Committee Co-Chair Joan Morrison; Website Committee Chair Libby Mojica.

Apologies: President-Elect Clint Boal; Vice President Ted Swem; Secretary Greg George; Treasurer Angela Matz; Directors Jim Bednarz, Miguel Ferrer, Carol McIntyre, Fabrizio Sergio, John Smallwood & Munir Virani.

The meeting was opened at 09.05hrs with welcomes and introductions.

Item 1: 2014 Budget

Neither the 2013 Treasurer's Report nor the draft 2014 budget had been received by the time of the Board meeting so the approval of the 2014 budget was suspended for a future e-agenda under the direction of incoming President Clint Boal.

Action point:

1. Clint to solicit 2013 Treasurer's Report and 2014 draft budget from Angela and organise special budget e-agenda ASAP.

Item 2: Status report on transition to new Treasurer and Business Manager

Last year the Board agreed that the role of RRF Treasurer was now so onerous that the responsibility should be split between a voluntary RRF member (Treasurer) and a paid (part-time) Business Manager. The Treasurer, as an RRF Officer, would continue to oversee the Foundation's finances and report to the Board whereas the Business Manager would handle the bulk of the day-to-day accounting. The current Treasurer, Angela Matz, had indicated her intention to step down and Jessi Brown had been approved by the Board as the incoming Treasurer. Karen Kile, an accountant working in Rick Harness's office in Colorado, had received Board approval to take on the position of paid Business Manager.

The transition process has not yet been completed and the Board agreed that the changeover needed to be completed by the end of 2013 if possible, or as soon as possible thereafter to ensure we do not lose the opportunity of hiring Karen.

To expedite the transition it was suggested that, if both parties were willing, RRF would pay for Karen to visit Angela for a couple of days in Alaska to enable Karen to understand the requirements of the role, formulate a job description for the division of the two roles, and to ensure Karen had suitable accounting software for a smooth transition. Jessi would then liaise with Karen on her return.

A question was raised as to whether there would be an independent audit of the accounts prior to the formal hand-over. This was confirmed as standard practice.

Just prior to the Board meeting, on October 18th Angela sent an email to Ruth:

“I’ve just received the papers to add Karen to the bank account. Because we are a non-profit, it requires approval of the Board by a resolution, and for the resolution to appear in the minutes.

Could you please introduce the following resolution and get a vote from the board:

Be it resolved that Raptor Research Foundation's Business Manager, Karen Kile, be allowed to: Endorse checks and orders for the payment of money or otherwise withdraw or transfer funds on Deposit with Merchants Bank, a financial institution.

Let me know when this is accomplished (or if you prefer to wait for an e-agenda), and then I can move forward”.

The above resolution was proposed by Rob, seconded by Rick, and was carried unanimously.

Action Points:

1. Clint to liaise with Angela and Karen (cc'd to Rick Harness and Jessi Brown) to see whether a meeting in Alaska in the very near future would be do-able.
2. If Angela and Karen are in agreement, Clint to add an estimated cost to the draft 2014 budget.

Item 3: JRR Editor’s Report

Cheryl presented her report (this was not circulated with the Board Agenda so is attached here: see Attachment 1).

Cheryl commented that the Special Issue went well - it was dedicated to Gary Bortolotti and she had heard from his family and they were really happy to see the publication. Cheryl mentioned that another Special Issue was planned for the near future, with details to follow.

Cheryl was pleased with the publication data (see Attachment 1) and she also asked for more papers. It was suggested that perhaps she could put an article on the need for more good papers in the next Wingspan.

Last year the Spanish translators requested a pay rise to put them on the same level as other publications, e.g. The Auk. The extra cost to RRF would probably be about \$400 per year. Cheryl had told the translators that their request had come after the completion of the budget last year, but that she would put forward their request at this Board meeting. Those Board members present considered the request to be extremely reasonable, although it was not possible to provide a Board vote – this would have to be suspended until Clint circulates the budget e-agenda in the coming weeks.

Cheryl warned that when the 2013 budget is scrutinised there might appear to be some ‘odd’ payments for translators. However, this was due to a changeover of translators, which has now been completed and future payments would return to the usual four instalments per year.

Cheryl is considering a new advert in the back of the journal.

After some discussion on how to encourage others to view the papers in JRR it was suggested that all authors could be asked to write a few sentences in lay terms to summarise their findings; this 'capsule' could then be posted on the RRF website to make the research more accessible to those who may not necessarily have read the paper.

Cheryl acknowledged the work of her 13 associate editors, and mentioned that Jessi Brown would be leaving her AE role as she takes up her responsibilities as the new RRF Treasurer.

The Board congratulated Cheryl for her continued excellence in the role of JRR Editor.

Action Points:

1. Clint to add the proposed payment increase for translators to the draft 2014 budget.
2. Cheryl to look into adding a box on the JRR submission website whereby authors would have to provide a short 'capsule' summary of their paper before they could submit their ms for review.
3. Cheryl to work with Libby to publicise the 'capsule' information on the RRF website in due course.

Item 4: Election Results

The results of the 2013 election are as follows (new Directors' terms begin 1st January 2014):

North America #1

There were three candidates: Jennifer Coulson, Lloyd Kiff, John Smallwood.

Lloyd Kiff was elected and will replace out-going Director John Smallwood.

Southern Hemisphere

There was one candidate: Munir Virani.

Munir Virani was re-elected for a second term.

Directors at Large #1 and #4

There were four candidates for two positions: Ara Monadjem, Eugene Potapov, Miguel Saggese, Brian Washburn.

Miguel Saggese was re-elected as Director at Large #1.

Ara Monadjem was elected as Director at Large #4 and will replace out-going Director Carol McIntyre.

All candidates had been notified of results prior to the Board meeting.

The voting turn-out was low, as usual, with just 146 voters. The geographic breakdown of voters was as follows:

Argentina: 1
Australia: 2
Brazil: 3
Canada: 9
Chile: 2
France: 1
Germany: 4
India: 1

Ireland: 1
Italy: 2
Mexico: 2
Norway: 1
Portugal: 1
Slovak Republic: 1
South Africa: 1
Spain: 4
Sweden: 2
Turkey: 1
UK: 5
USA: 102

To encourage greater participation it was suggested that the voting period be shortened to one month (currently it is approx two months) and that we send out an email reminder to all members mid-way through the voting period (via OSNA).

Our current Nominations Committee Chair, Laurie Goodrich, has successfully completed her term of office (thank you, Laurie!) and is not re-standing.

Action Points:

1. Ruth to email the election results to Cheryl so she can amend the JRR listing.
2. Ruth to update the Board Guidelines document and distribute to the new Directors.
3. Ruth to add the new Directors to the RRF Board Listserv.
4. Libby to update the Director listings on RRF website in early January 2014.
5. Clint to solicit candidates for the position of Nominations Committee Chair ASAP.
6. Greg to ensure OSNA is aware of our restructured voting period and requirement for a reminder email to be sent to all members mid-way through the voting period.

Item 5: Nominations for new Wingspan Editor

Petra has successfully completed 7 years as the Editor of Wingspan and has announced her retirement from this role (thank you, Petra!). An advert seeking a potential replacement was included in the Sept 2013 edition of Wingspan. This resulted in one enquiry, but unfortunately that individual has since backed off. Board members were asked to spot potential candidates during the conference, and Clint will also be asking several people who have previously stood for Directorships but have been unsuccessful.

Action Point:

1. Clint to solicit potential candidates from pool of previously unsuccessful Director candidates (liaise with Nominations Chair, Laurie).

Item 6: Website Committee Report

Libby presented her Website Committee Report (as previously circulated with the Board Agenda).

Libby is receiving many emails from all over the world with photos of raptors. She is gradually finding the time to re-size etc and add them to the website. She requested more photos of RRF members actually doing research.

Libby suggested that within a year we should re-evaluate the website (to avoid it becoming dated).

Libby mentioned that the RRF logo is very hard to reproduce, particularly on items that RRF might sell, e.g. mugs. A discussion followed about various options to resolve this, including finding a higher resolution copy of the logo, having the original logo re-drawn, or having a completely new logo designed. Comments were made that a new logo may be a good idea, to reflect the organisation's international status rather than having a Prairie Falcon with its limited range. Others commented that some of the older RRF members might disagree with a logo change if the old logo holds historical significance. Others thought that designing a new logo might galvanise the membership to actively participate, e.g. in a design competition.

Ruth argued any decision could not be made at short notice and it was agreed to suspend the decision-making process for Clint to decide how to take forward once he was in post.

Action Points:

1. Libby to get quotes for a potential re-draw of the original logo.
2. JPJ to get quotes for a possible new logo design.
3. Clint to follow up on the discussions of re-draw vs new logo via email with Libby (and Miguel Saggese, Torgeir and JPJ, all of whom expressed an interest in the topic).

Item 7: Conservation Committee Report

Joan presented the Conservation Committee Report (as previously circulated with the Board Agenda).

A discussion followed as to how to get more issues brought to the Committee's attention. It was agreed that the current format (with designated Conservation Committee members representing specific geographic areas) wasn't very effective and a new approach was needed. It was agreed that Joan would write a piece for Wingspan and for the website, encouraging ALL members to bring potential issues to the attention of this Committee, specifying the sort of issues that we could handle. A list of issues would be added to the website with a short summary of information and a link to appropriate external websites if readers wanted further information.

Action Points:

1. Joan to write to our current Conservation Committee regional representatives, thanking them for their service and advising of the new approach.
2. Joan to write an article for Wingspan to encourage all members to participate with this Committee.
3. Joan to work with Libby to restructure the information on our website about the workings of the Conservation Committee and to create a list of 'conservation issues' as and when they are brought to the Committee's attention.

Item 8: Education Committee

The Education Committee has been inactive for some time and attempts to contact the current Chair have failed. Information emerged later during the conference that the current Chair (Jeremy Scheivert) has left his previous employment (Hawk Mt) hence his lack of response to emails.

Action Point:

1. Ruth to work with Clint and Laurie to find new contact details for Jeremy.
2. Clint to contact Jeremy and ask whether he wishes to continue in the role or whether we need to search for a new Education Committee Chair.

Item 9: Recognition for Local Conference Chairs

[Miguel Saggese, as one of the local conference organisers, left the room for this item]

It was recognised that RRF has been rather inconsistent in the way we show our gratitude to the local organisers of our annual conferences; in some years we have bought a gift for the organiser whereas in other years we haven't. Buying gifts has often been problematic, especially in terms of carrying the gift to the conference.

After a general discussion it was proposed that we standardise an arrangement. RRF will in future provide a three-year gratis membership to the local organiser, as well as present a more tangible offering in the form of an RRF plaque. The plaque is relatively inexpensive to produce (the venue and year would just need to be changed each year) and is easy to transport to the conference. It was pointed out that sometimes there is more than one local organiser (as in the case of the current conference) and in these circumstances RRF will provide the 3-year membership and a plaque for up to three local organisers.

The resolution was proposed by Rob, seconded by JPJ and carried unanimously.

Action Points:

1. Kate Davis (current Conference Committee Chair) to incorporate this new arrangement for all future conferences.
2. Kate to liaise with Clint about the production of plaques (the plaque maker is in Clint's town and Clint currently organises the Awards plaques).
3. Kate to liaise with Membership Committee Chair (Ted Swem) and the Treasurer to ensure OSNA is notified each year of the gratis memberships and their duration.

Item 10: Membership Committee

Jessi presented a report from the Membership Committee (this was not circulated with the Board Agenda so is attached here: see Attachment 2).

Membership is holding reasonably steady.

Jessi will be stepping down from her role as Membership Committee Co-Chair as she transitions to her new role as Treasurer (thanks, Jessi!).

Item 11: Raptor Research Techniques Manual

This is a restricted item.

Action Point:

1. Ruth to provide an update of the current situation to Clint.

Item 12: Bariloche Conference

Miguel (Saggese) provided a brief update. He reported that as of the Board meeting the conference finances were still in the black. He wanted to thank the Board for allowing the conference to be held in Argentina. He also wanted to acknowledge the work of the local committees as well as the RRF committees (particularly RRF Conference, Website and

Scientific Programme Committees). He felt proud to see experienced scientists coming to South America to mix with the local researchers and see the exchange of knowledge.

A.O.B.

As an addendum to these minutes, Petra Bohall Wood and Joan Morrison were the recipients of the 2013 President's Award, announced at the awards banquet. A full write –up on their achievements will be included in the next edition of Wingspan. Well done Petra and Joan!

The meeting was closed at 1pm.