

BLUE GOOSE ALLIANCE
Minutes of Annual Meeting
Flying X Ranch
Georgetown, Texas
February 22-25, 2006

At 5 PM on February 22, an ice breaker set up by John and Peggy Doebel in the Georgetown Holiday Inn Express, welcomed the gathering of Board Members, Working Group Members, Spouses, and Management and Friends of Balcone Canyonlands NWR. Good German beer, soft drinks, hors d'oeuvres, good friends, casual conversation, and a common cause got the annual meeting off to a running start.

The group was warmly greeted by the staff of Balcones Canyonlands and their Friends Group. A special thanks to the Friends Group for donating us copious snacks during our meeting.

Gathered on the Flying X Ranch, courtesy of the Balcones Canyonlands NWR, President Bill Reffalt called the annual meeting of the Blue Goose Alliance to order at 8:40 AM on February 23, 2006.

Present:

- *Bill Reffalt—President.
- *Joe D. White—Secretary.
- *Don Redfearn.
- *Evelyn Redfearn.
- *Charles Danner.
- *John Doebel.
- * Phil Morgan.
- Christine Enright-Reffalt.
- One guest.

*Officers and board members.

A quorum was present.

President Bill Reffalt welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda.

Reading of the 2005 annual meeting minutes was dispensed with, as they were individually read, proofed and approved earlier.

Treasurer' Report: Treasurer Gail Fishman, who was not present, had prepared the financial report, sent it to the meeting via Secretary Joe White, who read it aloud to the gathering and passed it around for the group's inspection. This report is as follows as of February 19, 2006:

Beginning Balance 2005	\$7516.03
General Fund	\$6891.03
Danny Redfearn	\$625.00
Ending Balance 2005	\$8218.21
General Fund	\$6543.21
Danny Redfearn	\$1675.00
Beginning Balance 2006	\$8218.21
As of 2/19/06	\$11658.21
General Fund Balance	\$6983.21
Danny Redfearn	\$4675.00

Old Business:

President Reffalt announced the annual report had not been completed, but will be presented via email later.

With the Advanced Ruling Period for our temporary 501(c)(3) status expired on September 30,2005, Secretary Joe White reported the filing of two 501(c)(3) reports required by IRS in 2005. One report concerning effects of the change to the bylaws in 2005 was reviewed and accepted by IRS as making no change in BGA's 501(c) (3) status. The second report, involving a six year financial report, has not yet been evaluated by IRS, nor a final status determination made. The BGA will continue operations as before, assuming permanent 501 (c) (3) status will be granted by the IRS. A brief discussion of the 501(c) (3) issue followed this presentation.

President Reffalt conducted a brief review of individual refuge issues BGA had taken a position on during 2005, issues involving Kirwin, Minnesota Valley, Yukon Flats, National Bison Range Complex, Desert Complex, Little Pend Orielle, Upper Mississippi River, and Loxahatchee refuges.

Chuck Danner led a discussion of communication issues, presented hand out materials dealing with past website use, Yahoo email group use, and a mock up of the new website currently under design. He brought the group up to date on the selection of the website designer, the features planned to include in the new website, and the need to keep it fresh, up to date, and accurate. A substantial anonymous donation was received that will allow us to move this project forward as planned. He also discussed problems we have been experiencing with the Yahoo groups and a need for a modification and simplification of membership approval process.

John Doebel offered a motion that new member acceptance require only Executive Committee approval and that once approved, members be added directly to the BGA-WG Motion was seconded by Phil Morgan and passed unanimously by voice vote

The new procedure is as follows: Affiliate Members wishing to nominate prospective new Affiliate Members should make their nomination to the President (or Acting President). They should provide the person's name, email address, and a brief description of their nominee's background pertinent to the Blue Goose Alliance's mission and membership. The President and Executive Committee (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Vice President for Communications) will approve/disapprove the nomination and that decision will be announced to the BGA-WG at large. When approved, the new member will be added directly to the BGA-WG and sent a welcoming message by the Vice President for Communications. All Affiliates are encouraged to welcome new Affiliate Members as announcements are made.

A brief discussion focused on the need to get the Working Group involved in BGA issues and activities. It was suggested that it would even be appropriate for the President to single out Working Group individuals for assignments.

New Business

A discussion of outreach strategy was led by President Reffalt in which he recommended sending a three member team, including himself, John Doebel, and Phil Morgan, to Washington D.C. this spring to get a jump on this fall's congressional election by interfacing with and placing BGA's name, mission, and strategy before congressional staffs and NGOs. NGOs should include The Wilderness Society, Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council and Audubon Society. The team would also seek out individuals in the D.C. area that might serve as BGA contacts with the important stakeholders and the Congress. A group discussion of Bill's recommendation followed, as did a pressing need for influential champions of our mission, the pressing need for an expanded base of support, and a hypothetical new Federal Department of National Conservation Lands.

The group held a brief discussion on the prospect of listing in the Combined Federal Campaign, but present rules preclude our eligibility and the rules are getting more stringent. Nonetheless, we will continue to look into that possibility as a funding source.

John Martin's written report concerning his desire to abolish organizational layering and secrecy, and the need to better communicate with the entire membership was passed out, individually read, and discussed by the group, but no action was taken on this report.

President Reffalt led a short discussion of the non-existent Advisory Board which resulted in the recognition that the concept just had never worked out and we simply do not have one at the time. The group agreed to step back from and table the issue for now.

President Reffalt led a discussion about getting our message out, contacting a receptive media outlet, right timing, and the need for feed back from the Working Group. Following this discussion the meeting was adjourned for the day.

On the morning of the second day, February 24, 2006, the group was treated to a tour of Balcone Canyonlands NWR led by Refuge Manager Deborah Holle and Deputy Manager Kelly McDowell.

Following the tour and before the meeting resumed, Phil Morgan presented a plaque to Bill Reffalt, honoring and showing appreciation for his diligent labors as President of BGA.

President Reffalt called the meeting to order at 12:30 PM and led a general discussion of where BGA is now and where it is going. There was unanimous agreement that BGA needs more participation from more recent membership who are more familiar with the current Refuge System and maybe even an infusion of new blood on the Board. Time, experience, and a failure to achieve certain goals hints at a need to scale back our expectations and be selective about issues we are willing to take on was also a topic of discussion. A need for regional BGA representatives was identified.

Evelyn Redfearn presented a motion for the Board to appoint regional representatives. That motion was seconded by Phil Morgan and passed unanimously by voice vote.

John Doebel offered a motion to hold another BGA meeting this October 9th or 10th in Albuquerque, New Mexico and hold it in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's annual retirement gathering. Motion was seconded by Evelyn Redfearn and passed unanimously by voice vote.

That concluded the general business meeting.

Following a break, the group launched into a brief Board of Directors Meeting at 2:30PM.

A new budget for 2006 was not put forward and there was general agreement that we could continue to operate as we have with past budgets.

Several possible candidates for regional representatives were identified and will be contacted and appointed by the President if they agree to serve.

Board members present each adopted several Working Group members to contact and personally encourage them to become more involved in BGA activities and that they attend the September meeting in Albuquerque.

That concluded the Board of Directors Meeting at 3:30 PM.

The Business Meeting scheduled for Saturday morning, February 25, 2006 was moved up and conducted on February 24, 2006, beginning at 3:30 PM.

Current status of several Board Members and Officers as of the opening of this annual meeting included:

President Bill Reffalt retired as President effective the close of this meeting, but agreed to remain on the Board of Directors

Vice President Burkett Neely resigned his office prior to the meeting, but agreed to remain on the Board of Directors.

Directors John Oberheu and Mike Daulton resigned prior to the meeting and elected not to stand for another term.

The Vice President for Communication office has been vacant since Les Beaty's resignation in August, 2005.

Directors Florence LaRiviere, Jim Hubert, and Bill Reffalt terms expired at this meeting.

This left the following offices vacant and in need of occupants: President, Vice President, Vice President for Communications, and four Directors.

The nominating committee presented the following slate of Officers and Directors for the Board's consideration:

Directors: Florence LaRiviere

Jim Hubert

Glen Elison

Bill Reffalt

Vice President: John Doebel

Vice President for Communications: Charles Danner

Phil Morgan offered a motion that the Board accept the slate of officers as offered. Don Redfearn seconded the motion and the motion unanimously passed by voice vote.

Vice President John Doebel agreed to serve as Acting President until the October meeting in Albuquerque while the nominating committee continues to search for a willing candidate for the office of President and to remain on as Vice President for a full two year term after the new President is installed

At the request of incoming acting President Doebel, the following action items were made a part of the minutes:

Contact and choose regional representatives by April 30—Board.

Advise membership of new procedure for approving new members—Chuck Danner.

Complete the new web site by June 30—Chuck Danner.

Complete 2005 annual report by March 30—Bill Reffalt.

Check with John Martin concerning completion of New Horizon document—Evelyn Redfearn.

Draft a letter to the FWS Director for the President's signature concerning his failure to list refuges as one of his six priorities for 2006—Bill Reffalt.

Ask Gail to draft a letter of appreciation for the President's use in expressing our appreciation for donations—Joe White.

Flesh out proposed Washington spring trip with details of who to meet with—Bill Reffalt.

The search committee was charged with finding a President nominee by July 15—Evelyn Redfearn (Chair) and Phil Morgan.

The annual meeting was adjourned at 5PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Joe D. White, Secretary:

Approved By

John Doebel, Vice President (Acting President)