

Final Final Final

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

**23 February 2018
Sam's Town, Las Vegas, Nevada**

The Annual Business Meeting was called to order by Bruce Palmer, Chairperson at 08:00 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: Kristin Berry, Judy Hohman, Greer Dolby, Larry LaPré, Maggie Fusari, Ken MacDonald, Becky Jones, Joe Probst, Mari Quillman, Bruce Palmer, Cristina Jones, Joe Probst, Michael Tuma, Pete Woodman, and Ed LaRue. **Guests:** There were five Symposium attendees at the Annual Business Meeting, who as members, participated in the votes described herein.

A. Introductions: Bruce Palmer introduced the Board to those in attendance.

B. Review Agenda:

C. Officer and Committee Reports:

1. Chairperson's Annual Report: Bruce Palmer will present a more extensive report during the Symposium, which will summarize Board member activities over 2017.

2. Treasurer's Report: Joe Probst read his report, which included the Council's total assets of \$279,286.99 as of today. **Following the motion made by Cristina Jones, seconded by Kristin Berry, the membership in attendance unanimously approved to accept the Treasurer's Report.**

3. Corresponding Secretary's Report/Recording Secretary: Becky Jones indicated that correspondence included responses to emails and forwarding communications to pertinent Board members. Dealing with captive tortoises is a persisting issue. There were also checks for symposia that were given to Joe Probst, and project announcements for Ecosystem Advisory Committee consideration that were forwarded to Ed LaRue.

4. Membership Coordinator/Membership Committee: Mari Quillman reported that there are 360 Active Members as of today, and 1,600 names in our contacts list. She will be working on getting new members in 2018, particularly students, and modifying membership categories.

5. Chairperson-elect/Nominations Committee: Michael Tuma reported that we will have elections of new officers this morning (Agenda item 13). He identified Judy Hohman and Greer Dolby as the two new Board members joining us in 2017.

6. Ecosystems Advisory Committee: Ed LaRue provided a summary report for 2017 indicating that the Council received 30 notices, commented on 6, attended 4 public meetings, wrote 1 editorial piece for newspaper, cosigned 5 letters, declined to cosign 2 letters, and endorsed 1 candidate for BLM working group; environmental projects included 18 in California, 4 in Nevada, 1 in Arizona, 2 in Utah, and 5 on national issues.

7. Agency Coordination Committee: Cristina Jones reported that the Council is working with various biologists in targeted states. This year, we will work with agency and organization biologists in California.

8. Introductory Workshop Committee: Maggie Fusari reported that the Basic Workshop in Ridgecrest, CA in early November 2017 was successful, including several local high school teachers. The 2018 Basic Workshop will be at the Ker-McGee Center in Ridgecrest, CA the first weekend in November 2018.

9. Advanced Training Committee:

a. Health Assessment Training (HAT) Committee: Cristina Jones reported that there was no formal HAT workshop in 2017. She is working on a refresher course to be available in 2018 for previous students.

b. Advanced Techniques Workshop: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nevada Department of Wildlife, and the Council have a Memorandum of Agreement that allows us to radio track tortoises near Jean, Nevada at the Large Scale Translocation Site (LSTS). Cristina Jones is working on a supplemental workshop to provide more tortoise handling experience for students who attended the original class in 2017.

10. Information, Outreach, and Social Media Committee: Michael Tuma indicated that recently we have been more active on social media. Mari Quillman represented us at the recent Wildlife Society conference in New Mexico, where she interfaced with the attendees and sold Council products.

a. Newsletter: Michael Tuma reported that there was one newsletter in 2017. Given his new responsibilities as incoming Chairperson, he will be stepping down from his position as Newsletter editor. He will help the so-far unidentified person to transition into these responsibilities.

b. Website: Our web person, Mary Cohen, is doing a wonderful job but will not be able to be here this weekend.

11. Grants Committee: Michael Tuma distributed the Grants Committee report, which included four grant requests, three of which were awarded. These included an \$11,790 grant to Arizona State University to study tortoises along the Colorado River, \$5,000 grant to Tortoise Group to keep wild tortoises wild, and \$9,587.12 to California Parks and Recreation for studying tortoises in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, California. Total grant expenditure in 2017 was \$26,377.12. There were no applicants for the Morafka Memorial Research Award or the Lockheed Martin Diversity Grant. Michael Tuma and Bruce Palmer will work to reinstate a second offering of the Lockheed Martin Diversity Grant in 2018.

12. Awards Committee: The Awards Committee identified the following awards recipients for 2018: Jun Lee for the Kristin H. Berry Annual Award; coauthors Kevin Mulder, William Boarman, Andrew Walde, Peter Woodman, Emily Latch, and Robert Fleischer for the R.C. Stebbins Research Award; Chris Noddings for the James St. Amant Special Award; Paul Delaney for the Pat von Helf Award; and the Glenn R. Stewart Special Award is presented to Maggie Fusari, Michael Burroughs, and Terry Christopher.

13. 43rd Annual Symposium Local Host Committee and Program Committee: Tracy Bailey has done a wonderful job as the Host Chair. There are 53 papers and posters that will be presented, with seven non-tortoise papers and 46 that are specific to tortoises. The 44th annual symposium will be 21-23 February 2019 (Thursday through Saturday) in Tucson, Arizona.

14. Board Member At Large Contributions: Ken MacDonald worked on Best Management Practices on mitigation measures to protect tortoises. Greer Dolby, our newest member, recently commented on an environmental project and will be working at enlisting student Council members. Larry LaPré serves on the Awards Committee and Grants Committee, and took the lead on writing a letter on the Pacific Gas and Electric Habitat Conservation Plan in Hinkley, CA. Judy Hohman worked closely with the EAC on reviewing and drafting letters on environmental projects. Peter Woodman helped organize various techniques workshops, including the Introductory Workshop in Ridgecrest, CA and tracking 25 tortoises at the LSTS at Jean, Nevada for the Authorized Biologist Workshop.

D. Old/New Business:

1. Proposed revisions to the Bylaws: As required by the Bylaws, the proposed changes were posted on the website for the minimum of 30 days. The proposed revisions (shown in red below) are as follows. "Section 11. Grants Committee. The Grants Committee shall be chaired by a current Board member. The Grants Committee Chairperson will **receive and manage processing of applications for regular and special grants (David J. Morafka Memorial Research Award, Glenn R. Stewart Student Travel Fund) and, on a grant request-by-request basis...**" **Michael Tuma made the motion to adopt the Bylaws revision as given above, which was seconded by Becky Jones, and unanimously approved.**

2. Election of Officers: The two current nominations are Becky Jones as Corresponding Secretary and Joe Probst as Treasurer. **Given these nominations and no new nominations from the floor, Becky Jones and Joe Probst were unanimously elected as Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, as per the terms of office given in the Bylaws.**

E. Adjourn to Opening the Symposium: Bruce Palmer adjourned the Annual Business Meeting at 08:30 a.m.

Draft minutes were recorded, later distributed and modified with Board member review and input, then approved in a formal vote, and now respectfully submitted as this final version by Ed LaRue, Recording Secretary.



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