

TPE Board Meeting  
Tuesday, January 20, 2015  
7:05 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
via Teleconference  
Conference Dial-In number 712-432-0180  
Participant Access Code: 231266#  
Minutes

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

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Directors: Jack Kussmaul, Scott Fulton, Nick Faessler, Jim Rogala, Evanne Hunt, Mark Leach, Rich Henderson, Alice Mirk, Paul Rode, Jean Clark, Henry Panowitsch.

Excused: Dawn Littleton, Linda Lynch, and Richard Oberle.

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising.

2. Adopt Meeting Agenda

3. Approve Consent Agenda – ACTION

a. Accept Minutes of December 16, 2014

Jack Kussmaul asked for a clarification in the Minutes of the December 16<sup>th</sup> President's Report, regarding training for the Executive Director with Gathering Waters, the last sentences need to be reordered.

**There was a motion by Rich Henderson to approve the consent agenda as amended. Scott Fulton seconded it. The motion passed.**

4. Treasurer's Report – Nick Faessler – ACTION

a. Statement of Financial Activity as of December 31, 2014

Nick Faessler reported on the budget shortfall and need to handle this. Details were specified as to amounts, expenses, and the annual appeal process. The Finance Committee has reworked on the annual budget. Chris Kirkpatrick discussed there are funds on hand for operations, there are six months available. This report reflects that we will take funds from reserve. Jack Kussmaul recalled when this happened in the past and TPE reduced the Executive Director's time to ½ time from full time. One reason the annual appeal is down is because the Compass Club and Board giving is not in annual appeal anymore. If we take out the bequest from last year and include membership, Board and Compass Club, we are financially up. The silver lining is that we did increase most of our categories.

The Statement of Financial Position was reviewed. There were questions regarding the figures, like what is available for operations? Evanne Hunt asked about the past conference, it looks like we made about \$2,000. Chris said there is something wrong with the events column that is not related to the conference. We need to check into this so we can be clear about profit or loss on the conference. No appeal letters went out from the Prairie Smoke Chapter. They don't make up a large portion of the annual appeal, @\$1,800. That Chapter can be developed to bring in more donations. There was discussion about the Annual Appeal process and communications with each chapter. There can be more feedback on this too.

There was a motion by Scott Fulton to accept the Statement of Financial Activity. Evanne Hunt seconded it. The motion passed with one abstention.

5. Endowment Funds and TPE Trust Report – Rich Henderson

a. Year-end reports have been provided by Jon Traver

Rich Henderson spoke to the Trust Report and need for the trustees to meet and direct Jon, and the issue of taking the 4%, especially regarding the internship endowment. We have three trustees plus Jon. They are Nick Faessler, Richard Oberle and Rich Henderson.

6. President's Report – Jack Kusmaul

a. On-line Organizational Assessment – Land Trust Alliance

Jack Kusmaul spoke to this process, the prior guided assessment, and the need to do this again this year. We will meet and discuss the results of this after the conference. This will help with the Strategic Plan and where we need to strengthen the organization.

b. Strategic Planning – Board Development Committee

Jack Kusmaul will call each Board member about committee assignments, similar to last year, and including a pledge. Chris mentioned that the Board Development committee will be working on the Strategic Plan. We want to develop the Fundraising and Endowment Committee and the Board Development Committee with diverse perspectives.

7. Executive Director Report – Chris Kirkpatrick

a. Compass Club Donation Results and Fundraising & Endowment Committee

Chris Kirkpatrick spoke about his progress since the last board meeting. There is a need to contact Compass Club members in each chapter by phone, email, or some type of personal communication. This is the basis for starting our fundraising this year. Jack Kusmaul sent personal, handwritten, thank you letters to all of the Compass Club members. The retention rate was very high and some members increased their giving. There was a recognition event last year. Chris also met with many members last year. We cultivated them more and can go further with the cultivation. This is an important to do to work on the deficit and move forward. Paul Rode asked about the Volunteer Coordinator position. The Empire –Sauk Chapter has a meeting coming up and would like to see the position funded. They will fund it.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

8. Finance Committee:

- 2015 Revised Budget – ACTION

Chris Kirkpatrick and the Finance Committee reviewed the budget and there were revisions to the 2015 Budget. Henry Panowitsch asked about increases to the budget. Henry thinks these are big strides. Evanne Hunt agreed, this is optimistic given last year's annual appeal, as we missed this three years in a row. Chris said that we have a better development process now. Jim Rogala looked at the totals, we have had growth and similar growth this year as last year. There is a big hill to climb and we will not know until the very end of the year or early in 2016 how we have done. The fat has been trimmed and we are in a growth phase. Can we analyze the annual appeal by chapter? We can look back at 2013 too. There was a discussion about membership and updating the membership data and contacts. The Finance Committee looked at all the budget's figures and suggested cuts. Salaries up

due to the Bookkeeper as staff versus contract. There was a staff 3% raise approved by the Board in December. Next time we will not raise the budget until we know the numbers!

There was a motion by Evanne Hunt to accept the 2015 Revised Budget. Jean Clark seconded it. The motion passed with one abstention.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **9. Friends of the Thomas Barn – ACTION**

- a. Request to be formed as part of TPE & apply for Jeffries Foundation Grant.

Chris Kirkpatrick spoke to this acquisition of the Thomas property, including the stone barn. We have obligations to maintain the barn to the degree originally protected. Stephanie Judge who has worked on this has developed a crew of supporters who want to maintain the barn. There was a \$30,000 donation by Mr. Thomas towards this fundraising. If a minimum of \$100,000 is raised the grant will kick in above the minimum amount. We will be the financial agent and applicant for the grant. There will be a focus on a different donor base - based on historic preservation. There are committed and exited donors in the wings. The goal is to raise about \$200,000, as a good basis for caring for the barn. This is a lot of money and there is a potential for issues there. TPE is responsible and in control of this. What do we have to know about this new project? How does this fit with our mission? Funds should be set aside to manage this project, e.g. for overhead and administrative fees. This is a given for all grant money. We are already responsible for this barn, we need a process to manage it. We are improving our land management on each site. This will be with restricted funds. The Central operating budget does not include land management,

Evanne Hunt moved to approve a Friends of the Thomas Barn group and to authorize them to apply for grants and fundraise for the barn. This was seconded by Henry Panowitsch. The motion carried with one opposed.

Discussion as to whether this will be within a Chapter or in Central? Where does it make the most sense for it to reside? There were questions regarding TPE as a land trust and how Education and Outreach can work with a barn.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Evanne Hunt discussed progress regarding the annual conference auction. She has contacted all the chapters about the auction at least twice. The Glacial Prairie Chapter will be the coordinator. Evanne will email everyone.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **10. Adjournment**

Scott Fulton made a motion to adjourn and Jim Rogala seconded it. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 8:29. p.m.

2015 Board Meetings:

Sunday March 22<sup>nd</sup> in Stevens Point, WI

Tuesday May 19<sup>th</sup> 7:05 p.m. via conference call

Sunday July 19<sup>th</sup> TBD which chapter will host

Saturday September 19<sup>th</sup> in Viroqua, WI at TPE Office time TBD

Tuesday November 17<sup>th</sup> 7:05 p.m. via conference call  
Tuesday December 15<sup>th</sup> 7:05 p.m. via conference call

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joe Rising, Communications Coordinator

TPE Board Meeting  
Sunday, March 22, 2015  
8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  
Comfort Suites Hotel  
300 Division St. N.  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
715-341-6000

Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Scott Fulton at 8:05 a.m.

1. Roll Call

Directors:, Scott Fulton, Nick Faessler, Jim Rogala, Evanne Hunt, Mark Leach, Rich Henderson, Dawn Littleton, Paul Rode, Jean Clark, Richard Oberle, Gary Eldred, and Linda Lynch by telephone.

Excused: Alice Mirk, Henry Panowitsch

Guests: Karen Agee

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising, Diane Hills.

2. Adopt Meeting Agenda

3. Approve Consent Agenda

a. Accept Minutes of January 20, 2015

b. Approved Committee Meeting Minutes

**There was a motion by Rich Henderson to approve the consent agenda. Jim Rogala seconded it. The motion passed.**

4. Treasurer's Report – Nick Faessler

Nick Faessler reviewed the TPE Statement of Financial position, and the list of assets including a collection of books from Ruth Kind. Paul Rode asked about the Prairie Smoke Chapter membership dollars, they were about \$3,000 in 2014. There may be implications with a loss of their memberships. There was a discussion regarding the report and the reporting process and how this is being done in an improved way.

b. New restricted assets reports

Nick addressed the restricted funds by project report. This is a new report. Chris commented that this report shows real figures, so confusion is being cleared up and this runs through the entire life of the project. Rich Henderson suggested the legal part of a project, including recording and closing fees, could be two additional categories.

a. Statement of Financial Activity as of February 28, 2015

**There was a motion by Rich Henderson to accept the Statement of Financial Activity. Mark Leach seconded it. The motion passed.**

5. President's Report – Scott Fulton. September Board meeting

Scott Fulton gave the President's Report as Jack Kussmaul was not able to attend the meeting. He pointed out the opportunity to have an Executive Committee meeting to discuss staff, development, etc at the September 19<sup>th</sup> board meeting. He shared the new TPE video goals and intent, and how to carry this out further. People in the video will have a chance to comment as the video is still in process. Evanne Hunt asked about the video roll out, when will it be on the

website, where will the final product be available, will there be an opportunity to have the producer and director there? There will be a final cut and three short videos for the website. There will be coordination. The Education Committee can be a conduit and provide a service to the chapters by carrying this forwards.

#### b. Prairie Smoke Chapter Status – DISCUSSION

Thanks to Dawn Littleton for coming and giving a report on the Prairie Smoke Chapter (PSmC) status. The plan is to develop a mutually written letter to go to the PSmC membership, giving members a choice stay with TPE, go with the new Prairie Smoke organization, or both. She and Jack Kussmaul have been working on this. They will use current and past membership lists. There are about 300 PSmC members with 80 renewed memberships last year. Dawn said they want to keep their name. Rich ask what the conservation goal is and what the mission of the new organization is. Dawn said their mission will not involve land protection, just management. They are concerned that we do not represent the upper Midwest, just WI. Linda Lynch said that it sounds like the chapter has made up their mind to leave. Dawn hopes the organizations can work together. Jim Rogala said that as a Board we need to understand why the chapter is leaving. There was further discussion regarding these concerns. Dawn said there appears that there is no benefit to them for being in TPE. Dawn will stay active, she thinks the conferences are great. If we want to have a chapter in South East MN that is our issue. Scott said we have other geographically concurrent organizations with overlapping and different missions. They have submitted the paperwork and they are awaiting the IRS reply. Chris said there is land owner interest in that area for land trust services. We can help with their new mission and carry on our work there as well. Further discussion of equipment inventory, Chapter financial accounts, how to do this amicably. Paul Rode suggested a small financial holdback to reincorporate a new chapter. Jim suggested this may turn into a new policy so we know how to do it in the future. Chris will work with Jack and Dawn to draft a letter to the membership. Thank you to Dawn for her help!

#### 6. Executive Director Report – Chris Kirkpatrick

##### a. 2015 Work Plan

Chris discussed his work plan, its focus on the strategic plan and 2015 Development Plan. Rich likes Chris's monthly reports, they can be briefer. The Board thinks they are useful and should continue. There could be more feedback on them.

##### b. US Fish & Wildlife Service Cooperative Agreement

Chris and Jim have been working on this. There is money available for Monarch habitat. This is a strong fit and each chapter can work on this. The other states are likely prospects too. Jim suggested seeking overhead funds. Chris suggested chapter's look at their goals and how this program may apply, as there will probably be Milkweed and also other nectar sources though the seasons. The money goes to hire contactors, to cut and treat, buy seed, and habitat development. Work parties are a match. Other pollinators will be supported. There was agreement from the Board to proceed.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### 7. Board Development Committee:

###### Strategic Planning Process– UPDATE

Jim Rogala reported that there was one meeting and they will be looking for input, the goal will be to present something by the annual picnic. We aim to have input from each chapter, a review of the current plan, and aims for the future. Scott Fulton also hopes for input and output to and

from the chapter level as we are a chapter based organization and want to include all members. Gary Eldred suggested this be in the newsletter.

#### 8. Fundraising & Endowment Committee:

##### 2015 Development Plan – ACTION

Richard Oberle and Chris reported. We need to make sure there are messages for each category of donor. We did get 100% for Board Giving, but the financial goal is not reached yet. We need to raise another \$1,600. Rich asked about recruiting new board members. Legacy givers need to be encouraged! We need ongoing cultivation of relationships with our donors.

**There was a motion by Rich Henderson to approve the 2015 Development Plan. Nick Faessler seconded it. The motion passed.**

#### 9. Finance Committee:

##### Land Management income and expense tracking by site– ACTION

Chris Kirkpatrick reported that the land management codes and new process is so we can give each chapter site reports by income and expense. We need a site name with all receipts. The Bookkeeper, Jerry Pedretti, will be working with Chapter Treasurers to make sure they understand the procedure. This is for tracking restricted funds per site. This is an effective budget tool, it gives information for budget support, project management, decision making, education, and options. If funds are not restricted, tracking them per site is not as necessary.

**There was a motion by Rich Henderson to accept the new Land Management income and expense tracking by site approach. Scott Fulton seconded it. The motion passed.**

### NEW BUSINESS

#### 10. Summer Picnic & 2016 Conference Chapter Hosts – DISCUSSION

Mark Leach said the Chippewa Savanna Chapter can host the picnic on the third Sunday in July. The ESC wants it in 2016, and the CRC in 2017. NIPE is thinking about hosting the conference and will make a decision by mid-April. The ESC will consider 2017 and the CRC in 2018. They may partner with other organizations.

### OLD BUSINESS

### OTHER BUSINESS

Gary Eldred reported on a land protection project in Crawford County. Chris and Gary will work on this to bring it to the Land Protection Committee. Gary is concerned about the Stewardship Funds. Rich asked about projects where Chapters and individuals do not agree as to how to proceed. The Strategic Planning Committee may have to look at this.

#### 11. Adjournment

**There was a motion by Paul Rode to adjourn. Jean Clark seconded it. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.**

### 2015 Board Meetings:

Tuesday May 19th 7:05 p.m. via conference call

Sunday July 19th TBD which chapter will host

Saturday September 19th in Viroqua, WI at TPE Office time TBD

Tuesday November 17th 7:05 p.m. via conference call

Tuesday December 15th 7:05 p.m. via conference call

Respectfully Submitted, Joe Rising, Communications Coordinator

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

The meeting was called to order by President Jack Kussmaul at 7:06 p.m.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Directors:, Jack Kussmaul, Scott Fulton, Nick Faessler, Jim Rogala, Evanne Hunt, Mark Leach, Rich Henderson, Richard Oberle, Linda Lynch, Alice Mirk, and Henry Panowitsch.

Excused: Paul Rode. Note Jean Clark, and Dawn Littleton are no longer participating as TPE Board Representatives.

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising

2. Adopt Meeting Agenda.

3. Approve Consent Agenda – ACTION

a. Accept Minutes of Board & Committee meetings

There was a motion by Evanne Hunt to approve the agenda and consent agenda, with the exception of the new TPE Membership levels which will be placed on the July Board meeting agenda. Alice Mirk seconded it. The motion passed.

4. Treasurer's Report – Nick Faessler – ACTION

a. Statement of Financial Activity as of April 30, 2015

Jack Kussmaul read from an email from Paul Rode regarding the audit and news of an update regarding the audit noting a TPE 'significant deficiency' vs 'material weakness.' The deficiency is a good thing and shows we are doing the best we can for a small organization. Nick stated this is better than a material weakness and is good for the organization. Nick also gave a report regarding funds available for operation, cash and reserve. Memberships are coming in better than last year. Board Giving is a little lower than last year. The Finance Committee will take a look at this prior to the July Board meeting. Nick took questions on the reports and pointed out how they are displayed with entire projects now and a two year perspective. Jack pointed out that cash is down but this is a usual pattern as insurance and other bills are paid early in the year and the money consistently comes in later.

There was a motion by Rich Henderson to accept the Treasurers Report. Alice Mirk seconded it. The motion passed.

5. Endowment Funds and TPE Trust Report – Rich Henderson

a. 1st quarter reports have been provided by Jon Traver

Rich Henderson pointed out the summaries are showing progress and how the strategy is doing well. There was an option discussed regarding another financial organization that can handle this work at a lower percentage. This will be followed up with. Evanne asked if there is a cost to moving the accounts, is there a fee? We will ask Jon Trever for this information.



## 6. President's Report – Jack Kussmaul

### a. Prairie Smoke – ACTION

Jack Kussmaul discussed the Prairie Smoke Chapter and the proposed letter. This was sent to Barb Nigon and is acceptable to her. There was a question about how the members can respond, and where to send the return card. Evanne asked about the last sentence and suggested an edit “We received feedback supporting PS becoming an independent, incorporated non-profit organization.” This card will go out by the end of May. Jim Rogala asked about members who do not return the card, how will they be handled, we will not drop them or continue to send renewals? Will we solicit a new leadership team for the chapter? This remains to be seen. Prairie Smoke members can affiliate with another TPE chapter. Rich asked about how much cash was brought to the new PSmC by TPE at their inception? We will look into this.

### b. Guided Organizational Assessment – UPDATE

Jack Kussmaul discussed priorities and timing. We have worked on this process for many years. At the July meeting we will make a decision to commit to applying for accreditation, a pre-proposal is due by May of 2016. An application will require an Accreditation Committee and a \$7,000 fee.

## 7. Executive Director Report – Chris Kirkpatrick

### a. Executive Director Leadership Training – UPDATE

Chris Kirkpatrick discussed his report and a summary of the leadership training he attended including leadership strengths training, community engagement, finance and fundraising. All that we have done has put us on a solid foundation and we are in a good place. Our fundraising strategy is quite diverse, well poised and integrated. Cultivation and joint asks are important to work on together. Technical advices is available to us. We can get our templates setup with expert assistance.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### 8. Finance Committee:

#### 2014 Audit– ACTION

Nick Faessler discussed the Audit Report. We are doing well with the new staff and the job they are doing earned us the significant deficiency that is better than a material deficit. We are doing well.

**A motion was made by Linda Lynch and seconded by Jim Rogala to accept the 2014 Audit. The motion carried.**

#### 2014 IRS 990 for TPE & TPE Trust– ACTION

Nick Faessler reported on the process and forms. This will be filed and an extension has been filed due to the timing with the Board meeting.

**A motion was made by Rich Henderson and seconded by Alice Mirk to approve the 2014 IRS 990 for TPE, the TPE Trust, and the State documents as well. The motion carried.**

### 9. Land Protection Committee:

#### Recommended final approval of Avon Ridge acquisition– ACTION

Mark Martin is the new Chair of this Committee. Rich Henderson asked about the included documents. Nick asked about funding received at this point, over \$11,000 and this will likely be added to significantly by potential donors. As it stands now, @20,000 is needed. Nick said they expect to use chapter funds to make the project go.

**Evanne Hunt made a motion to approve the acquisition of Avon Ridge and Scott Fulton seconded it. All in favor, the motion passed.**

Recommended final approval of Rattlesnake Ridge acquisition– ACTION

Chris Kirkpatrick said there is a signed contract from the DNR and the owners are donating the other half. The owners are also going to add money to an endowment.

**Scott Fulton made a motion to approve the acquisition of the Rattlesnake Ridge and Jim Rogala seconded it. All in favor, the motion passed.**

Recommended final approval of Handrick Grasslands acquisition– ACTION

Rich Henderson gave an update and there is a signed purchase agreement. This is 100% funded by the DNR and Dane County. They anticipate getting this done by the end of the fiscal year. The closing will be shortly after July 1, 2015 as there are others projects the DNR needs to close on. This project ranked well on its final score. We have a minimum now but could have more definition. This is a good property and its location geographically helped get the funds.

**Richard Oberle made a motion to approve the Handrick Grasslands acquisition. Jim Rogala seconded it. All in favor, the motion passed.**

#### 10. Board Development Committee:

Strategic Planning– UPDATE

Jim Rogala commented on the process and how the committee has taken on a vision statement, tagline, and mission statement. There was input of all on the committee. There was a request for membership comments. There will be goals for the July Board meeting for review.

#### 11. Fundraising & Endowment Committee:

Donor Recognition Events– UPDATE

Richard Oberle and Chris Kirkpatrick shared the committee work and the upcoming donor event. It is proposed to be at the Mounds View Grassland. The concept is to invite Compass Club donors and potential donors to socialize with the board, tour the site and show the video. This is a thank you and a cultivation event. Evanne Hunt and the SCVC chapter will also have something up there the weekend after the TPE Annual Picnic. There will also be a video showing in the Many Rivers Chapter area.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

The annual TPE conference host in 2016 will be the Empire Sauk Chapter! They are looking for a date in late February or early March. NIPE is willing to take it for 2017 and the CRC after that.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mark Leach gave an update on the Annual Picnic planning process. It will be at the fairgrounds in Colfax, WI, this is near to Dobbs Landing where there will be a tour.

## 12. Adjournment

There was a motion by Rich Henderson to adjourn. Alice Mirk seconded it. The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Minutes submitted by,

Joe Rising  
Communications Coordinator

### 2015 Board Meetings:

.  
Sunday July 19th Chippewa Savannas Chapter details TBD  
Saturday September 19th in Viroqua, WI at TPE Office time TBD  
Tuesday November 17th 7:05 p.m. via conference call  
Tuesday December 15th 7:05 p.m. via conference call

THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS, INC.  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Sunday, July 19, 2015  
Colfax Fairgrounds  
Colfax, WI

The meeting of the Board was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by President Jack Kusssmaul

Roll Call

ATTENDEES:

Directors: Jack Kusssmaul, Scott Fulton, Nick Faessler, Jim Rogala, Evanne Hunt, Mark Leach, Paul Rode, David Hamel, Gary Eldred.

Excused: Linda Lynch, Richard Oberle, Rich Henderson, Alice Mirk, Henry Panowitsch

Guests: Kathy Stahl, Harvey Halvorsen, John Thomas, & Kathy Ruggles

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising.

2. Adopt Meeting Agenda.

3. Approve Consent Agenda – ACTION

A motion was made by Jim Rogala and seconded by Paul Rode to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried.

a. Accept Minutes of Board & Committee meetings

There was a motion by Scott Fulton to approve the Minutes of Board & Committee meetings. Alice Mirk seconded it. The motion passed.

4. Treasurer's Report – Nick Faessler – ACTION

Item 4, Treasurer's Report

Nick Faessler reported on the Statement of Financial Position, Central's budget projections, memberships are low for this time period, board giving is a bit low, compass club is up, the finance committee has looked at these numbers every month. Paul Rode commented on the individual items and how they are hard to predict. As a Board we want to track this and be alerted to a shortfall. Costs are fixed at this point. Scott Fulton asked about the Accounting and Audit costs, Claudia sent a bill for \$2000 in early January and the transition was costly. The Audit goes up every year and this year there were two IRS 990s. Chris said we will switch Auditors this year and that may save some money. In terms of membership we are tracking better this year than last year and we are getting more responses and asking more nonmembers to join. In the past they had been just getting yearend appeals. Chris is confident we will get close to our financial target. We have not solicited the Prairie Smoke Chapter members yet this year. We are cleaning up our membership list and weeding out the members who have lapsed and the Prairie Smoke Chapter members who will be leaving TPE. David Hamel asked about insurance and how that is spread out through the year. We have paid it and are amortizing it throughout the year. Webhosting is a fixed cost per month. We hope to have the website up and running prior to the end of the year. Jim Rogala asked about the reserves and if they can carry TPE based upon the

projections. Worst case scenario, we are still solvent at the beginning of next year with about 6 month cash on hand.

There was a motion by Evanne Hunt to accept the Treasurers Report. Scott Fulton seconded it. The motion passed.

## 5. Endowment Funds and TPE Trust Report

Jack Kussmaul spoke to this and the excellent management by Jon Trevor. This fund is doing well. Chris reported the Thomson funds are coming in this year and on their trust forecast and funding. The investment portfolio is spread out and endowments are up. Costs are being drawn out very minimally. We want these endowments to grow.

## 6. Presidents Reports

6a. Jack Kussmaul reported on the Prairie Smoke Chapter. The letters have gone out and come in. The results have been tabulated and are similar to what is in the background materials. We got a 40% return rate. Over 100 people have not responded. 2/3 want to go with the new Prairie Smoke organization. There is a small core group who want to stay with TPE and some who want to be part of both groups. 108 have been suspended from TPE mostly through this mailing. We have to decide how to proceed with another mailing to our active Prairie Smoke Chapter membership give them a chance to renew and asking who wants to help reform that new chapter and leadership. Evanne Hunt suggested a membership meeting with an invitation to remaining TPE members and other interested area residence to determine if there are leaders and others interested in carry things on. Alternatively, we can expand our present chapters into that area. We can add this option into the next appeal letter. We need to explore these options further. New Prairie Smoke Chapter members have come in this year as well. We have about 175 contacts remaining on our list. How shall we handle the transfer of assets? Gary Eldred asked how TPE will be different than the new Prairie Smoke organization, they are just interested in prairie management especially in the Rochester area but not permanent land protection. There is a need for a local land trust in that area to do land protection. The MN Land Trust is in the area but only does conservation easements and usually on larger, carefully selected projects. There are funds in MN for prairie protection. We could try a land protection project as a trial balloon focus. Prairie Moon Nursery is in this area. There is a member who does land management in that area who has knowledge of land owners who may have land protection interests. Scott suggested we look at the people and projects in that area.

There was a motion Nick Faessler to let the new Prairie Smoke organization have the equipment in their possession, and the cash in their accounts as of June 30<sup>th</sup>. This motion was seconded by Paul Rode. The motion passed. This will include a document by TPE transferring the equipment to the new non-profit called Prairie Smoke.

## 6b. Accreditation Application:

Jack Kussmaul gave a report on the TPE accreditation progress with the LEAP Program. This will take extra work by staff and will cost about \$7,500 which is due later with the pre-application. Chris said the guided assessment we did last spring has helped us make a lot of progress. We have a plan, we want to be sure the Board is behind this process. We will be a

stronger organization regardless. Jim Rogala asked about funds needed for land mgmt. and easement monitoring and legal defense. Chris said we do meet the minimum now. With land management we have a large endowment coming to us and it is sizable. We have the tools to document land management needs and this will go a long way to help us with accreditation. We have a good record keeping process and this is important. Jack and Paul have experience with this process. Our paperwork will be subject to stringent review and include the last five years of acquisitions. Scott pointed out that our bookkeeping is more process and detailed for assessment and management needs. TPE Central is responsible for properties across the Chapters as the fee owner.

**There was a motion by Jim Rogala to proceed with the initial application for accreditation due by May 2016. Evanne Hunt seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

#### Item 7, Executive Director Report

Chris Kirkpatrick reported that TPE closed on Avon Ridge, this was announced at the donor event. There was a match of 100% in donations. Much of this came in through membership support - good job Prairie Bluff Chapter! We have scheduled closing dates for other land projects including Handrick and Rattlesnake Ridge in August. Some proceeds will be donated back to us by the owners and this will be used to support other projects. There is one other small remnant in the Glacial Prairie Chapter that will be a good site for that area, to help expand that Chapter and a project outside of the original TPE chapters. We got the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant submitted last week. We will find out about the awarding of those grants by the end of September. The awarded funds will start in September with hopefully \$20,000 and \$100,000 for each of the next two years. Joe Rising will become full time in Communications and Diane Hills will be full time as the new Outreach Coordinator. Chris mentioned the Butterfly project funding; partnering, projects, outreach. Chris is following up with the Chapters and organizations across the state. Jack Kussmaul raised the issue of a colored newsletter prior to the Annual Appeal with nice pictures throughout. This may get funding through several member donations. Scott is looking into a new reader friendly designs, with pictures, titles, call-outs, and bullet points. We may get expanded grant funding for a communication strategy for social media. Scott will need a new editor, with layout help, for The Prairie Promoter when he becomes TPE President. Scott may help carry out the layout portion of this if necessary.

#### 8. Board Development Committee Strategic Planning- UPDATE

Jim Rogala gave an update. He asked the Board to look at the product thus far, including the Core Values and Draft Goals, we want to emphasize the unity of TPE in the first one. Action items were considered to help the goals make more sense. The committee will report back to the Board in September. Jim asked for comments. Chris hopes the goals and core values will be addressed by Chapters, possibly through chapter meeting visits by staff. This may or may not be an item of interest for Chapters.

#### Item 9, Fundraising & Endowment Committee: Donor Recognition Events- UPDATE

Jack Kussmaul gave an update on the Major Donor Events. There was a good turnout, about 60 people, the weather cooperated, the next event will be with the St Croix Valley Chapter with about 15+ people, and a tour and appetizers, Joe Mauar will be there. We want to have conversations, cultivation, dialogue and then follow-ups with these people.

NEW BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS

OTHER BUSINESS

10. Adjournment

There was a motion by Paul Rode to adjourn. Evanne Hunt seconded it. The meeting adjourned at 11:50 p.m.

Minutes submitted by,

Joe Rising

Communications Coordinator

2015 Board Meetings:

Saturday September 19th in Viroqua, WI at TPE Office time TBD

Tuesday November 17th 7:05 p.m. via conference call

Tuesday December 15th 7:05 p.m. via conference call

TPE Board Meeting  
Saturday, September 19, 2015  
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
TPE Central Office  
110 S. Main St.  
Viroqua, WI 54665

The meeting was called to order by President Jack Kussmaul at 10:00 a.m.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Directors:, Jack Kussmaul, Scott Fulton, Nick Faessler, Jim Rogala, Evanne Hunt, Rich Henderson, Paul Rode, Gary Eldred, Linda Lynch, Richard Oberle, David Hamel.

Excused: Alice Mirk, Henry Panowitsch, and Mark Leach.

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising

Guests:

2. Adopt Meeting Agenda

Nick Faessler requested time to talk about TPE promotions. Rich Henderson asked for discussion regarding a variance to the TPE naming policy for Handrick Grassland.

3. Approve Consent Agenda – ACTION

Accept Minutes of Board & Committee meetings

Revised Empire Sauk Chapter Bylaws

**There was a motion by Evanne Hunt to accept the Consent Agenda, Scott Fulton seconded it. The motion passed.**

4. Treasurer's Report – Nick Faessler – ACTION

Statement of Financial Activity as of August 31, 2015

Nick Faessler reported on the Statement of Financial Activity and activity of the Finance Committee. The budget is looking good, nothing glaring or out of line, membership is going well, board giving is decent along with the Compass Club. Expenses are doing well. Paul Rode said we still have a steep hill to climb by yearend. Linda Lynch mentioned TPE historical data and how that helps us with projections. Chapter budgets will start up soon. Evanne Hunt said we have changed our approach to major donors and grants, does this hide the real budget? This is common for grant oriented organizations. Chris mentioned that we switched accountants and this has given us additional reports and more timely views into the finances. The Board appreciates the work of the Finance Committee, Winnie Bade, the Accountant, and staff are doing a good job – especially Chris who is encouraging the major donor visits. Rich Henderson would like to see an accounting spreadsheet of the land management endowment history and a summary of the funds that have gone into it and from whom. The same on easement monitoring and legal expenses. Nick noted that this is also important to our accreditation. There is a new calculator that will help take this into account. The insurance line was discussed and the parts of it noted including legal defense, workers comp, and vehicles that get charged to chapters.



There was a motion by Linda Lynch to accept the Treasurer's Report. Rich Henderson seconded it. The motion passed.

5. President's Report – Jack Kussmaul  
Nothing additional to report.

6. Executive Director Report – Chris Kirkpatrick

Chris Kirkpatrick noted his report and discussed the NFWS grant which will not be awarded until the end of the month. The Monarch Grant is underway with chapters and partners. Chris has been the communicator, chapters have been working and funds allocated already. Chris explained this process and how the project has proceeded. There are regional biologists that will report on their work through Fish and Wildlife and TPE staff. Funds were shared by region. Additional funds may become available and reallocated. The total was \$80,000 throughout the state. The money was mainly for contactors and buying seed.

Southeast Minnesota Chapter– UPDATE

Chris reported on the finalized agreement to separate, ongoing membership interest, renewal notices and work towards reforming the chapter. We have renewals and supporters in this endeavor! Three people have said yes to helping to reestablish the chapter. References will be checked as we proceed. We hope to have an organizational meeting yet this fall. The next step will be a flier that goes out to these folks and to see the responses and then schedule the gathering. We want to serve them as members and then help them reform the chapter. In the interim we will call the chapter the South East MN Chapter.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

7. Bylaws Committee – ACTION

Proposed Bylaw Changes

Jack Kussmaul reported that annually there is a committee of three members, this year being Linda Lynch, Nick Faessler and Mark Leach. There were administrative changes and references that need updating. These will be fixed. Jack suggested the Board should be 17 members, not 20 members. Jack also commented on term limits. This has not been determined yet. There are pros and cons to each side. We should be following our bylaws. We should give notice regarding openings to membership. The Board Development Committee has been active with this. We should be identifying interests, needs, and qualifications through a screening process. Members-at-Large may be an untapped resource, Scott will put a notice in the next Prairie Promoter. We have notice of several Board members who are leaving this year. We want to work proactively with chapters and committee members. New members will be voted on and encouraged to serve on the Finance Committee. We have up to 4 at-large positions. Chris suggests keeping the term limits as is and to review these changes strategically. The election should be at the summer picnic. Gary Eldred, Richard Oberle and David Hamel were appointed to the next Bylaws Committee.

There was a motion by Evanne Hunt to accept the recommendations of the Bylaws Committee, with two changes; that there be a maximum of 17 Directors, and the Past President will be held to a two year term limit. Linda Lynch seconded it. The motion passed.

8. Accreditation Committee – ACTION

Board Resolution Applying for Accreditation

Jack Kussmaul spoke to the proposed accreditation application motion language. We will strike the word 'renewal' in both places and accept it as it. We will track our hours regarding this time so we

understand what the cost is to us. We may hire a part-time worker to put this together. This is not tied to how well we are managing natural resources. We can apply for a grant for this extra work. Chris is tracking his time to program areas and can allocate this out further. There will be a motion and minutes regarding this decision. We do not make a hard copy of the minutes in general, or make a signed copy of them. Jack will take a look at the statute regarding keeping minutes for the requirements.

**There was a motion by Evanne Hunt to accept the Board resolution subject to the removal of the word 'renewal.' Richard Oberle seconded it. The motion passed.**

#### 9. Land Protection – ACTION

##### North Lake Prairie Donation

Chris Kirkpatrick spoke to this opportunity. There is a \$20,000 endowment to be provided by the donors. The land protection committee recommended this for approval. It is a 1.6 acres parcel. Correction, this is not within the Kickapoo Watershed, more likely the Mukwonago River Watershed. Applying for a tax exempt status is up to the chapter. Sometimes we can stipulate an ag-use rate.

**There was a motion by Evanne Hunt that the Glacial Prairie Chapter proceed with this acquisition. Scott Fulton seconded it, with the addition that we will apply for a property tax exemption on this parcel. The motion passed.**

##### Iris Drive Prairie Acquisition

Linda Lynch raised the issue that the SW chapter has not voted on this proposal. She wonders about the process here. Linda said the SW Chapter has voted on an appraisal only. The appraisal is in progress. There is a hunting easement with the DNR already. Chris said he thought the chapter was supportive of the acquisition and not just the appraisal. This is an appraisal with a State Stewardship authorization. We will table this until we seek chapter approval. The TPE acquisition process was discussed. The steps are online. The Board does need to have the Chapter approval. There is a chapter meeting Monday evening.

##### Parrish Oak Savanna Addition

Rich Henderson spoke to this project, its connection to Ken Wade's property, the opportunity to apply for stewardship and county grant funds.

**There was a motion by Scott Fulton to proceed to accept the Parrish Oak Savanna Addition. Richard Oberle seconded it with the addition to apply for Stewardship Funds, DNR, and Dane County grant funding. The motion passed.**

##### Conservation Easement & Legal Defense Proposal

Jack Kusmaul spoke to this monitoring proposal and the goal to get the base lines up to date. The cost is supported by the 4% withdrawal per TPE policy. Scott asked about restriction on these funds and if these are appropriate to use here. Is this legally defending the property or supporting their legal defense? Chris Kirkpatrick spoke to the use of these funds and when they are appropriate to use. We would have to review the language for specifics, some of the funds are specifically noted in agreements. The question would be what *legal defense* means here. The funds can be used for any type of legal defense.

**Evanne Hunt made a motion that we approve the Conservation Easement & Legal Defense Proposal but that we use only the money allowed from the fund (4%) for legal defense, and that the budget be**

used to fund the full proposal of the easement monitoring. Scott Fulton seconded it. The motion passed.

10. Board Development Committee:

Strategic Plan Draft Action Items- DISCUSSION

Jim Rogala described the plan going forward, there will be a one page introduction to go with the plan. What we are doing now is looking for Board input prior to sending it out to the membership. We hope to get something back in 6 weeks and have a final for Board review by December and finalize it by the end of the year to be used in 2016. The document involved here is titled the Core Values, this is the Strategic Plan Draft. The Standard Operating Policies will be an addendum. Linda asked about the Chapter's soul searching here and how it will be used and followed up with. These will be used in the staff annual work plans. Board members may review these work plans. This is a three year strategic plan. Chapters will also be a part of this in terms of the budget process and a review through the Board Representatives. There was a question regarding TPE being a representative organization. Chapters vote on their representatives. Goals and action items were considered. The issue driving this is a desire for more membership input. The Board decides what the plan will consist of. Comments are welcome. The deadline for comments will be sent out.

11. Fundraising & Endowment Committee:

Compass Club Donor Asks- UPDATE

Richard Oberle spoke to the process of letters and meetings. Evanne Hunt and Chris have met with potential donors and had success. Chris and the local Board Rep go to the meetings. Chris sent a script to follow. Chapter members should be apprised of this and the information can be conveyed through the Chapter Board Rep or through Central communications. The local leadership needs to be aware that this is going on. Specific names do not need to be shared.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

12. A. Letter of Response to WI DNR regarding Badger Plant Master Plan

Jack Kussmaul spoke to this project and changes to the historic Badger Plant. Input was sought through TPE. There is a lot of interest in this locally. The field trip there went very well. Scott Fulton will submit the proposed comment.

**Evanne Hunt made a motion to accept this document. Jim Rogala seconded it. The motion passed.**

12. B. Discussion regarding a variance on the TPE naming policy for the Handrick Grassland.

Rich Henderson spoke to the standing policy regarding naming rights. We have a situation with this new preserve. Pat Handrick has spent much time and money and will provide an endowment regarding the property. The chapter would like to call it Handrick Grassland. Evanne read the policy. This is a variance to the policy.

**Richard Oberle made a motion to make an exception and use the current name. Evanne Hunt seconded it. The motion passed.**

12. C. TPE Window Stickers.

Nick Faessler suggested this as a membership option. There are bumper stickers for about \$200. 1000 window stickers are about \$700. These can be given out at the conference, events, to new members or people who want them. The external stickers degrade over the years. There are some that can stick on the inside of the window. Nick and Gary will follow up on this information and share this with Chris. This can be part of the December Board budget meeting.

13. Adjournment

There was a motion by Paul Rode to adjourn. Evanne Hunt seconded it. The meeting adjourned at 12:12 p.m.

2015 Board Meetings:

Tuesday November 17th 7:05 p.m. via conference call

Tuesday December 15th 7:05 p.m. via conference call

14. Executive Session

The Board went directly into an Executive Session.

Minutes submitted by

Joe Rising

Communications Coordinator

TPE Board Meeting  
Tuesday, November 17, 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 by President Jack Kussmaul at 7:05 p.m.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Directors: Jack Kussmaul, Scott Fulton, Nick Faessler, Evanne Hunt, Paul Rode, Linda Lynch, David Hamel.

Excused: Jim Rogala, Rich Henderson, Deanna Pomije, Richard Oberle, Alice Mirk, and Mark Leach.

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising

Guest: Rob Baller

2. Adopt Meeting Agenda

Linda Lynch wanted to discuss the timing of the TPE Annual Report. This was added at item #9.

3. Approve Consent Agenda – ACTION

Accept Minutes of Board & Committee meetings

**There was a motion by Paul Rode to accept the Consent Agenda, David Hamel seconded it. The motion passed.**

4. Treasurer's Report – Nick Faessler – ACTION

Statement of Financial Activity as of October 31, 2015

Nick Faessler reviewed the Statement of Financial Activity and reported on the expenses and income. We were slightly low on membership, Compass Club is up, so we are roughly where we usually are this time of year. There is nothing glaring or out of line. Evanne Hunt liked the two charts and we can thank our Accountant for this. Paul Rode mentioned that Membership had an uptick this month and this was nice and will hopefully carry through the end of the year - last year we ended at \$33,000 and we are at \$31,000 now. The Annual Appeals are out and some have come in already. Nick answered the Board's questions.

**There was a motion by Linda Lynch to accept the Treasurer's Report. Evanne Hunt seconded it. The motion passed.**

5. Trust Reports – Rich Henderson

Third Quarter Reports

Jack Kussmaul referred to the reports. We are tracking very well considering the economy and stock market.

6. President's Report – Jack Kussmaul

Accreditation Committee – UPDATE

There have been several meetings with Gathering Waters and the Land Trust Alliance to review where we are and our priorities. Chris Kirkpatrick said there may be grant money for extra help

to get this work done and there may be \$5000 available for this. Jerry Pedretti, our Bookkeeper has good skills and knowledge of TPE. He is excellent at documenting and tracking and this is a good skill set for helping with this work. Linda asked how we are tracking the extra cost for accreditation. Chris said there have only been committee meetings so far. Jack clarified that there will be extra time spent by the accountant, bookkeeper and staff. We want to track this time so we can tell the membership about the money spent. We can keep a daily log of time on this project. Chris said we are already tracking his and Joe's time and we can add a line for accreditation in our timesheets. This is part of the accreditation process. We will add it to our timesheets next month and going forward.

#### 7. Executive Director Report – Chris Kirkpatrick

##### Southeast Minnesota Chapter – UPDATE

Chris Kirkpatrick reported that there have been positive activities. This is explained in his report and in the background materials. We have sorted out the Prairie Smoke Chapter members who are interested in a new TPE Chapter in MN and individuals who are interested in being in chapter leadership, for instance George Howe and Marsha Ukura have expressed interest. We have sent out a mailing, and an email through Prairie Moon Nursery and Coulee Region Forestry contacts. About a dozen people came to the meeting and were supportive of reforming the Chapter. An organizational meeting will be held on December 10<sup>th</sup> for discussing leadership, by-laws, service area and chapter name. There is interest and desire from people who live in that area. There are landowner management coops in that area. Scott was excited by the meeting. It has a good spirit and was very beautiful there overlooking the Mississippi River. There are good resources in that area as well. There are @150 members in that area, and a quarter of them have contributed this year. A third of the organizational folks are new and younger people. The Annual Appeal list size for that area is still in line with the other chapter appeal lists. The Board thinks we are making wonderful progress.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### 8. Board Development Committee:

###### Strategic Plan Draft – UPDATE

Jim Rogala has done an enormous amount of work on the Strategic Plan Draft and the background materials explain it. A draft is done, and comments were solicited from memberships. The committee will get back together and get it to the board prior to the December meeting. Chris suggested that the final plan will be presented at the December meeting and then an implementation plan will be developed after the final review and approval.

##### 9. Fundraising & Endowment Committee:

###### Annual Appeal & Compass Club – UPDATE

The Chapter appeal letters are in the mail. Rob Baller helped several chapters with their letters. The money is coming in. A nonmember bought a t-shirt and sent in \$500 for the appeal already! Chris thanked everyone for their help and assistance getting this out and for working on the window decal sticker. The current chapters supported it and funded it and so far they are getting a positive review. We will be doing a follow up email after Thanksgiving with a thank you to the chapters and to announce the next Prairie Promoter will be coming out in color. With the letter, personalization, email and newsletter, we are poised for a good response. Chris appreciates everyone's help contacting the Compass Club members and Jack is sending out a letter to the

Board members. We have turned the appeal letter into a thank you letter and thanked the board and compass club members who have given with it as well.

### **TPE Annual Report**

Linda Lynch asked how it is appropriate to receive the 2014 annual report in November. Jack Kussmaul clarified that it went out in September. She thinks it is too far out of date. Chris Kirkpatrick said they historically come out at the summer picnic. This year they were printed in August. We need the audited financial statements that come out in May and then the Board needs to approve it. The earliest is May or June. Scott Fulton said we visit donors in the fall with the annual report and the present years report is not available yet. David Hamel noted that the TPP newsletters can be clearly dated in the document somewhere. David would like to see the annual report out earlier as well.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **10. Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame Gary Eldred Nomination – ACTION**

Jack Kussmaul discussed the Eldred nomination. Susi Nehls wants to nominate Gary and has now asked the Board to support the process. Gary has done a lot for TPE and conservation in general! Linda asked why we are involved, have we fully evaluated the criteria of this award and that we want to support this? Yes, Chris Kirkpatrick discussed the process and how carefully drafted and detailed the materials must be. Susi is doing a good job. David Hamel suggested that Susi prepare a letter as to what is needed. She and Chris will draft the letter.

**There was a motion by Evanne Hunt to support Gary Eldred's nomination to the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame, along with a letter as appropriate regarding this. Nick Faessler seconded it. The motion passed.**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **11. Outreach Coordinator Position Proposal – DISCUSSION**

Chris Kirkpatrick discussed this position and the positive results that can come of it. Many of the goals for the new strategic plan are supported by this position. We would all benefit by an organization wide position like this. This will support the recruitment and program support to chapters. There have been discussions as to how to create this position and what the role will be. This is an opportunity to discuss the scope of this work for this position and the status of looking at a funding mechanism for next year. The ESC will fund a substantial portion of the position. They will pledge a certain amount. This is a great opportunity to grow, expand, increase capacity and will help with management and activities. Scott Fulton said this has been a huge effort over a long time for he and his wife, Karen Agee. The position started part-time and grew into fulltime. All the chapters share a common need for increasing our capacity. Building capacity is the primary need. We are rather amateurish in the way we reach out now. We need to come up to the standard. We also need to reach a younger audience. We need the proper communication channels. When we look at TPE we have an unbelievable wealth of stories that are of interest to others. So we need to be more intentional and effective as to how we use these stories to build capacity. This needs to be guided by a professional person on the staff. It will take time to fully articulate this initiative. It will take several years for this to have its full effect on the organization. This position has to increase membership to pay for itself. Scott will put in \$10,000 to get it going. Evanne said she has real concerns about another staff position. Do we have the money to do this? It is wonderful if this position has helped ESC and they want it to continue.

Large chapters are different than small ones, for instance with population areas. This is a risky step but we need to get up to speed with other organizations and grow. David said they can make good use of someone at central to help them out with their Volunteer Coordinator. Scott said the Empire Sauk Chapter needs to determine their restricted and unrestricted income available for this. Scott suggests we put together seed money from each chapter and some from Central. He suggests we put Diane to work with each chapter to talk about this and see what we can do to make this happen. Paul said we need to see an impact in income due to this position. Scott said the position needs to pay for itself. Chris has scheduled to meet with Rich and Kathy Henderson on December 1st. They will discuss this and a budget supportive of it. What would this look like on the chapter level? More members and volunteers? We need to get behind it and engage each chapter about it. Jack suggested we look at specifics and that we can deal with this when we have the strategic plan before us. We are looking for a decision by the December meeting with the budget therein. When the volunteer coordinator started, ESC had a list-serve of 280 names and as of today they have 749 people and complete profiles on them. So we have more than doubled the numbers there. There are bigger turnouts at events. Rob Baller commented that it would help if Chris or Scott made a presentation about this to the chapters. Scott is happy to do this, he likes this conversation within the organization. There was an agreement that everybody on the Board will think on this pending further information. If it will be in the budget proposal or not? The budget will dictate if we are in the red or black.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

##### 12. Schedule 2016 Board Meetings

See materials for suggestions of dates; 2/21, 4/12, etc. were agreed too.

**There was a motion to approve the proposed Board schedule by Evanne Hunt. Paul Rode seconded it. The motion passed.**

##### 13. Adjournment

**There was a motion by Paul Rode to adjourn. Nick Faessler seconded it. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.**

Next Meeting: Tuesday December 15th at 7:05 p.m. via conference call  
2015 Board Meetings:

Minutes submitted by Joe Rising, Communications Coordinator



TPE Board Meeting  
Tuesday, December 15, 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 Kusssmaul

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

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

Excused: Paul Rode, Richard Oberle, Mark Leach

Staff: Chris Kirkpatrick, Joe Rising

2. Adopt Meeting Agenda

New business; Iris Drive Prairie Acquisition, TPE Bylaws Revision Process

3. Approve Consent Agenda – ACTION

Accept Minutes of Board & Committee meetings

**There was a motion by Evanne Hunt to accept the Consent Agenda, Scott Fulton seconded it. The motion passed.**

4. Treasurer's Report – Nick Faessler – ACTION

Statement of Financial Activity as of November 30, 2015

Nick Faessler reported on the Statement of Financial Activity and the comparisons to last year. Most chapters are equal or higher for the amount of cash. Prairie Smoke is down but there have been dues allocated for the third quarter. Restricted funds show on the balance sheet. Page three shows a chart and how the monies come in at the end of the year. Chris Kirkpatrick gave an update, the Compass Club is now over \$44,000. Membership and Annual Appeal continue to come in strong. The figures are looking better than last year and are strong. He projected we will come in at or very near budget. Nick asked about Board Giving, Chris said we are a bit behind from last year. We did make the 20,000 last year and aim for that again this year. We are short a couple board members from last year.

5. President's Report – Jack Kusssmaul

Given the full agenda, Jack Kusssmaul did not add to his report.

6. Executive Director Report – Chris Kirkpatrick

Southeast Minnesota Chapter– UPDATE

Chris Kirkpatrick reported that we had a very good meeting last week in MN. We have good traction for the reformation of the chapter. We have leadership positions, there is still need for a Board Representative but there are two interested people. The geological area is nearer to Winona. The next meeting will be in February with bylaws, naming officers and the service area. Some of these folks may come to the February Board meeting. There was a discussion of the past service area and including of all TPE members there. We might get another chapter or a larger chapter with specific

areas of focus. This is still unfolding. There has been good progress and connections especially with the Prairie Moon Nursery.

Annual Appeal & Compass Club– UPDATE

Chris Kirkpatrick touched on the specifics with year to date amounts. There are 9 new Compass Club donors! This is from all the hard work the Board has done to cultivate. He projects that we may come in over budget at the \$78,000 income category. We are 50% better than a year ago. We have good momentum going in to the end of the year. The Board work is paying off.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **7. Land Protection Committee:**

Final Approval of Adleman North Lake Donation– ACTION

Chris Kirkpatrick reported on his meetings with the Adlemans. This should close this year. The project is approved and the appraised was reviewed. They intent to donate \$20,000 for management, they want the name to be theirs. Final approval has been given by the Land Protection Committee. Jack said this will make Glacial Prairie the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter to hold title to property and the smallest chapter as well. Specific preserves are high motivators for people. Alice Mirk said thank you to Chris for his work on this. Chris appreciated the Mirks help and synergy with the Kettle Moraine Stewardship people, and management is already on the chapter work plan.

**There was a motion by Alice Mirk to approve the acquisition of the Adelman North Lake Property. Rich Henderson seconded it. The motion carried.**

Initial Approval of TPE Trust Property Transfers– ACTION

Chris Kirkpatrick gave an overview of this transfer. There is a \$50,000 cap per entity for cost share programs, and we are at this amount with the properties, and we are enrolling more properties, so we will go over the cap. We have the idea of transferring properties to the TPE Trust so we can work with the USDA for more contracts. This was disused in the Committee meeting last week. Jack Kussmaul suggested that holding property for TPE is a permitted use of the trust. We seek here for initial approve and then will amend the language of the trust and identify the specific properties to be transferred. The holding of these lands and the proceeds will only be used for land management. The CRP payments are intended to increase the income to TPE. We have several sites with agricultural land. Rich Henderson said we have 230 acres rented as cropland. We want to convert this to prairie eventually. The existing contracts have gone up considerably and this will exceed the limit. These funds will all be going back into the properties for restoration and management. Chris will talk to other land trust attorneys to see if this has been done or how they are handling this.

**There was a motion by Evanne Hunt to move forward with this process to amend the trust agreement. Scott Fulton seconded it. The motion passed.**

### **8. Finance Committee:**

2016 Central & Chapter Budgets– ACTION

Jack Kussmaul reported on the finance committee meeting from last week. Evanne Hunt had a question regarding the bulk mailing rate and process. Chris said that we have worked with the mail house regarding the personal name and mailing address on each envelope and getting the details regarding this figured out. Chris would like to try it for a year and see how it goes. Next fall we will decide if we want them to conduct the Annual Appeal too. Jack reported that the committee recommended that we table the budget until we have all the income figure from the end of the year. The budget as presented funded an Outreach Coordinator and in the meantime she should start

working in January. Staff Salaries and chapter budgets will be tabled until the January Board meeting. Paul Rode send an email and wanted to be heard, he wanted to know the 2015 results, the ESC budget and to state that he would not approve this original budget as presented. Alice said this sounds reasonable until we know what the full figures are. Linda asked about the Outreach Coordinator position and how it related to the Communication Coordinator Position. Scott said that he is willing to commit time to get to every chapter. Scott requests scheduling help to get to all the chapter meetings. Gary Eldred is in favor of exploring new ideas and getting feedback so he supports this idea wholeheartedly. Chris had comments on the budget, and what potential position would do. He also mentioned the Volunteer Coordinator has been in the Central budget. Jim Rogala said the federal government goes without a budget often and staff just continues to carry on as per the last one.

**There was a motion by Jim Rogala to approve the finance committee recommendation as reported in the minutes. It was seconded by Evanne Hunt. The motion passed.**

#### 9. Board Development Committee:

##### 2016-2018 TPE Strategic Plan – ACTION

Jim Rogala addressed the Strategic Plan process. Alice Mirk said it is very clear and ambitious. It is a three year plan. The color newsletter has already been accomplished. It is magnificent and beautiful. Jim said this is a good example of how the plan has been improved upon, including communications and the need for another staff person to help this all move forward. Alice said the smaller chapter may not be able to do everything that the larger chapters can. Jim said the Strategic Plan is for the organization and may not apply to every chapter. Alice said their chapter may have to import expertise from other chapters. Scott Fulton thanked Jim for his great job and hard work. Jim thanked the committee for their work too.

**There was a motion by Rich Henderson to accept the 2016-2018 TPE Strategic Plan. Alice Mirk seconded it. The motion carried.**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### 10. Outreach Coordinator Position Proposal – DISCUSSION

Chris Kirkpatrick shared comments regarding the budget. We just approve the Strategic Plan and how this will be played out. He needs an implementation strategy for the plan and he needs to do this with staff work plans. He thinks the next step is a finalized budget in. We need commitments from chapters to fund this position. What is reasonable, what helps the specific chapters, this needs to be balanced among the chapters. This needs to be a sustainable position in the TPE budget. Chris would like to work with the Executive Committee to come up with specifics regarding the position. Jack asked if a job description can be made prior to the chapters input. Chris said we can work with the information we have and this can be a preliminary job description. Scott said this is a good idea to have the executive committee work on this. Linda asked for clarification as to what the various staff positions are now, like a brief summary of what staff are doing; Joe, Winnie, Jerry, and Diane.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### Iris Drive Prairie Acquisition

Jack Kusssmaul gave a brief summary and how formal Southwest Chapter approval was given for this project by the chapter and the land protection committee. Gary Eldred gave an update to the land

owner. The owner does not want to sell a partial piece of property, this is a 107 acres parcel. Chris referred to today's email and asked for questions.

There was a motion by Rich Henderson to proceed with this project and apply for State Stewardship Funds. Jim Rogala seconded it. The motion passed.

### **TPE Bylaws Revision Process**

David Hamel asked for the TPE Bylaws that should be reviewed. Chris will circulate the updated and revised bylaws and they will be updated on the website as well.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Scott Fulton gave an update on the conference, banquet, speakers and topics. The story of the Sauk Prairie will be told from the beginning. Josh Mayer will put together a slide show for during dinner of projects with photos. There will be a brief after dinner awards, announcements and wrap up. Evanne suggested that chapters appoint a coordinator and pull together items for the auction. Chris mentioned the awards, last year we did not give out a TPE Enthusiast of the Year. We need nominations by January or early February. Gary mentioned the color newsletter and how great it looks. Chris gave an update on the Dairy land Power Coop printing the TPE budget.

### 12. Adjournment

There was a motion by Evanne Hunt to adjourn. Scott Fulton seconded it. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

### 2016 Board Meetings:

Tuesday January 19, 2016, 7:05 pm via conference call  
Sunday February 21, 2016, 10:00 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

Minutes submitted by Joe Rising, Communications Coordinator