

# The Canadian Field-Naturalist

## Draft Minutes of the 143rd Annual Business Meeting (ABM) of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club, 11 January 2022

Held by Zoom meeting during COVID-19 pandemic.  
Chairperson: Jakob Mueller, President

The Zoom meeting was attended by 55 participants. The minutes of the previous ABM, the financial statements, Treasurer's Report, and Annual Reports of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club (OFNC) Committees for 2020–2021 had previously been available on the Club's website. During the meeting, relevant documents were projected on the screen for the audience's reference.

Jakob Mueller called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and welcomed the participants.

The Zoom host, Ken Young, explained how the Zoom meeting and voting would work.

### 1. Approval of the Agenda

It was moved by Jakob Mueller, seconded by Janette Niwa, that the Agenda be accepted as distributed.

**Carried**

### 2. Minutes of the Previous Annual Business Meeting (ABM)

It was moved by Elizabeth Moore, seconded by Diane Lepage, that the minutes of the 142nd ABM be accepted as distributed and published in *The Canadian Field Naturalist* (CFN).

The motion was opened to discussion. Annie Bélair reported that she had been advised that, with respect to Item 8, Fenja Brodo had not, in fact, been the first to work with a computer on *Trail & Landscape* (T&L) and asked that the minutes of the 142nd ABM be amended to reflect this.

Jakob Mueller brought the motion that the minutes of the 142nd ABM, as amended, be accepted as distributed and published in CFN, to the vote.

**Carried**

### 3. Business Arising from the Minutes

#### a) Ethical Investing:

Catherine Hessian, Investment Manager, responded to a question that had been asked at the 2021 ABM as to whether the Club has an ethical investing policy.

The Finance Committee of the OFNC reviewed best practices of ethical investing, that is taking account of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria when making investments. We concluded that the Investment Manager will continue to exercise discretion in choosing bond investments that do not conflict with OFNC's mandate. She can handle ethical issues on a case-by-case basis. There are two

reasons for not adopting a specific policy: the difficulty of defining criteria to be used and the limited choice of investment instruments available to the OFNC.

An additional level of oversight is being added in the form of an annual investments review to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors could then advise of ethical issues with any of the issuers. The Board can also be pro-active in informing the Investment Manager of ethical issues that arise. The Investment Manager would take these judgements into account in choosing issuers.

### 4. Treasurer's Report by Ann Mackenzie

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club continues to remain in a solid financial position. For the second year in a row, revenues have exceeded expenses by a very comfortable margin. This is a result of generous donations combined with reduced expenses as COVID limited the scope of some Club activities.

We were pleased to be able to have a plant sale this year. This is the major fundraiser for the Fletcher Wildlife Garden (FWG) and is very popular in the Ottawa community. In 2020 it had to be cancelled with only minor sales. This year it was made a virtual event with ordering and paying online and then curbside pick-up. It was so popular that it raised the most money ever: \$7813 compared to \$6736 two years previously.

There were a few very large donations to the General Fund and one to the FWG resulting in increased revenue. Safe Wings continues to attract considerable donations totalling over \$11 000 this year. Many of the donors are not members of the Club but are expressing their appreciation for the work of the Safe Wings volunteers. On the other side of the equation, the expenses of running such a large and complex operation are considerable, also totalling about \$11 000.

Both the revenues and expenses for CFN are staying about the same. The publication schedule does not correspond to the financial year with variations between years that appear to be greater than they are in fact. Author's Charges in particular appear to have decreased substantially but that is because of a change of invoicing practices last year that artificially raised them. We are expecting higher printing costs for both the CFN and T&L in the coming year.

Research grant payments continue to be lower than normal as the pandemic delayed some of the field work. Costs for bookkeeping services took a significant spike and are now more in line with industry standards. At the same time, the level of service has improved.

The Club made a \$10000 donation to purchase land in the Alfred Bog through the Nature Conservancy. Conserving this peat bog just south of Ottawa has been a priority for the OFNC since the early 1980s. We were pleased to have this most recent chance to further enhance its protection.

We are not anticipating any significant changes from a financial perspective in the coming year.

It was moved by Ann MacKenzie, seconded by Ken Young, that the Financial Statements be accepted as a fair representation of the financial position of the Club as of 30 September 2021.

**Carried**

Approved financial statements available online at: <https://www.canadianfieldnaturalist.ca/index.php/cfn/article/view/3017/2843>

## 5. Nomination of the Accounting Firm

It was moved by Ann MacKenzie, seconded by Ken Young, that the accounting firm of Welch LLP be contracted to conduct a review of the OFNC's accounts for the fiscal year ending 30 September 2022.

**Carried**

In response to a question as to why the Club's accounts are not audited, Ann advised that an entity such as the OFNC is not required by the government to be audited. An audit would be expensive and involve a significant workload. As a number of people are involved in the Club's finances, it is unlikely that mismanagement by any particular individual would go unnoticed.

## 6. Committee Annual Reports

It was moved by Elizabeth Moore, seconded by Annie Bélair, that the Committee Annual Reports be accepted as distributed.

**Carried**

## 7. Report of the Nominating Committee by Diane Lepage (Chair)

The Board is almost unchanged from last year. Dwayne Lepitzki, who had been an *ex-officio* member, decided not to remain on the Board once it was

decided that all Board members would be full directors. Both the Chair of Membership, Henry Steger, and the Chair of Finance, Ken Young, have indicated that they wish to step aside when a replacement is available. Until that time they will both continue on the Board.

## Relevant Excerpts from the OFNC Constitution (revised February 2000)

Article 8 – The Council shall consist of the officers of the Club and up to eighteen additional members, all members of the Club.

Article 12 – The officers of the Club and other members of the Council shall be elected annually at the Annual Business Meeting. The nomination of sufficient persons for election to the various offices and membership of the Council shall be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee, which shall act in the manner prescribed in the By-Laws.

The Council shall, at the earliest possible date, appoint chairs and members of Standing and ad hoc committees and Editor and Business Managers, as required for club publications.

### Nominated Officers

Jakob Mueller	President
Owen Clarkin	1st Vice President
(vacant)	2nd Vice President
Elizabeth Moore	Recording Secretary
Ann MacKenzie	Treasurer

### Official Duty

### Nominated Members of the Board of Directors (alphabetical order)

Annie Bélair	Janette Niwa
Robert Cermak	Gordon Robertson
Edward Farnworth	Henry Steger
Catherine Hessian	Ken Young
Diane Kitching	Eleanor Zurbrigg
Diane Lepage	

It was moved by Diane Lepage, seconded by Ann MacKenzie, that this slate of nominees for Officers and other Members of the Board of Directors of the OFNC for 2022 be accepted.

**Carried**

### Nominating Committee suggestions to the Board Members for Chairs of Committees and other positions in the OFNC

#### Positions of Members of the Board of Directors

Awards Committee	Eleanor Zurbrigg
Birds Committee	Robert Cermak
Conservation Committee	Owen Clarkin
Education & Publicity Committee	Gordon Robertson
Events Committee	Jakob Mueller
Fletcher Wildlife	Edward Farnworth,

	Representative
Finance Committee	Ken Young
Investment Manager	Catherine Hessian
Macoun Field Club	Diane Kitching, Representative
Membership Committee	Henry Steger
Safe Wings	Janette Niwa, Representative
Publications Committee	Annie Bélair, Representative
Editor, <i>Trail &amp; Landscape</i>	Annie Bélair

### Positions of people not on the Board of Directors

Chair, Publications	Jeff Saarela
Editor, <i>Canadian Field-Naturalist</i>	Dwayne Lepitzki
Chair, Macoun Field Club	Rob Lee
Chair, Safe Wings Ottawa	Anouk Hoedeman
Webmaster	Sandra Garland
Ontario Nature Representative	Diane Holmes

## 8. New Business and General Discussion

### a) Colacem L'Original Cement Plant

Fenja Brodo inquired about the outcome of the effort, reported at the 2021 ABM, to overturn planning permission for the construction of a cement plant by Colacem Canada Inc. in L'Original, Ontario. The OFNC had supported a study of the likely emissions from the plant in which it was shown that the emissions projected by Colacem were substantially underestimated. Diane Lepage advised the meeting that, regrettably, the appeal had failed.

### b) General Discussion

In response to questions and comments from members, the participation of OFNC in various initiatives and areas of concern was discussed:

- (i) City proposal to extend Brian Coburn Boulevard across the northern fringe of the Mer Bleue wetland complex—OFNC had released a statement supporting the National Capital Commission's position that the City's preferred plan is a poor choice from an ecological standpoint. These concerns had been covered by *The Ottawa Citizen* and CTV. Ontario Nature has taken an interest and has published a statement expressing their concern.
- (ii) City of Ottawa policy changes regarding the environment and development—Owen Clarkin, OFNC Chair of Conservation, was commended by a member for his work in drawing the attention of the community to the negative effects of City policy on the environment.
- (iii) Ottawa Hospital Civic Campus—Jakob Mueller noted that the Club had felt that it was not within

the Club's mandate to become involved in the politics of the establishment of the new hospital site.

(iv) Degraded Woodland Areas—The attention of the meeting was drawn to the degradation of a number of local forested areas and concern expressed that this degradation would be used as a reason to develop these areas. The damage caused to trees by invasive species and increasingly frequent storms associated with climate change was discussed. Ann MacKenzie called upon members to become involved in their communities so that their voices are heard with respect to environmental matters.

(v) Gatineau—it was noted that greenspace had been a major issue in the recent Gatineau municipal elections. Hope was expressed that the Club would become more involved on the Gatineau side of the Ottawa River. It was noted that this is the intention of the Club.

(vi) Richmond Fen—concern was expressed about the effects of development around this area. It was noted that OFNC has been involved in some bird studies in the area but that it is very difficult to access.

(vii) Land preservation—it was noted that OFNC has contributed to land acquisitions made recently by both Ontario Nature and the Nature Conservancy.

## 10. Adjournment

It was moved by Jakob Mueller, seconded by Eleanor Zurbrigg, that the meeting be adjourned.

**Carried**

ELIZABETH MOORE  
Recording Secretary

### Post-business presentations

After the meeting was adjourned, Diane Lepage presented a challenging multiple choice identification quiz based on some of her wildlife photographs.

Janette Niwa and Deb Doherty then reported on some of the activities being carried out by Safe Wings. The presentation focussed on collision prevention and particularly on the work being done by several students at the University of Ottawa to mitigate collisions on campus.

The post-business part of the meeting concluded with a presentation by Owen Clarkin on the Elm Zigzag Sawfly (EZS). Elm Zigzag Sawfly is native to Asia but has recently been identified in North America and is potentially another threat to our native elms. The Conservation Committee was responsible for the first report of this insect in Ontario and has since identified it in numerous sites in Eastern Ontario.