

Minutes of the General Meeting of the Kingston Field Naturalists held February 19, 2015, Queen's University, 7:30 p.m.

Opening Remarks

Kurt Hennige welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming out on a bitter, cold evening. He thanked Polly Aiken for providing refreshments before the meeting.

Acceptance of Minutes of General Meeting for January 15, 2015

Recording Secretary, Janis Grant, referred members to the minutes of the January meeting, which are posted on the KFN website. There were no corrections

Motion

Moved by John Critchley, seconded by Larry McCurdy that the minutes be accepted.

Carried

New Business

Bud Rowe Treasurer, Larry McCurdy, thanked Bud for his many years of service to KFN, most recently as our auditor. Bud, and his wife Joan, are moving to British Columbia and will no longer be able to review our finances. Bud thanked Joan for her assistance with the audits.

Motion for KFN to Make a Further Donation to APAI

Larry McCurdy explained that the KFN Executive had voted to contribute \$500 to the Association to Protect Amherst Island (APAI) in January. This was announced at the January General Meeting. \$500 is the maximum the Executive can spend without approval from the membership. During the January meeting the following motion was made by member, Chris Grooms:

Motion

*Moved by Chris Grooms, seconded by Larry McCurdy that:
KFN top up the KFN's donation to APAI from \$500 to \$5,000.*

This motion was tabled until February in order to allow the Executive to consider it. Following this discussion, the Executive is prepared to recommend to the membership a further donation of \$4,500 to APAI:

Discussion

-KFN are landowners of a Nature Reserve on Amherst Island. Three proposed turbines will be situated beside the property, which will have a negative impact on the charitable purpose of our property. We are well within our legal right to oppose the turbines and to support other opponents, such as APAI.

-Amherst Island is an environmentally sensitive IBA situated on a major flyway for birds and bats. Wind energy is important but should not be placed here because of the negative impact on its habitat.

-At the moment, APAI seems to be the most effective and best opportunity to prevent the turbines being constructed.

-KFN is in good financial shape with a substantial accumulation of funds. We can afford to support APAI.

-The government ignores IBA's (Important Bird Areas) such as Amherst Island when it suits their purpose, which leaves the courts as the only recourse to oppose them. Going to court takes money.

-Prince Edward County Field Naturalists have also been fighting the installation of wind turbines at Ostrander Point to protect wildlife in an ANSI and IBA. KFN has helped them with \$2,000 in contributions and may recommend they be given more.

Some KFN members expressed opposition to the motion stating that:

- APAI are viewed as NIMBI's (Not In My Back Yard) who are not confined to scientific arguments to oppose the environmental impacts of wind turbines.
- Wind is an important form of green energy that KFN should not oppose
- The money should be spent elsewhere rather than on a legal battle that may end up costing more
- Will there be many more requests for donations for legal fees. At what point do we say "no"?

KFN's Constitution requires that a quorum of 25 members be present before a vote. Kurt reminded those in attendance that non-members cannot vote.

Vote:

In favour: 43; Opposed 1

Carried

Members Observation

-Jackie Bartnik has had a Pileated Woodpecker as a regular visitor to her yard.

-Lynn Bell saw 2 Peregrine Falcons on the Princess Towers on February 14.

-Rose-Marie Burke has had 3 White Throated Sparrows and 2 Pine Siskins at her bird feeders this month.

-Several members have observed flocks of Redpolls at their feeders.

Nomination Committee

A Nomination Committee of Gaye Beckwith (Chair), Erwin Batalla and Peter Good has been established for 2015. Members are encouraged to suggest names of members for the Executive and Committees to the Nominations Committee.

Featured Speaker

Alexandra Simmonds introduced speaker Dr. Herwart Helmstaedt from Queen's University Department of Geology. Dr. Helmstaedt gave an interesting talk and slide presentation *On the Fringes of Beringia* –observations from a recent trip to Alaska and the Yukon.

He was thanked by Alexandra.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm. There were approximately 52 people in attendance.