

**Desert Tortoise Council
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting**

**9 January 2021
Zoom Online Meeting**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Ken MacDonald at 10:05 a.m. **Action items are in blue, with responsible parties in red. Motions made, seconded, and approved (or not) are shown in bold red font.**

Attendees: Kristin Berry, Greer Dolby, Peter Woodman, Judy Hohman, Ken MacDonald, Cristina Jones, Maggie Fusari, Mari Quillman, Bruce Palmer, Michael Tuma, Becky Jones, Joe Probst, Ed LaRue, Halle Kohn, and Michael Vamstad. **Absent:** None. **Guests:** Tracy Bailey was here to discuss the Symposium.

A. Welcome/Announcements/Introductions: Ken MacDonald welcomed everyone.

B. Review Agenda: New issues were incorporated as needed.

C. Approval of Meeting Minutes of 21 November 2020: Ed LaRue prepared draft minutes of the most recent virtual Board meeting, which were distributed, reviewed, and approved today as final without additional changes. **Motion made (Mari Quillman), seconded (Cristina Jones), and unanimously approved to accept the draft minutes as amended to be final.**

D. Review of Board Actions since Last Board Meeting:

a. 2021 Symposium Costs: On 1/4/2021, **Mari Quillman made a motion, seconded by Ed LaRue, and unanimously approved by 13 Board members by 1/6/2021 to adopt the following cost structure for the 2021 virtual Symposium and membership fees:**

Symposium	2020 Fee	2021 Fee
Registration Regular Member	\$300	\$150
Registration Regular Non-Member	\$360	\$210
Registration Student Member	\$185	\$20
Registration Student Non-Member	\$215	\$50
Registration Retiree Member	\$185	\$50
Registration Retiree Non-Member	\$215	\$100

Membership	Unchanged between 2020 and 2021	
Membership Regular	\$40	\$40
Membership Student	\$20	\$20
Membership Retiree (65+)	\$25	\$25
Membership Organization/Corporation	\$250	\$250
Membership Lifetime	\$500	\$500

b. Contribution to Turtle Survival Alliance: On 1/4/2021, **Mari Quillman made a motion, seconded by Ed LaRue, and unanimously approved by 10 Board members by 1/6/2021 to contribute \$10,000 to Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA), to compensate them for their logistical support for the 2021 Symposium.**

E. 2021 Virtual Symposium:

Planning and Miscellaneous Logistics: Kristin Berry thanked Mari Quillman for instigating a Zoom meeting several days ago with several Board members, representatives of TSA, and several other volunteers. Mari also produced a to-do list for Kristin and other organizers. **Tracy Bailey will be working with Molly Peters and Par Singhaseni to coordinate and organize different aspects of the Symposium.** • To accommodate Bylaws requirements, **Kristin Berry will have the draft Symposium Program on the website by tomorrow, 1/9/2021, and will provide copies to Board members.** • **Mari Quillman asked that Kristin Berry copy her with the draft Program when she sends it to the webmaster so she can eblast it to the members.** There will be panels for questions and answers following each session. There will not be any session chairs this year, so Bruce Palmer and Ed LaRue will alternate as Chairpersons. **Bruce Palmer and Ed LaRue will work together to determine who chairs which sessions.**

Presenter Coordination: **Kristin Berry will send presenters' contact information and all Power Point presentations to TSA (David Hedrick) so that practice sessions can be set up before the Symposium (so there is no delay, presenters do not need the actual presentation but just something to share).** • **Kristin Berry will provide contact information for all speakers to Tracy Bailey and Molly Peters by next Tuesday, 1/12/2021, but will not have emails for some coauthors (we will not need contact information for coauthors who do not register).** If there are coauthors and panelists who are not registering but participating, that contact information needs to be provided to TSA. • **When available, Molly Peters will provide an email with all links for each day that will be shared with registrants.**

Registration/Announcements: The registration is now live on the website, and includes purchase of raffle tickets. We will need to watch for people who register but do not pay. **For the Symposium, there will be frequent posts by Michael Tuma and Halle Kohn, with brief announcements (photo-contest, Symposium dates, registration information, raffle, sponsors, award winners, etc.) to be provided by Kristin Berry, Mari Quillman, and others.**

Scheduling: The schedule will be approximately 08:30 am to 12:30 pm each day on February 9 & 11, 16 & 18, and 23 & 25 February 2021. The business meeting will be on the first day of the Symposium, and take about 45 minutes to accommodate elections of officers and chair reports. **Mari Quillman** will ask **TSA** during a scheduled meeting next week about the elections voting procedure. • **Ken MacDonald** will prepare an agenda for the business meeting. • **Each Committee Chair** will produce and present a brief annual report for their committee, and provide copies to **Ed LaRue** for the minutes of the Annual Business Meeting. After the business meeting, there will be the plenary speaker, and presentations on the proposed Northern Corridor and listing of the Sonoran desert tortoise.

Sponsors: **Mari Quillman** has received \$3,500 in donations so far. **Larry LaPré** also sent out solicitations to numerous consulting firms. We will include sponsorship logos on a slide to be added to the end of presenters' talks, provided to **Ed** and **Bruce** to be posted as background visuals during their chairing duties, and announced by **Ken MacDonald**.

Awards: **All Board members** are asked to provide potential awardees to **Kristin Berry**. Awards will be presented on 2/25/2021, the last day of the Symposium. It would be good to have a description of the awards that can be posted during the Symposium. We will contact award recipients so they can be in attendance to receive the award. At that time, we should ask for a photo that can be posted both during the Symposium and on the website. There have been two submissions for the Morafka Award, which are being reviewed by **Michael Tuma**, **Bob Murphy**, and **Ken Nagy**. **Michael Tuma** will contact **Sylvia Morafka** to let her know the Morafka Award is being presented. There are currently five student papers that definitely need to be presented before the last day of the Symposium to facilitate judging. **Michael Tuma**, **Maggie Fusari**, **Greer Dolby**, and **Larry LaPré** will judge the student papers to determine the winner.

Photo-contest: **Joe Probst** expects it will take about 15 minutes to present winners of the photo-contest for the eight categories, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners and best of show (25 awards). We need to ask for the photographer's name and the category information for each photo, to be coordinated by **Par** for the Symposium and provided to **Michael Tuma** for later use by the Media Subcommittee. **Michael Tuma** and **Halle Kohn** will work with **Par Singhaseni** to get the information for each photo to be used later. • **Par Singhaseni** will assemble a Power Point of the winning photos. • **Maggie Fusari** and **Par Singhaseni** will oversee the photo-contest and coordinate with **Sky Esser** to post winning photos on the website.

Raffle: **Motion made (Greer Dolby), seconded (Becky Jones), and unanimously approved for Mari Quillman to spend up to \$5,000 for raffle items.** **Par Singhaseni** is pursuing electronic methods to select raffle winners. • **Mari Quillman** and **Par Singhaseni** will oversee the raffle and collect winners' names, who unlike at the physical Symposium, need not be present to win. All raffle items will be electronic gift cards, so this will minimize cost of shipping. **Mari Quillman** will be sending a raffle eblast, soliciting ticket purchases, and identifying raffle items.

F. Next Meeting Date: The next virtual meeting of the Board of Directors will be on Zoom, between 10:00 a.m. and approximately 2:00 p.m. (PST), on 1 May 2021.

OFFICER/COMMITTEE REPORTS

G. Treasurer's Report: The electronic Treasurer's Report was distributed by Joe Probst on 1/8/2021. As given in that report, the Council's total income was \$123,995.56, total expenses were \$179,487.58, and total current assets are \$161,793.84. **Motion made (Greer Dolby), seconded (Cristina Jones), and unanimously approved to accept the Treasurer's Report as final.** • Joe Probst will provide the 2021 proposed budget in the next several weeks to be approved by the Board via email. There is no need for the proposed budget to be voted on at the Annual Business Meeting, but we should be able to provide and/or reference it.

H. Agency Coordinating Committee's Report: Cristina Jones shared there is very little to report, with many agency biologists on vacation during the holidays and the need for social distancing.

I. Corresponding Secretary's Report: Becky Jones shared that six Introductory Course certificates were returned, otherwise very little correspondence received at the Post Office.

J. Membership Committee's Report: Mari Quillman provided her electronic report on 1/7/2021, and indicated there are 404 active members. She is still working with the webmaster on the membership database to standardize the way names are assigned and the best way set up the job postings on the website so our Organization Members can take advantage of that benefit.

K. Nominating Committee's Report: Michael Tuma reported there are three officer position terms expiring that will need to be voted on at the Annual Business Meeting: Chairperson-elect (Mari Quillman), Recording Secretary (Ed LaRue), and Membership Coordinator (Halle Kohn). Michael Tuma has been talking to several people about their interest in becoming Board members. It was recently suggested that we have a designated Event Coordinator, who can work (for example) with Kristin Berry on the Symposium, Maggie Fusari on the Introductory Course, and Cristina Jones on the various workshops and perhaps agency coordination meetings. There are also five Board Members At Large whose terms are ending. These include Kristin Berry, Greer Dolby, Peter Woodman, Halle Kohn, and Maggie Fusari. The officers are nominated and elected at the Annual Business Meeting, and the Board members elected today. **Motion made (Bruce Palmer), seconded (Joe Probst), and unanimously approved to re-elect the five At Large Board members to new, two-year terms: Kristin Berry, Dolby Greer, Peter Woodman, Halle Kohn, and Maggie Fusari.**

L. Ecosystems Advisory Committee's (EAC) Report: Ed LaRue reported that there were only five actions and projects identified and reviewed by the Board in the reporting period between 11/21/2020 and 1/9/2021. Two of these were relative to the Northern Corridor, there were two development projects, and the proposed federal listing of Sonoran desert tortoise.

M. Media Committee's Report: Michael Tuma reported that he and Halle Kohn have been actively working on the next Newsletter, which will go out on or about January 31, just before the Symposium. **Mari Quillman will provide Halle Kohn with the 2020 sponsors to be sure they are in the Newsletter.** Michael Tuma, Maggie Fusari, and Ken MacDonald were all featured in a brief video prepared by a student in Nevada about tortoise conservation. **Maggie Fusari will contact the Nevada student about the status of her video project.** There were three or four people who agreed at the Introductory Course to help with the Media Committee, with the intent to start posting information more regularly this month. Mary Lane Poe (marylanepoe@gmail.com), whose official title is still being determined, has agreed to take the lead on posting the Council's social media. **Committee Chairs please send any committee announcements to Mary Lane Poe, Michael Tuma, and Halle Kohn so they can be posted.** As of 2021, we now have more than 1,000 Instagram followers compared to only 50ish in 2017.

N. Education and Outreach Committee's Report: Maggie Fusari, Michael Tuma, Becky Jones, and Halle Kohn identified themselves as committee members, with Maggie as chair. **Maggie Fusari plans to meet with Michael Tuma, Becky Jones, and Halle Kohn to identify existing education materials that can be used by this committee.**

O. Grants Committee's Report: Michael Tuma reported that the Southern California Edison grant was awarded to Transitions Habitat Conservancy (THC). THC plans to restore damaged habitats on BLM lands, which will require a professional archaeological assessment. Greer Dolby indicated it is important to maintain a list of all grant applicants in an updated data base. The winner of the Morafka Award (see Awards in Section E above) will be determined in time for the Symposium.

P. Mexico Coordination Committee. Michael Vamstad reported he is translating the announcement for the Symposium so he can share it with his contacts in Mexico. Judy Hohman asked if it would be appropriate to provide either free or reduced rates for Mexican biologists to attend the 2021 Symposium. Mari Quillman said it is doable so long as we let Molly Peters know that their participation is being compensated so she can still send them a link. **Michael Vamstad will find a solution for providing this benefit and coordinate with Molly Peters and Sky Esser.** • **Board members are asked to provide Michael Vamstad with a list of biologists who may benefit from this decision.** • **Bruce Palmer made the motion, which was seconded (Joe Probst), and unanimously approved to wave fees for the 2021 Symposium for up to 12 international registrants.**

Q. Fundraising Committee Report: Greer Dolby reported there have not been any recent activities. Mari Quillman shared we want to get the online store ready for the Symposium. This would require photographs and written descriptions of all the products. Wild Apricot has a platform for selling merchandise. **Greer Dolby volunteered to draft descriptions for all the products, to be coordinated with Michael Tuma and Joe Probst (for photos) and Mari Quillman for site development with Sky Esser.**

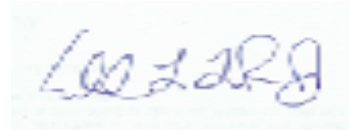
R. Training Program Committee Report:

a. Introductory Training Course Committee's Report: Maggie Fusari distributed a report on the Introductory Course and sent personal evaluations to each of the presenters. **Maggie Fusari will send outstanding certificates when corrected addresses are determined.** The intent to provide answers to the questions received during the Introductory Course has proven too difficult to complete and will not be pursued.

S. COVID/Public Safety Policy: Michael Tuma reported there has been no recent progress on this policy. Judy Hohman pointed out we need to contact Center for Disease Control to ensure the latest guidance for COVID is included. Ken MacDonald suggested revisiting this policy later, taking advantage of the current situation where we cannot meet in the foreseeable future.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson, Ken MacDonald, at 1:35 pm.

Draft minutes were recorded on 9 January 2021, distributed the same day, 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

Ecosystems Advisory Committee Report DTC Board Meeting of 1/9/2021

Note: The table attached to this report on the last page follows the **bold red** numbered outline given below.

1. Northern Corridor Protest Letter (St George, UT)

12/12/2020 – On **12/12/2020**, we receive a formal Protest letter from Tom Butine of Conserve Southwest Utah (CSU) asking the Council to cosign the protest letter and to respond by **12/14/2020**. With six endorsements (there were two subsequent endorsements and two recusals *after 12/14/2020*), Ed LaRue let CSU know on **12/13/2020** that the Council is willing to cosign the Protest.

2. Northern Corridor Participation in Possible Litigation (St George, UT)

12/16/2020 – On **12/16/2020**, we receive a request from Todd Tucci, Senior Attorney with Advocates West to participate in potential litigation for the Northern Corridor project, which is distributed the same day. Some members suggested a ceiling for our contribution at \$5,000 (two members) and no ceiling (two members). With five endorsements, Ed LaRue let Tom Butine and Sarah Thomas of CSU and Todd Tucci know that the Council is willing to participate.

3. Willow Beach Road Improvement (Lake Meade, NV)

11/18/2020 – On **11/18/2020**, we receive a link to the proposed road improvement project. Ed LaRue drafts the letter and distributes it to the Board the day before it is due (**12/19/2020**), asking for quick review and comment. With six endorsements and one recusal, a hard copy of the letter is taken to the Post Office, as it was supposed to be postmarked by today (Sunday), **12/20/2020**, and also emailed to Margaret Goodro, Lake Meade National Park Superintendent.

4. Table Mesa at I-17 Communication Site (Maricopa County, AZ)

12/9/2020 – On **12/9/2020**, we receive a 15-day notice from the BLM to comment on this communication tower and access road affecting about two acres in Arizona. With a due date of **12/23/2020**, Ed LaRue drafts the letter and distributes it to the Board on (**12/19/2020**). With seven endorsements, the letter is emailed to the BLM on **12/22/2020**.

5. Sonoran Desert Tortoise as a Candidate for Federal Listing

12/24/2020 – After receiving several prompts from our membership, we receive a request to sign an endorsement letter with Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) on **12/24/2020**, which is distributed on **12/28/2020**. Bruce Palmer responds with information on **12/28/2020** that is put into a letter by Ed LaRue, who redistributes it to the Board, and submits it to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on **12/31/2020** with 10 endorsements.

**Ecosystems Advisory Committee
Summary Table from 11/21/2020 to 1/9/2021**

Current date for this latest table revision is: 1/9/2020

No .	Title	Dates (2020/2021)				Board Member Responses Codes: Y = Vote of Yes; N = Vote of No; PI = Provided input; Blank = No Response; R = Recused; A = Authors/Lead Board member; NA – Replied they were not able to respond by indicated date														
		Rec'd	Dist	Due	Sent	BJ	BP	CJ	EL	GD	HK	JH	JP	KB	KM	MF	MQ	MT	MV	PW
1	Northern Corridor Protest	12/12/20	12/12/20	12/14/20	12/13/20	Y 12/13	R 1/9	R 1/9	Y/ PI 12/12			Y 12/12	Y 12/12			Y/ PI 12/12		Y 12/12	Y 12/30	Y 12/16
2	Northern Corridor Litigation	12/16/20	12/16/20	AS AP	12/2/20		R 12/18	R 12/18	Y/ PI 12/16			Y/ PI 12/16		R 12/18	Y/ PI 12/16		Y 12/18		Y/ PI 12/18	
3	Willow Beach Road	11/18/20	12/19/20/20	12/20/20	12/20/20	Y 12/20			Y/ A 12/19			Y/ PI 12/20	Y 12/20		R 12/21			Y 12/19		Y/ PI 12/20
4	Table Mesa Comm Site	12/9/20	12/19/20	12/23/20	12/2/20	Y 12/20		R 1/9	Y/ A 12/19			Y/ PI 12/20	Y 12/20		Y 12/20		Y 12/20		Y 12/20	Y 12/20
5	Sonoran Desert Tortoise Listing	12/28/20	12/28/20	AS AP	12/31/20	Y 12/30	Y/ A 12/28	R 1/9	Y/ PI 12/30	Y 12/31	Y 12/30	Y/ PI 12/31	Y 12/31	Y 12/28	Y 12/29	Y/ PI 12/29	Y 12/30	Y 12/30		Y 12/30

BJ = Becky Jones, **BP** = Bruce Palmer, **CJ** = Cristina Jones, **EL** = Ed LaRue, **GD** = Greer Dolby, **HK** = Halle Kohn, **JH** = Judy Hohman, **JP** = Joe Probst, **KB** = Kristin Berry, **KM** = Ken MacDonald, **MF** = Maggie Fusari, **MQ** = Mari Quillman, **MT** = Michael Tuma, **MV** = Michel Vamstad, **PW** = Pete Woodman