

TPE Board Meeting
Tuesday, January 19, 2015
7:05 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
via Teleconference
Conference Dial-In number 712-432-0180
Participant Access Code: 231266#

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by President Jack Kussmaul

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Directors: Jack Kussmaul, Scott Fulton, Nick Faessler, Evanne Hunt, Jim Rogala, Rich Henderson, Alice Mirk, Deanna Pomije, Linda Lynch.

Excused: Mark Leach, Paul Rode, David Hamel, Richard Oberle

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising

Guests:

2. Adopt Meeting Agenda

3. Approve Consent Agenda – ACTION

Accept Minutes of Board & Committee meetings

There was a motion by Alice Mirk to accept the Consent Agenda, Jim Rogala seconded it. The motion passed.

4. Treasurer's Report – Nick Faessler – ACTION

Statement of Financial Activity through December 31, 2015

Nick Faessler reported on the cash available to Central and Chapters. The Central Budget year-to-date did pretty good, the Compass Club helped get close to the goal. The Finance Committee went over this carefully. Two Board members moved into Compass Club and that is indicative of the change. Chris Kirkpatrick noted we did better than last year but the total amount was under budget. The costs that were related to the accounting transition have been identified and refined for the 2016 budget. Comments were addressed. Jack Kussmaul and Alice Mirk noted that the budget categories are very clear in the reports adding that Winnie Bade and Jerry Pedretti have made a lot of improvements. Linda noted that we need to keep an eye on spending.

There was a motion by Alice Mirk to accept the Treasurer's Report. Scott Fulton seconded it. The motion carried.

5. 4th Quarter Trust Reports – Rich Henderson

Rich Henderson gave a summary of the reports. He also raised a question regarding whether the Board is to take action to adjust the balance between the stocks and bonds or if this is automatic and done routinely each year through the trustees who manage the trust. Chris said there are also TPE invested funds in the TPE portfolio and this rebalancing can be done with them as well. For this year there were no net gains. If there are no earnings, can we draw anything down? We need to rebalance and we need to get a clear interpretation of the policy if we want to make a withdrawal for the internships. Jack Kussmaul believes this withdraw is authorized and necessary and he will speak to the accountant about this. Rich concurred that there is no

preclusion of a withdrawal if there is a negative year. The Finance Committee will take a look at this policy and make a decision if Jack and Winnie do not clear this up.

There was a motion by Nick Faessler to reauthorize the balancing of the endowment account. Linda Lynch seconded it. The motion passed.

6. President's Report – Jack Kussmaul

2016 Board Commitments

Jack Kussmaul said that he will be contacting people about this year's Board donations, he will be calling next week.

Prairie Enthusiasts of the Year Nominations

Please get your nominations to Chris, and the Board will discuss it and come up with a nominee. Alice Mirk asked about a Chapter Volunteer of the Year. Get this item to Chris and it will go onto the presentation list. Scott Fulton is the Conference Chair and he can be notified as well. There is no specific template so it is up to the Chapter to decide what is meaningful to the chapter and their nominee. Chris suggested a nominee. Evanne recalled giving him recognition in the last few years. She will take a look for this. There is not an award every year but usually within two years.

7. Executive Director Report – Chris Kirkpatrick

2016-2018 Strategic Plan Implementation Strategy – UPDATE

Chris Kirkpatrick reported on the Implementation Strategy that is in draft form here. It explains items for the Board, Committees and staff to be responsible for. We want this to be finalized by the February meeting based on the new Strategic Plan and as a tracking mechanism for the coming years.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

8. Finance Committee:

2016 Central & Chapter Budgets– ACTION

Jack Kussmaul reported that this year's budget proposal does not note a significant increase in income. We have the whole organization and also Central. The Board reviewed the 2016 Budget for Board Approval. Nick Faessler noted the budget amounts per categories, pertaining to the central budget including grant funds and administrative fees. There is also a proposed amount for the Education and Outreach Coordinator. Linda asked about the line with the Education and Outreach Coordinator's salary as 'released from restrictions' and not 'other income.' Her salary is covered for the first half of the year by several funding sources. After that we do not know. Chris said this was in the approved budget and released from the Empire Sauk Chapter. Nick noted salaries, benefits, and a 3% increase, along with \$5000 towards accreditation. Payroll will be done in-house from now on. This is the most accurate year to date budget in years. There is a lot of progress here. Jack and Evanne gave Chris credit as the increase in the TPE budget is going well.

There was a motion by Jim Rogala to approve the 2016 Central & Chapter Budgets. Scott Fulton seconded it. The motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

9. Outreach Coordinator Position Proposal – DISCUSSION

Scott Fulton discussed the work done over the last few months, this is a work in progress and a good topic for our in-person board meeting in February. The goal is to meet the needs of the chapters. When adding a new staff position we need to know how to pay for it. We can look at a % increase in new members, at the Annual Appeal, or at donations. A 20% increase in membership and donation income levels would about double the funds needed for this. With this 2016 budget we will be able to get half way through the year while we discuss this. Chris added that the new Development Plan for the whole organization will help clarify the needs to be increased and the needs to sustain this position. This needs to be articulated so that the organization really wants this and there is a clear funding strategy regarding it. Jack said the face to face meetings with Chapters are valuable and we need to know their opinion on this.

NEW BUSINESS

10. TPE Tag Line – ACTION

Scott Fulton referred to his memo and explained where this is tagline is used and why the wording is needing to be changed. Work, death and taxes are not something we want headlining our organization. The aim is to change the word ‘work’ to ‘action’ so that it reads Grass Roots Conservation in Action!

There was a motion by Evanne Hunt to approve the TPE Tag Line modification. Alice Mirk seconded it. The motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chris Kirkpatrick gave an update on the February 21st Board meeting at the Clarion Hotel from 9 to 12:00. Nominations for TPE Member of the year are encouraged. The Leopold Restoration Awards are also seeking nominations.

11. Adjournment

There was a motion by Jim Rogala to adjourn. Evanne Hunt seconded it. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Minutes submitted by

Joe Rising

Communications Coordinator

2016 Board Meetings:

Sunday February 21, 2016, 9:00 am Madison, WI (after 2016 conference)

Tuesday April 12, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

Tuesday May 17, 2016, 7:05 pm via conference call

Sunday July 17, 2016 TBD (ESC had offered to host 2016 & CRC in 2017)

Saturday September 17, 2016 10:00 am TPE office, Viroqua, WI

Tuesday November 15, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

Tuesday December 20, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

TPE Board Meeting
Sunday, February 21, 2016
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Clarion Suites at the Alliant Energy Center 2110
Rimrock Road Madison WI, 53713

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Directors: Jack Kusssmaul, Scott Fulton, Nick Faessler, Evanne Hunt, Jim Rogala, Rich Henderson, Alice Mirk, Deanna Pomije, Linda Lynch, David Hamel, Caroljean Coventree,

Excused: Paul Rode, Richard Oberle, George Howe

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising

Guests: Diane Hills, Jerry Petretti

2. Adopt Meeting Agenda

3. Approve Consent Agenda – ACTION

Accept Minutes of Board & Committee meetings

There was a motion by Jim Rogala to accept the Consent Agenda, Rich Henderson seconded it. The motion passed.

4. Treasurer's Report – Nick Faessler – ACTION

Statement of Financial Activity through January 31, 2016

Nick Faessler referred to the balance sheet and reviewed recent activity. Nick addressed TPE's financial position, the graph of contributions, monthly income, expenses, chapter budget performance, annual financial planning, sources of income and questions.

There was a motion by Alice Mirk to accept the Treasurer's Report. Rich Henderson seconded it. The motion carried.

5. President's Report – Jack Kusssmaul

Summary of Board commitments

Jack Kusssmaul reported on his discussions with TPE Board members and their annual board giving commitment. The numbers are down from last year due to the state of the economy and stock market performance.

6. Executive Director Report – Chris Kirkpatrick

Staff Work Plans- UPDATE

Chris Kirkpatrick reported on items in the new TPE Strategic Plan and how it was used to create the staff work plans for the year based on identified goals and needs. These were similar to the past work plans. Joe's is focused on communications, membership, and administrative tasks. The membership database is up-to-date but the *contacts email list* is still in transition until the

new website is launched. There was a discussion of chapter lists, lapsed members, renewals, tracking response rates, suspensions and database cleanup. The Board would like to see a report tracking the annual appeal donations and response rates, along with a Dashboard explaining options with a definition of terms. We want to track metrics regarding members and potential members. We can create standard reports. Some of the data is difficult to determine as memberships are updated when donations come in. We have tremendous capability, but we need to filter this into the reports we are interested in. Scott Fulton responded to this and added that there are 893 TPE member organizations with renewal dates. Board members will email Chris Kirkpatrick with interests regarding reports and statistics. Certain members want to be contacted regarding work parties only, so we will need targeted communications for the new contacts. Board members can send their email lists to central with their contact interests. Scott will put a summary together to help board members understand how the system works and how to ask for reports. Linda Lynch asked about the work plans and how deliverables are identified and measured verse a job description that is more general. She wants to know what is accomplished. Alice Mirk suggested full-time, part-time, and a % devoted to work areas. David Hamel would like the chapter worksheets to be more user friendly. Jack Kussmaul noted we added the idea of accreditation as a line item in the timesheets so that we can track the costs that go into this.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

7. Finance Committee:

Investment Funds Earning Withdraw- UPDATE

Caroljean Coventree reported that The Finance Committee tabled the Investment Funds earning withdraw policy until there is an understanding of annual numbers and a long term view of the performance. Jon Traver is doing a good job with the investments. We do this for the trust but not the TPE funds yet. The easement monitoring and 2016 internships are in need of funds. We need to know whose pocket this comes from, management or protection. Nick Faessler summarized the numbers and hope to find out what the performance has been and the goal for a policy to decide how to proceed with this.

8. Land Protection Committee:

Final Approval of TPE Trust Transfer- ACTION

Rich Henderson reported that the Land Protection Committee reviewed the amendment and possibility of the Trust taking title to the TPE properties. CRP contract payments have been going up fast but the cap has not been increased. Rich took questions. Jack Kussmaul gave a brief summary of the issue related to CRP enrollment and per entity caps. By doing this TPE can continue to gain the increased CRP funds. Title to real-estate can be held by the Trust with the amendment. David Hamel stated that Central does a good job with legal and financial management. There was some skepticism regarding the need for a shell game in order to receive these well-deserved funds. Rich responded that this is important to protecting sensitive lands. Caroljean Coventree suggested the issue is if this is good for TPE. Nick Faessler hoped the new language will pass USDA requirements. The Trust is there to provide an income stream to TPE for land management.

There was a motion by David Hamel for approval of the TPE Trust Amendment and Transfer. Scott Fulton seconded it. The motion carried with one no vote.

Initial Approval of Rattlesnake Ridge Addition – ACTION

Rich Henderson referred to the map of the current preserve. He gave a background regarding the property and ownership and prairie attributes. There is a 16 acre parcel here that interconnects several parcels. There has been an appraisal and negotiations. If this is harvested there are light demanding species that will benefit from opening. The appraisal is there and Stewardship will provide half of the funding. Scott Fulton asked why strategically we are interested in this piece. Rich responded we want larger pieces for biological diversity and viability. This will be easy to burn and especially if we get the next price as well. Linda asked about funding sources. The owners have funds set aside to use as a donation and for land management, we also have easement credit to use up for this. There is a legal driving access and it is a natural fire break.

There was a motion by Linda Lynch for Approval of the Rattlesnake Ridge Addition and to authorize the Board to apply for Stewardship Funding. Jim Rogala seconded it. The motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

9. Minnesota Driftless Chapter – ACTION

Chris Kirkpatrick spoke to the re-establishment of this chapter, the initial business meeting, the new name, officers and service area including Goodhue County. George Howe was elected as the Board Representative and he will be knowledgeable with a background in land trusts, land protection and management. Caroljean Coventree referred to the language of the bylaws and a Prairie Smoke Chapter membership that was apparently disconnected in the database after last year's conference. The word Director should be Officer as Director is regarding the Central organization. The title says bylaws versus chapter rules. There are several mistakes that need to be edited. Caroljean will review the template and suggest corrections and send out a draft for review, send her suggestions within two weeks. We will look at all the Chapter Rules and send out suggested Rules to the MN Driftless along with other chapters.

There was a motion by Caroljean Coventree to approve the MN Driftless Chapter. This was seconded by Scott Fulton. The motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Deanna Pomije asked about email lists and chapter communications. This will be an ongoing process.

10. Adjournment

There was a motion by Caroljean Coventree to adjourn. Rich Henderson seconded it. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

2016 Board Meetings:

Tuesday April 12, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

Tuesday May 17, 2016, 7:05 pm via conference call

Sunday July 17, 2016 TBD (ESC will host 2016 & CRC in 2017)

Saturday September 17, 2016 10:00 am TPE office, Viroqua, WI

Tuesday November 15, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

Tuesday December 20, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

DRAFT

TPE Board Meeting
Tuesday, April 19, 2016
7:05 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by President Jack Kusssmaul at 7:05 p.m.

Directors: Jack Kusssmaul, Scott Fulton, Nick Faessler, Evanne Hunt, Jim Rogala, Rich Henderson, Alice Mirk, David Hamel, Caroljean Coventree, George Howe, Paul Rode

Excused: Linda Lynch, Richard Oberle, and Deanna Pomije.

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising

2. Membership Program Update – 15 minutes

Chris Kirkpatrick gave a report of the Membership Program progress since the February Board meeting, following up on concerns and interests. We are at about 100 new members per year. The membership program is being refined and cleaned up over the last couple years. There are 1606 members now and that includes lapsed members. We have a 73% renewal rate, 80% is really good. We intend to be over 80% yet this year. We have suspended 655 members since using the new database. A lot of work has gone into this. There are 132 contributors and 351 contacts. We will suspend the lapsed members more intentionally from here on, giving them two years to renew or be suspended. The present lapsed group (2015 -2010) will be suspended after a couple more solicitations to renew. Chris explained the membership program and renewal process, the annual calendar, content calendar, and member types, all lead up to the annual appeal. There are 264 lapsed members prior to 2014. Chris noted the new renewal letter format with photos and more white space. We have streamlined our process through our new printer, Dairyland Power. This includes a bulk mailing rate. We personally signed the 930 recently sent letters. Chris said we are looking at stories of change and the success and impact of the work that is going on throughout the organization. The content will depend on what we know about, what work is going on. That helps cover the organization's mission and gives positive results. With 28 hours a week we are very intentional with the Communications Coordinator's time. Evanne asked about overlap between Diane Hills and Joe Risings work. We do not want people doing the same thing. We want to understand what will be helpful to Chapters beyond and outside the Central communications plan. We are looking to a job description for the Outreach Coordinator that will assist the chapters and compliment Joe's time. We will need communications content shared with us. The Board thought Chris gave a great presentation.

3. Website Tour – 30 minutes

Jim Rogala gave a tour of TPE's new website. The site has been under careful review and construction for a long time coming. The last redesign was in 2000. This is new and up-to-date with industry standards. Jim reviewed the *home page* and its contents and buttons, and the subpages, with links to other pages like *chapter pages*, and the need to keep these relevant and up to date, with what's new. *Site Pages* can have information like a species list, history, or what is meaningful to describe the site. Various site pages were reviewed. E-news items will be linked into these pages. Chapter Facebook pages should be noted and linked in the chapter page. Thanks to all who have contributed to this project! Once we go live, we want to invite members to update their profiles with skills and interests. Spouses can have their own profiles. Jim will keep adding to the website as he receives information.

4. **Communication Plan Proposal** – 30 minutes

Chris Kirkpatrick gave a report on how the plan was developed through a consultant using a scientific basis and the reasoning behind it. This type of plan has helped other land trusts. This plan will be very intentional and integrated with other communication channels. Chris encouraged chapters to have a Facebook page and share work parties and what is going on. Central can then share this chapter news organization wide. Content will come from many sources and should be easy to get and share. Chris focused on highlighting what Chapters are doing. We want to highlight stories of change in a short conversational tone, that helps readers envision being there, with a pitch that connects donors to the meaning and why of the organization as it relates to them personally. Chris noted the audience that we want to reach and what type of communications they are looking for; relevant, personalized, consistent, meaningful and using money wisely. Chris then gave examples of other land trusts and how they are using this communication process successfully with good financial success. We can do this too. This is a big step forward. Take picture and send them in. This is exciting stuff! We can continue to use the gotomeeting.com meeting format. Some Directors prefer hard copies for review.

5. **Outreach Coordinator Discussion** – 45 minutes

Empire Sauk Chapter Volunteer Coordinator Accomplishments

Scott Fulton reviewed the purpose of this presentation and gave a summary of what Diana Hills, the Volunteer Coordinator, has done with the Empire-Sauk Chapter over the last 3 years. He then showed a PowerPoint presentation with slides and graphs displaying event and program results. This position arose after a chapter retreat in 2009. A Coordinator was hired part-time and then full time. This was all funded by private donations. Scott reviewed the Outreach engagement projects and resulting new contacts (460), greater numbers of people showing up at work parties, including college students from the UWM landscape architecture department, environmental studies, and conservation oriented subjects. Badger Volunteers from UWM have given 2-300 hours of volunteer time so far. The benefits are experience by the students too. A staff position is important for making connections and keeping continuity, reaching out to local organization, and building site communities and their leadership. For instance with Master Gardeners and other conservation professionals. Publicity through local papers has been very fruitful. This is really a science of how to get people involved and have fun. It takes organization and leadership to have this kind of success story. The ESC new members are on an upward trend along with getting members involved. The question is: “How can Central help build our Chapter community?” Scott will be going out to the chapters with this question and looking for clarification through discussions. He has learned that every chapter is unique. Let him know if you have ideas.

6. Adjournment

There was a motion by Paul Rode to adjourn. Evanne Hunt seconded it. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

2016 Board Meetings:

Tuesday May 17, 2016, 7:05 pm via conference call

Sunday July 17, 2016, 10:00 am ESC, Shelter #2, Brigham County Park, Blue Mounds, WI.

Saturday September 17, 2016 10:00 am TPE office, Viroqua, WI

Tuesday November 15, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

Tuesday December 20, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

TPE Board Meeting
Tuesday, May 17, 2016
7:05 – 9:00 p.m.

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/451344837>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: +1 (669) 224-3412

Access Code: 451-344-837

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by President Jack Kussmaul at 7:05 p.m.

Directors: Jack Kussmaul, Scott Fulton, Nick Faessler, Jim Rogala, Rich Henderson, Alice Mirk, David Hamel, Caroljean Coventree, Linda Lynch, Deanna Pomije and Gary Eldred.

Excused: Richard Oberle, Evanne Hunt, George Howe and Paul Rode

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising

Guest: Winnie Bade

2. Adopt Meeting Agenda

Jack Kussmaul identified two typos to be corrected, one in the March 14 Finance Committee Minutes and the other in the April Board Minutes.

3. Approve Consent Agenda – ACTION

Accept Minutes of Board & Committee meetings

There was a motion by Scott Fulton to accept the Consent Agenda, Jim Rogala seconded it. The motion passed.

4. Treasurer's Report – Nick Faessler – ACTION

Statement of Financial Activity through April 30, 2016

Nick Faessler gave a report of funds shown in each chapter and available on April 30. We are slightly up on income but that does not mean much at this time of year. Members are up a little from last year. Board giving is up from last year. Compass Club is up double from last year. Chris Kirkpatrick spoke to the grant money that helped with the Communication Plan and Calendar. Events looks a lot better except expenses were up so the actual income was lower. Nick likes the Go To meeting format so we can see where we are in the report all together. We will budget for the Go To meetings cost next year, same with the Mailchimp service so together it will be \$70 a month and is a good operational value for the services. David Hamel asked if this is the best bargain for our money. Chris and David will look into this.

There was a motion by to accept the Financial Report by Linda Lynch. Scott Fulton seconded it. The motion carried.

Approval of 2015 Audit & IRS Form 990

Winnie Bade gave a report on the Audit and Form 990. She began with the letter and responsibilities and standards. The numbers section was reviewed, and included the consolidated numbers of the two entities. The Moely Sand Prairie was changed in QuickBooks to match what the auditor wants done. This is consistent with what we have done in the past for easements. The main programs were reviewed and discussed in terms of program services versus capitalized expensed. The Cash Flow Statement is required but not very meaningful. The Notes are interesting and remain consistent from year to year. She has read them and they are true. The TPE Inc. versus the TPE Trust is shown in the later pages. The last page is our monthly report including the acquisition information. We will want to remove the Moely Sand Prairie easement from this page. The TPE conservation easements are not recognized as assets in financial statements.

There was a motion by Alice Mirk to accept the 2015 Audit. There was a second by David Hamel. The motion passed.

Winnie Bade then went over the Form 990 highlights by section. The first page was a high level summary. There was a comparison from prior years. These are not consolidated, so the TPE Inc. and TPE Trust are separate. The Board reviewed the 990 and agreed to the checklist of items. The questions about the 'endowments' is a foggy area that will be resolved prior to next year.

There was a motion by Nick Faessler to approve the Form 990 for the Prairie Enthusiasts Inc. There was a second by David Hamel. The motion passed.

Winnie then spoke to the TPE Trust. There was one distribution for the year that went from the Trust to TPE Inc. of about \$2,000. There was no other activity.

There was a motion by Nick Faessler to approve the Form 990 for the Prairie Enthusiasts Trust. There was a second by David Hamel. The motion passed.

5. Trust Report – Rich Henderson – UPDATE

First Quarter Report

Rich Henderson gave a brief report, things are working out fine. There were no questions. Scott expressed thanks to Winnie Bade for the clarity that she has brought to the process. All are in agreement on this. Winnie was thankful.

6. President's Report – Jack Kussmaul

• Executive Committee Meeting – UPDATE

Jack Kussmaul gave his report. There is a new issue of unemployment taxes. Winnie Bade explained that the payroll service did not identify TPE's unemployment withholding need. Jerry Pedretti found this oversight. Chris Kirkpatrick gave the potential cost of about \$3500 for 2015. We can also self-insure but this may be more costly. Chris will bring it to the Finance Committee for review and then back to the Board for a decision. Linda Lynch suggested to just pay it. Jack said the Executive Committee agrees. Chris wanted the Board to be aware of it because it is an

unbudgeted expense. Nick Faessler asked if there are any penalties or interest. The figure Chris has is what is needed to be in compliance.

7. Executive Director Report – Chris Kirkpatrick

Final Communications Plan– UPDATE

Chris Kirkpatrick gave a report regarding the new website, the news templated, and the draft Communication Plan. We have launched the website, it has been well received. There are a few bugs to deal with regarding the platform. The Mailchimp platform indicated that we are above average for statistics. We are also using Facebook more than in the past. He asked Board members to please share or like the TPE Facebook page if appropriate. The consultant produced a final report. Chris encourages the Board to read it as it includes national trends, member retention, and annual calendar strategy. We mainly want to share the success stories of the chapters. Please send in a picture and a brief story about what you are doing to the TPE Communications Coordinator, Joe Rising, to post on Facebook. We will share and profile the great work going on. Jack is excited and looking forward to results. Gary Eldred commented on the creativity and effort going into TPE, it is amazing.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

8. Accreditation Committee

TPE Trust & Accreditation Fees– ACTION

Chris Kirkpatrick discussed the idea of transferring property to the trust to continue to get full USDA, CRP payments. This was already approved by both entities. The issue became that the LTA accreditation will have to accredit this change to the Trust and so the fee will go up an additional \$2,500. There will be policy work needed to ensure the trust is handled appropriately. There was a review of potential CRP income which is about \$10,000 this year and going up. Beyond the present cap. This will be something to decide so that we can proceed to work on it. The Accreditation Committee will need to do some extra work here. Linda Lynch thinks we jump into things and then there are unforeseen costs. Rich Henderson said that being able to enroll the Military Ridge Area as a set aside grassland area is a special allotment, with more acreages and a different process. Chris said this is a projection but the cost benefit is a good ratio. Rich said this is not a forecast but can be a real financial loss and we want to be able to reenroll these properties. Gary Eldred likes the idea. Alice Mirk concurs, these properties should go into the TPE Trust. Nick Faessler asked about the \$2500, were will we get this. David Hamel asked if the accreditation cost is a onetime only fee and if the payments are annual. Nick said the CRP payment goes to the Chapters and the payment to the LTA comes from Central, yes. Jack asked if ESC will pay its fee. Linda thinks it should be shared or prorated against all enrolled chapter acreage. Caroljean hopes that the cap will be raised in the future. Linda thinks this decision has been made and we should stick with it. We will proceed as planned.

9. Land Protection Committee:

Final Approval of Iris Drive– ACTION

Chris Kirkpatrick gave an update on the final project summary, it was reviewed by the Land Protection Committee. The funding is 100% approved. We had a credit from the Moely Prairie and that makes this fully covered by the stewardship grant money. There have been some discussion about dividing Iris Drive but the chapter is interested in keeping it as proposed. Final

approval is recommended. This can close in June. Gary Eldred spoke to the property management that has taken place. There was much work done over the years and it was burned this spring. There are a few concerns with buildings and liability issues. There will be a field trip hike on May 21.

There was a motion by Scott Fulton for final approval of the Iris Drive Project and to proceed with closing on the property. Jim Rogala seconded it. The motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

10. LTA Rally Volunteer Opportunity – INFORMATION

Chris Kirkpatrick shared the Rally conference information. He encouraged Board Members to volunteer and attend at no cost.

11. ATC Distribution Line Placement and impacts to TPE sites – ACTION

Scott Fulton said he has learned about this through Tom Brock. The power company is interested in a major powerline to bring wind energy to Madison. The problem is where the corridor is going, over Pleasant Valley Conservancy or the Thomas Barn Property. We will want to address this as an organization. Gary added that these lines provide a highway to expand with the building of towers and substations. We are in favor of renewable energy but this is not an appropriate route. We need to protect our sites. The Land Protection Committee will take this up. Our Terra Firma insurance may be activated here. We might want to do a written comment and request a meeting. These are ecologically sensitive areas. Scott will take this to the Land Protection Committee. Jack is supportive.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mike Carlson of Gathering Waters would like to talk at the Annual Picnic about financial support related to TPE's operating budget. The Board is supportive of his coming to the meeting.

12. Adjournment

There was a motion by Alice Mirk to adjourn into a closed session. Jim Rogala seconded it. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m. and went directly into a closed session.

13. Closed Board Session

2016 Board Meetings:

Sunday July 17, 2016 ESC Mike Carlson with Gathering Waters will attend and talk briefly about Gathering Waters

Saturday September 17, 2016 10:00 am TPE office, Viroqua, WI

Tuesday November 15, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

Tuesday December 20, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

TPE Board Meeting
Sunday, July 17, 2016
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Brigham County Park
County Highway F

Blue Mound, WI Special Guest Presentation – INFORMATION

☑ Mike Carlson, Executive Director with Gathering Waters spoke about their mission and how their work supports and benefits The Prairie Enthusiasts.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by President Jack Kussmaul at 10:35 a.m.

Directors: Jack Kussmaul, Scott Fulton, Nick Faessler, Jim Rogala, Evanne Hunt, Caroljean Coventree, Rich Henderson, Alice Mirk, David Hamel, Linda Lynch and Gary Eldred.

Excused: Paul Rode, Deanna Pomije, George Howe, Richard Oberle

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising

Guest: Mike Carlson

2. Adopt Meeting Agenda

There was a motion by Evanne Hunt to accept the Agenda, Rich Henderson seconded it. The motion passed.

3. Approve Consent Agenda – ACTION

Accept Minutes of Board & Committee meetings

There was a motion by Alice Mirk to accept the Consent Agenda, Scott Fulton seconded it. The motion passed.

4. Treasurer's Report – Nick Faessler – ACTION

Statement of Financial Activity through June 30, 2016

Nick Faessler gave a report regarding the Statement of Financial by going through the document. He said we are on track and all is pretty much as expected. Jack Kussmaul asked about the operations funding to central? Chris Kirkpatrick said this is our low cash point and there should be an uptick, with big out of pocket are taken care of, the reserves are tight now. Evanne Hunt suggested we change the timing of our renewal date requests to meet this dip in funds. Restricted funds are ample. Interns are expensed and this is working better, Gary Eldred asked about threats due to low cash flow. Rich Henderson said cash is there, but is spread out geographically. Last year we were further ahead with cash on hand. Linda Lynch asked if we can take a better look at this for the next meeting, why this is happening and how this can be better handled.

There was a motion to accept the Financial Report by Scott Fulton. Caroljean Coventry seconded it. The motion carried.

5. President's Report – Jack Kussmaul & Scott Fulton

Election of Officers – ACTION

Jack Kussmaul referred to the slate of proposed officers and said we are open to other nominations. The Board discussed this slate, and the process and voted. Evanne Hunt suggested a change to the process with a secret ballot, in the future, in case of objections, and a chance to nominate others. Alice Mirk asked about a Vice President, which is empty at this point.

There was a motion to accept the Election of Officers by Alice Mirk. Rich Henderson seconded it. The motion carried.

Welcome to Scott Fulton as President, Nick Faessler to Treasurer, and Jim Rogala to Secretary.

6. Executive Director Report – Chris Kirkpatrick

Summary of current activities – UPDATE

Chris Kirkpatrick highlighted a few items in his report. We have applied and been accepted for accreditation. Our application is due about this time next year. The Annual Report is out, there is a new format and the list of supporters are not in this document, this is more of a messaging tool for conversation with major donors. The Annual Report timing is based upon the audit completion. Scott Fulton and Chris attended the Land Trust Alliance training for Executive Directors. They were able to connect and anticipate their rolls into the future. Jack asked about the email blasts and how it goes out. Evanne requested that TPE be in the title, and gave a reminder to the Board to submit informational content to Joe Rising, Communication Coordinator, with the caption Chapter News. We are seeing membership growth due to email and Facebook posts. This info also needs to get to Jim Rogala where appropriate. Joe can forward it to him.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

7. Land Protection Committee:

Final Approval of Parrish Oak Savanna Additions – ACTION

Rich Henderson gave a report, referred to the map, and discussed the conservation zone corridor and how these properties adjoin each other.

There was a motion to approve the Parrish Oak Savanna Additions by Evanne Hunt. Alice Mirk seconded it. The motion carried.

8. Fundraising Committee

□ August Donor Events & Donor Cultivation– ACTION

Jack Kussmaul discussed the events coming up, their locations and chapters related to them. We had a big increase in major donors and a 20% increase in these donor's gifts which is nearly ½ our operating budget. We need strong relations with potential donors. He explained the process, personal contacts, cultivation, invitations to events, and appreciation of their support. This meets our budgetary needs and cash reserves. We want board members there if possible. Gary asked about planned giving in wills? Chris said we are being contacted for information and we need to track this better. We would like this in the newsletters routinely. Jack will do an article on it and we will add a box reminder on the back page of the Prairie Promoter. We want to thank people who us have listed us in their estate planning. Caroljean can help talking to people about TPE and about options of how to give. The Board supports this process.

OLD BUSINESS

How do we follow up with action items? Old business can be the place for notice of follow up items, Joe will put them here.

NEW BUSINESS

OTHER BUSINESS

9. Adjournment

There was a motion by Rich Henderson to adjourn into a closed session. Linda Lynch seconded it. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 11:28 a.m. and went directly into closed session.

10. Closed Board Session

2016 Board Meetings:

Saturday September 17, 2016 10:00 am TPE office, Viroqua, WI

Tuesday November 15, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

Tuesday December 20, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

TPE Board Meeting
Saturday, September 17, 2016
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
The Prairie Enthusiasts Office
110 S. Main St.
Viroqua, WI 54665

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Directors: Scott Fulton, Nick Faessler, Jim Rogala, Jack Kussmaul, Evanne Hunt, Caroljean Coventree, Rich Henderson, David Hamel, Deane Pomije.

Guests: Jim and Richie Rachuy

Excused: Paul Rode, Linda Lynch, Alice Mirk, George Howe, and Richard Oberle.

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising

2. Adopt Meeting Agenda

New business; 30th Anniversary of TPE, minute takers, scheduling meetings later when we meet in Viroqua.

3. Approve Consent Agenda – ACTION

Accept Minutes of Board & Committee meetings

Corrections: Evanne Hunt noted that the minutes from the July Fundraising Committee were from 2015 instead of 2016. Rich Henderson noted a correction of the Administrative Fee being 5% vs. .5%. Caroljean Coventree's name was misspelled in the minutes from July.

There was a motion by Caroljean Coventree to approve the Consent Agenda, Rich Henderson seconded it. The motion passed.

4. Treasurer's Report – Nick Faessler – ACTION

Statement of Financial Activity through July 31, 2016

Nick Faessler reported the Central operations budget was below expectation and we continue to cover this with other income. There was an unrestricted donation of \$20,000 that covered this. We have a procedure for borrowing from restricted income if necessary. The reports show an end of month snapshot. We can use a Central operating reserve for lean times, donations and expenses balance throughout the year. The Finance Committee discussed this and will again. The goal would be to have 6 month cash on hand. ESC has a payment coming due for the Conservation Fund on Hauser Rd. The funding drive was discussed. The Stewardship conversation regarding a past credit is ongoing. In the past years we had not been paying into unemployment taxes. We are sticking with the budget. Winnie does a great job to help Board understand the budget and annual cash flow. Chris Kirkpatrick reported on grant fund distributions. Rich asked for a document or table summarizing the grant funding, what they are and where it goes by chapter. Rich will just work with Mike Engle on this. Scott asked about the total of the grants coming each year. This depends on the grants, about 1-300,000.00. In October there will be a projection made for the rest of the year and a look towards the 2017 budget. We should look at our Development and post it on the web. We need an action item in the Finance Committee to create a reserve.

There was a motion to accept the Treasurers Report by Jack Kussmaul. Jim Rogala seconded it. The motion carried.

5. President's Report – Scott Fulton

Chapter Visits – UPDATE

Scott Fulton summarized his work with Chris to focus on TPE business and meeting with all TPE Chapters. They like to meet with leadership in a special meeting with a focus on what Central can do to better help the chapters meet their goals over the years. This is helpful to get to know the chapter needs and leaders. There has been a good start with these visits. Scott is committed to doing this and it helps him understand each chapter. Jim asked if this goes both ways. We want chapters to help Central with committee work, etc. as well. Scott shared his learning about chapter individuality, and how they are a collection of communities. Caroljean suggested that chapters have a time at the Annual Conference to share skills and projects. This can be done at the picnic as well. A TPE Leadership Conference was suggested with the Boards of all chapters. A goal is to learn how other chapters do their projects. We need to renew the Communication and Outreach committee. Communication leads to education. We need to show people our value in order to recruit new members. Scott will send out a description of this proposed committee and circulate it. Jim Rogala volunteered to chair a committee along these lines.

6. Executive Director Report – Chris Kirkpatrick

Summary of current activities – UPDATE

Chris Kirkpatrick highlighted his report, the accreditation work, grant funding, communications planning, strategic goals, and his assistance with dyslexia. He encouraged the board to support the cultivation and fundraising efforts with member/donor conversations and follow-up notes and calls. The new renewal process and annual appeal was discussed. Better storytelling is our communications content approach. The three regional recognition events were covered along with the cultivation process. Fundraising is mainly getting to know donors, what they are enthusiastic about and thanking them for their support. The budget for the recognition events annually is about \$2000. The Board will hear about this more as this is key to the budget.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None given

OLD BUSINESS

7. American Transmission Line – UPDATE

We have had some contact, conversation and letters. Other organizations are focusing on this and will form a coalition. The Board will be asked to support opposition to this when and if appropriate. Our interest is to protect and manage our properties. Policy work is not in Chris's work plan. There is a question as to if there is an energy need. Jack suggests we object to it as it effects the natural quality of the properties. We are not interested in the larger issues of energy. Some of the direct impact is about effecting these poles and lines with smoke, burning and grassland bird species.

NEW BUSINESS

8. Strategic Plan Goal #1 Review – DISCUSSION

There was a discussion about the strategic planning, and details of the Prairie Promoter; content, number of issues, chapter news, color pictures, the field trip flier, and # pages. It is like a formal scientific journal with a fundraising objective. There is a newsletter policy to follow and an annual Communication Plan. We can get data on this and work with it in committee. Facebook is another new media channel that is valuable. A picture and 3 or 4 four sentences is all we need. Enews is another media stream. Chapters want this capability. Discussion of how will we celebrate the 30th anniversary. One way will be at the annual conference, costs, sponsorships, scholarship finding, fundraising, partnering, transportation, rebranding logo, a Promoter article, and photos. We have data

back to 1987. There was a discussion about Board Meeting scheduling; how about lunch and then the meeting at 1:00? This will be proposed for next year. We can also add a field trip into this meeting. Minutes, the Finance Committee needs more decision details, and an accurate record. David Hamel moved to have the Communications Coordinator, Joe Rising, take the Finance Committee minutes. Caroljean Coventree seconded it. The motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

9. Adjournment

There was a motion to adjourn by David Hamel. Jim Rogala seconded it. The meeting adjourned at 12:15. p.m.

2016 Board Meetings:

Tuesday November 15, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

Tuesday December 20, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

TPE November Board Meeting
Tue, Nov 15, 2016 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Directors: Scott Fulton, Nick Faessler, Jim Rogala, Jack Kussmaul, Evanne Hunt, Caroljean Coventree, Rich Henderson, Deanna Pomije, Paul Rode, Linda Lynch.

Guests:

Excused: Alice Mirk, George Howe, David Hamel

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising

2. Adopt Meeting Agenda

The Oct 10, 2016 Finance Committee Minutes were removed and will be added in to the Finance Report

3. Approve Consent Agenda – ACTION

- Accept Minutes of Board & Committee meetings

There was a motion by Evanne Hunt to approve the Consent Agenda, with the exception of the October 10th Finance Committee Minutes. Jack Kussmaul seconded it. The motion passed.

4. Treasurer's Report – Nick Faessler – ACTION

Statement of Financial Activity through October 31, 2016

Nick Faessler reported that there were about \$12,000 available for operations. The restricted funds were reviewed. He referred to a graph of the last three years and we are a bit behind the last couple years but are basically at a normal level. Jack Kussmaul noted that the graph-line in decline is a source of concern. Paul Rode said the NIPE graph is similar as income usually comes later in the year and the work is done earlier in the year. We need to understand and address this. There is an increase of about \$5,900 in Board Giving. Total income is a little ahead at \$2,709. Expenses were normal.

There was a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report by Evanne Hunt. Jim Rogala seconded it. The motion carried.

5. President's Report – Scott Fulton

- Chapter Visits – UPDATE

- Conflict of Interest Statements & Board Evaluations – UPDATE

Scott Fulton gave an update on his Chapter visits. They have been exciting and inspirational.

TPE is a great organization, and to get to know the Chapter leadership is a great experience.

Linda Lynch asked about the Southwest Chapter visit last spring, they will be happy to have Scott come back. Linda thinks this would be beneficial. The chapter visits will be completed by early next year. There is a link to Evanne's online survey. Enter your email address to track who has completed it. It can be reviewed next year to make it more useful.

6. Executive Director Report – Chris Kirkpatrick

- Summary of current activities – UPDATE

Chris Kirkpatrick has received the conflict of interest statements and is looking to receive them all by December. We need 100%. He wanted to highlight the work related to accreditation. Much progress was made. Easement monitoring and site reports are coming in. We are after 100% on

these by the end of this year. The Finance Committee is moving ahead policy wise and with categorizing restricted funds.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

7. Finance Committee

In the Minutes of the October 10, 2016, Finance Committee it says Alice Mirk was appointed as Treasurer starting next year. This needs to be approved by the Board. Thanks to Nick Faessler for his many, many years of service!

There was a motion to appoint Alice Mirk as TPE Treasurer effective January, 2017 by Evanne Hunt. Paul Rode seconded it. The motion carried.

Legal Defense Fund Reallocation – ACTION

Chris Kirkpatrick reported that the Finance Committee approved the Accountants Manual, and the Easement Monitoring Policy - as an endowment and this proposal is to reallocate funds to be split between Legal Defense and the Endowment Fund. This is part of accreditation. We own a lot of sites and want enough funds to handle these in case something comes up. So, basically we are reallocation easement monitoring to legal defense. It will not cover all the projected need or desire. We have one outstanding pledge that may show what the potential shortfall will be. Rich Henderson asked about the minimum per property? About \$1,500 per project is the main denominator. Our calculator includes legal and easement monitoring and so we are separating these out, depending on the complexity and size of the property. The Land Trust Alliance stresses that this is a minimum. Nick mentioned that we need to have the necessary funds available. We may have a shortfall of about \$12,000 and this needs to be considered in the future, probably not until 5 years for the re-accreditation process. Caroljean Coventree asked if this is for both funds as laid out in the proposal by Chris. Yes. The prior Accountant's tracking of restricted income was not as detailed as we do it now.

There was a motion to accept the Legal Defense Fund Reallocation plan by Rich Henderson. Jack Kussmaul seconded it. The motion carried.

Accountant's Manual – ACTION

Chris reported on the progress made here by the Finance Committee. This came up along with the Chapter Treasurers Handbook. These manuals lay out the process of how the finances of an organization are handled. Most of the discussion was regarding how to handle restricted funds and how auditor accounting and management takes place. We wanted a specific policy regarding various funds and with clarifications and that is what the manual is. This is an accreditation related item. Our thanks to Winnie and Jerry and Chris for pulling this together.

There was a motion to accept the Accountant's Manual by Evanne Hunt. Nick Faessler seconded it. The motion carried.

8. Fundraising Committee – UPDATE

Yearend appeal

Jack Kussmaul reported that the appeal letters have gone out. It is being handled in a segmented fashion with some as bulk, all personally signed, and others with additional hand signed notes.

Calls have been made in advance to request a response to support us through the annual appeal. Chris discussed the yearend campaign with its message, content, wording, formatting, pictures and that industry research show that this is what is most effective. Total giving is up this year. This is coordinated with the eNews and with Facebook highlighting. These are new tools that we are using in this fashion. This is a planned and integrated approach. A personal thank you is requested to responders to the notes for cultivation. Linda asked about SWC involvement and possible communication improvement. Same with ESC, things have changed a bit here and we want to monitor and review this after the first of the year. We want Chapter Leadership involved.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

9. Land Trust Alliance Rally- DISCUSSION

Scott Fulton reported on who attended this event. Scott was inspired, feeling like we are part of a larger movement with a lot of diversity and fantastic ideas. He liked a session on creating a dashboard summary all the financial and membership items. Jack Kussmaul said he enjoyed a fundraising workshop with creative ideas, we need a Prairie Pete character with a burn suit on for announcements and requests to keep people's attention. Evanne the conservation field is more that equal with women. We need to give opportunities to the next generation. We just have to find them. Chris said culturally there was diversity as well. Communications was a big part of the Rally. He liked the 'logic model' as a tool to use and outreach methods for reaching a broader audience. Community Conservation was noted as a way to touch a broader audiences well as the theme "Land it the Answer."

OTHER BUSINESS

11. Set 2017 Board Meetings

The proposed schedule was noted. Evanne suggested a change to the meeting on March 5th from 10 a.m. to 9:00. a.m. Also, September 16th can be moved to 1:00 p.m. with a Board lunch. The CRC will host the Annual Picnic on July 16th.

There was a motion to accept the proposed schedule by Evanne Hunt. Jim Rogala seconded it. The meeting adjourned at 12:15. p.m.

10. Adjournment

There was a motion to adjourn by Jack Kussmaul. Caroljean Coventree seconded it. The meeting adjourned at 8:30. p.m.

Next 2016 Board Meeting, Tuesday December 20, 2016 7:05 pm via conference call

Minutes submitted by

Joe Rising

Communications Coordinator