

Final Final Final

**Desert Tortoise Council,
Minutes of Annual Business Meeting**

**19 February 2016
Sam's Town, Las Vegas, Nevada**

The Annual Business Meeting was called to order by Ken MacDonald, Chairperson at 08:02 a.m. in the Virginia City room at Sam's Town, Las Vegas, Nevada. **Motions made, seconded, and approved are shown in bold red font.**

Attendees: Glenn Stewart, Ken MacDonald, Becky Jones, Joe Probst, Mari Quillman, Kristin Berry, Bruce Palmer, Cristina Jones, Jason Jones, Joe Probst, Michael Tuma, Pete Woodman, and Ed LaRue. **Guests:** There were approximately 25 Symposium attendees at the Annual Business Meeting, who as members, participated in the votes described herein.

A. Introductions: Ken MacDonald introduced the Board to those in attendance.

B. Review Agenda:

C. Officer and Committee Reports:

1. Chairperson's Annual Report: Ken MacDonald will present a more extensive report during the Symposium.

2. Treasurer's Report: Joe Probst distributed a report, which included our total assets of \$273,989.44 as of 2/17/2016. The 2015 budget and accounting and a draft budget for 2016 were also presented in Joe's report. **Motion made (Becky Jones), seconded (Bruce Palmer), and unanimously approved to accept the Treasurer's Report.**

3. Corresponding Secretary's Report: Becky Jones reported there has not been much correspondence since our Board meeting in January. Most correspondence included registration forms and payment for attending the Symposium.

4. Membership Coordinator/Membership Committee Report: Mari Quillman reported that there are 464 Total Members and 396 Active Members as of 2/16/2016, with 40 new members in the last month. We are still using Wild Apricot to manage membership.

5. Awards Committee Report: Glenn Stewart distributed the awards committee report several days ago, which includes Jeff Aardahl for the Kristin H. Berry Annual Award; Taylor Edwards, Alice Karl, Mercy Vaughn, Philip Rosen, Cristina Melendez Torres, and Robert Murphy for the R.C. Stebbins Research Award (in recognition of a third species of tortoise: *Gopherus evgoodei*); Eric Goode and Jennifer McKay for the James St. Amant Special Award; Joe Probst for the Pat von Helf Award; and the Glenn R. Stewart Special Award is presented to Bianca Cirimele. Winners of the David J. Morafka Memorial Research Award, Student Award for Best Paper, and a special Rob Gilman Award will be determined during the Symposium. The Council presented more than \$30,000 in awards and grants in 2015.

6. Nominations Committee Report: Michael Tuma reported that we will have elections of new officers this morning (Agenda item D2).

7. Grants Committee Report: Glenn Stewart distributed a report several days ago for 2015 describing three grants that were rejected. Those that were accepted included (1) Three Travel Grants for Meetings - \$1,500 to *Turtle Survival Alliance*. (2) “Improving Effectiveness of Tortoise Population Monitoring and Conservation Education at Copper Mountain College” – \$5,390 to *Paul Delaney, Copper Mountain College, Joshua Tree, CA*. (3) “New Initiative to Reduce Growth of Raven Populations in the California Deserts” - \$10,000 to *Lawrence Alioto, Coalition for a Balanced Environment*. And (4) “Creating a Success Story: Identifying and Prioritizing Restoration Sites, Restoration Activities, and Long-term Management to Promote Desert Tortoise Recovery” – \$6,500; to be managed by *Chris Noddings, Bren School Group Project, University of California, Santa Barbara*. So a total of \$23,390 in grants was awarded in 2015 (noting that the \$6,500 grant to Bren School will be dispersed in 2016).

8. Information, Outreach, and Social Media Committee Report: There was no report in the absence of Chris Noddings (who is expecting his son to be born any day now).

9. Newsletter Editor’s Report: Michael Tuma is the current newsletter editor, distributing two issues (including an expanded newsletter) in 2015 to Council members. Michael anticipates we will have three issues out this year.

10. Webmaster’s Report: Mari Quillman reported there are no significant issues.

11. Ecosystems Advisory Committee Report: Ed LaRue provided a summary report for 2015 indicating that we received 48 notices, commented on 29, attended 4 public meetings and 1 field trip, participated in 1 interview, and signed 12 letters. Environmental projects included 34 in California, 6 in Nevada, 2 in Arizona, and 2 in Utah.

12. 41st Annual Symposium Local Host Committee and Program Committee Report: Tracy Bailey has done a wonderful job as the Host Chair. Kristin Berry (Program Chair) reported that the program, including abstracts, is final and ready for this meeting.

D. Old/New Business:

1. Proposed Revisions to the Bylaws: The Board of Directors, led by Bruce Palmer, is proposing amendments to the Bylaws of the Desert Tortoise Council. These modifications are to provide flexibility to the Board, increase organizational efficiency, and clarify obligations as a non-profit organization with 501(c)(3) status. Specifically these amendments would:

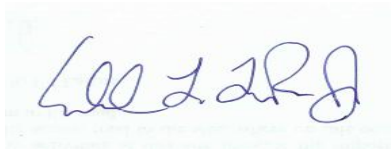
- a. Raise the total number of Board members from 15 to 20;
- b. Extend the term of the Chairperson to two years;
- c. Identify that the positions of Past Chairperson and Chairperson-elect would be filled in alternate years;
- d. Allow the Board to hire staff; and
- e. Add language concerning political endorsement to clarify restrictions under 501(c)(3) status. **Motion made (Michael Tuma), seconded (Cristina Jones), and unanimously approved by those at the meeting to accept the amendments to the Bylaws as summarized above.**

3. Election of Officers: Because 2016 is an even year, Recording Secretary Ed LaRue conducted the elections. Bruce Palmer was nominated as Chairperson, Michael Tuma as Chairperson-elect (to begin serving 2018 as per the new Bylaws revision), Becky Jones as Corresponding Secretary, and Joe Probst as Treasurer. **Given these nominations and no new nominations from the floor, Bruce Palmer, Michael Tuma, Becky Jones, and Joe Probst were unanimously elected as Chairperson, Chairperson-elect, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer, respectively, as per the terms of office given in the Bylaws.**

E. Future Meetings. Owing to exorbitant costs for Arizona (where we diligently tried to go), the 42nd Annual Business Meeting and Symposium will be here at Sam's Town in February 2017 (at a date to be determined). The next Board meeting will be in Ontario, CA on 4 June 2016, beginning at 10:00 a.m.; all are welcome.

F. Adjourn to Opening the Symposium: Ken MacDonald adjourned the Annual Business Meeting at 08:25 a.m.

Draft minutes were recorded, later distributed and modified with board member review and input, then respectfully submitted as this final version by Ed LaRue, Recording Secretary.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ed LaRue', is centered on a light blue rectangular background.

Edward L. LaRue, Jr.
Desert Tortoise Council, Recording Secretary