CPAWS Southern Alberta Chapter
Annual General Meeting Minutes
September 25, 2025, 19.00
By Zoom Conference Call

Attendance: The Chapter's Bylaws indicate that a quorum of ten (10) members must be present at the Annual General Meeting. The Meeting convened as scheduled at 19.00 and quorum was established.

1. Land Acknowledgment
Given by Jon Mee.

2. Quorum confirmed
Jon Mee in the chair confirmed that we had a quorum prior to giving the land acknowledgement.

3. Review and approval of the agenda and the minutes of the 2024 AGM.

Jon Mee noted an error in the wording of the motion for item 7 with the omission of the word "changes" after the word "proposed".

MOTION: To adopt the agenda, moved Deanna Steblyk, seconded Sarita Barrett, adopted by consensus.

MOTION: to approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of September 18, 2024.

Adopted by consensus.

4. Approval of the 2025 Financial Statements

Jon Mee referred to the audited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2025 which had been circulated in advance along with the agenda.

MOTION: that the audited financial statements of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society Southern Alberta chapter for the year ended March 31, 2025, be approved.

Moved by Jon Mee, seconded by Doug Firby

Motion as presented, carried.

5. Financial Update, Lana Mezquita, Treasurer

Jon began by thanking Lana Mezquita, Tatiana Jaciw-Zurakiwsky, Finance and Operations Director and Katie Morrison, Executive Director for their work on the financial statements. Lana provided an overview of the financial position of the society as of March 31st, 2025. Lana noted that the society enjoyed a significant increase in revenue over the year ($236,000). We ended the year with a small shortfall in revenues over expenditures (approximately $35,000) but noted that this had been budgeted for and was part of a deliberate strategy of deploying assets to meet our needs.

There were no questions of Lana.

6. Appointment of Auditors for 2025 - 2026

MOTION: that Buchannan Barry LLP be appointed as the auditors for the society for year ending March 31 2026

Moved by Jon Mee, seconded by Deanna Steblyk

Discussion: Lana Mezquita reviewed the history of having Buchanan Barry LLP as our auditors (about ten years) and noted that the finance committee reviews every year the question of whether it would be appropriate to put the contract out for bid. The committee is satisfied with the Buchanan Barry's performance and therefore again proposed their appointment.

Motion as presented carried unanimously.

Lana also provided an update under this agenda item on the financial position of the society in the current year (April though to July). She noted that we have budget for an increase in revenues of about $200,000. At this stage revenues are unfavourable to budget and expenses favourable. These variations are not unusual or a cause for concern given the timing of grants and the timing of when expenses actually incurred.

Lana noted that the significant unrestricted assets line ($443K) allows us to respond nimbly to new needs.

Jon Mee questioned how the finance committee reviews the adequacy of the restricted asset class (rainy day fund). This is currently at $260K. Lana responded that the committee reviews this annually with some debate about what the fund should cover (all current employees or just a core). Lana noted that this chapter is strongly placed by comparison with other CPAWS's chapters.

7. Special Resolution: bylaw amendment

Jon Mee introduced the special resolution to amend the society's bylaws referring to the principal reasons for the changes: clarify membership rules, provide for electronic meetings, address inconsistencies, adopt nonbinary language and describe the role of the treasurer. Jon also referred to the materials that had been pre-circulated: the existing consolidated, bylaws, the text of the special resolution proposing the amendments, and the explanatory memorandum from Nigel Bankes as chair of the governance committee.

MOTION: that the proposed changes to the by-laws of the society be approved.

Moved Jon Mee, seconded Connie Van der Byl. There being no discussion Jon called the question.

Motion as presented carried unanimously.

8. Year In Review

Presentation by Katie Morrison, Executive Director.

Ms Morrison began by acknowledging the important role of CPAWS-SAB staff and the role of the Board. Ms Morrison's presentation covered the following topics:

- the results of the society's strategic planning exercise referencing the idea of the society as a catalyst for conservation bringing others together; as well as the four pillars of the plan: (1) protect, (2) educate and engage, (3) fund and (4) sustain.
- Protect –Ms Morrison referenced work on
    - The draft plan for parks – some evidence that CPAWS had been able to influence the draft plan
    - An Alberta nature strategy
    - CBD CoP 16, Cali, Columbia held a number of events including events on sub-national approaches to meeting protected area targets
    - *All Season Resort Act* – serious concerns about regulatory discretion; working with the Department on regulations as well as working more proactively on sustainable recreation
    - National Park – input on the Banff railways lands redevelopment plan
    - Public lands – coal has come back as a big issue; CPAWS leads a broad collaborative group; December 2004 coal industry modernization initiative (CIMI); Northback seems to be coming forward with a new Grassy Mountain project; CPAWS continues to advocate for no new coal on the eastern slopes
    - Land use planning – worked on the ten-year review of the South Saskatchewan Plan and work on irrigation expansions projects
    - Forest management – kudos to Josh Killeen who leads this work; continuing work on bull trout in Loomis Creek; still waiting on what action DFO will take if any in relation to unauthorized construction of a bridge by West Fraser's predecessor two years go. Our work on Loomis Creek has also led to further and more general work on loss of critical trout habitat as a result of forest operations as well as field work on restoration, sediment control and identification of redds.
- Educate and engage
    - Ms Morrison introduced a pathway to engagement: awareness, knowledge, skills, behaviour change, systems change
    - Key elements here are our education programs, a youth conservation collective (funded by the federal ECCC), Alberta grasslands stories program, community engagement programs including touring the film Dry Horizons and attendance again at the Kainai Ecosystem Protection Association meeting.
- Fund and sustain
    - Ms Morrison noted that we continued to work on our systems to provide efficiency, accountability and transparency including continuing work on our

financial processes. Much of our work on financial processes has been led by Tatiana. Katie also referenced a new donor website and encouraged those in the meeting to sign up on the society's volunteer page and newsletter.

9. Election of Board of Directors for 2025/2026

Jon Mee noted that members are typically nominated for one-year terms and that the bylaws do not stipulate a maximum number of renewals. Phil Nykyforuk, for example, has been on the board for 15 years which helps provide some institutional memory.

Board nominees standing for re-election: Jon Mee, Phil Nykyforuk, Doug Firby, Lana Mezquita, Nigel Bankes, Elliot Fox, Nicole Edge and Connie Van der Byl

Board nominees standing for election: Deanna Steblyk, Sarita Barrett, Douglas Mills and Don McGarvey.

MOTION: That the presented slate of Directors be accepted as the Directors for the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society Southern Alberta Chapter for the coming year.

Moved by Jon Mee, seconded by Deanna Steblyk. All in favour. Carried.

The discussion that followed (principally referring to Katie's report and a note in the chat) expressed kudos to all staff for their work and dedication through some challenging times.

Katie agreed to share her year in review powerpoint with participants.

Elliot Fox drew members' attention to concerns as to a possible new dam being studied for the Belly River.

Jon Mee indicated that he would canvass board members for a new date for a first meeting. He also indicated that it was unlikely that we would have in-person board meetings

Jon expressly requested that the minutes reflect his undertaking (arising from the summer gathering of staff and board members at Jon's house) to return trucks to one of Lana's children.

10. Other Business

No formal motion for other business.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

Moved Connie Van der Byl, seconded Lana Mezquita

The meeting adjourned shortly after 20.00.