

ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED CONSERVATIONISTS

Zoom Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Dick Steffes

Wednesday, March 2, 2021

Laurel opened the meeting with a moment of silence for those who have passed and U.S. troops serving in harm's way.

Treasurer/Minutes: Treasurer Dick Steffes reported ARC has a checking balance of \$75 but is significantly under water financially. When ARC starts meeting again, we will have to continue to add \$2.00 dues per meal until ARC regains its footing. In the meantime, with the approval of the executive team, the treasurer is loaning funds to us so ARC can meet its obligations. \$75 was sent to the Natural Resources Foundations in remembrance of Dean Tvedt. A partial payment of \$325 was made to the webmaster for services to ARC. Previous meeting minutes are no longer read but are available on the website.

ETF: Bob Schaefer reported in early on the agenda to accommodate his schedule. He reported that open enrollment for health insurance in 2021 will run September 27 to October 22. Delta Dental has a new contract with the state to provide dental coverage. However, the contract award is being disputed. Bob advises members to look at their yearly dental expenses: premium costs are roughly the same as two teeth cleanings per year. If that's all the dental work you anticipate, carrying the insurance is a wash. If you anticipate more dental work like crowns or fillings, insurance may be financially advantageous.

New Members: Cindy Hoffland attended her second meeting and was unanimously approved for membership. Her one-time \$5.00 dues will be collected.

Old Business: Following up on ARC's endorsement of renewing Stewardship at \$50 million per year for ten years, Laurel reported that the Governor's Office acknowledged our support and included renewing the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship at \$70 million per year for 10 years in the Governor's draft budget. Next will be to urge support of the Legislative Joint Finance Committee. Individual notes of support are extremely powerful. ARC members can use an on-line form on state representative and senator websites to register support of Stewardship. Just go to the legislator's website and select contact or requests. Check the ARC website (wisarc.org) "What's New" tab for information on the value of renewing Stewardship.

New Business: New member Cindy Hoffland had reported that she received no information that ARC existed when she retired. ARC had had a paper brochure that went out with retiree materials, but when that information went all electronic, information about ARC was dropped. Laurel worked with Deputy Secretary Todd Amb's and the current HR director to get ARC noted in electronic pre-retirement email information. It urges retirees to consult wisarc.org about joining. Knowing that Madison-based ARC may not work in for people living in other areas of the state, ARC has reached out to other DNR retiree groups and has added contacts for people wishing to join local informal groups in Green Bay, Rhinelander and Spooner. Laurel had asked

if anyone had contacts with the Eau Claire group. She subsequently received contact information from Bruce Neeb, and it will be added. Local group contact information is under the "About Us" tab on the ARC website. We hope connecting with those groups will result in retirees from all over the state attending the annual picnic or holiday party.

Death and Illnesses: I&E veteran Dean Tvedt passed away. The obituary is noted under the "What's New" tab.

No trips or jokes were reported. Business meeting was adjourned.

Bruce Braun introduced the March speaker, Dave Clutter, the Executive Director of the Natural Resources Foundation (NRF) since September 19, 2019. Dave presented a Power Point about the finances, priorities and initiatives at the NRF. Dave noted that Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) legislation is pending in the U.S. House of Representatives. As proposed, it would provide \$1.4 billion per year nationwide. Wisconsin's share would increase from \$900,000 to \$21 million per year, resulting in a very significant benefit to conservation efforts. Like the Pittman - Robertson or Sport Fishery Restoration programs , 25 per cent state or private match is needed.