

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board
Williamsburg Bird Club
Monday, June 17, 2013**

Conference Room, Human Services Building, 5249 Olde Towne Road, Williamsburg

Board Member Attendees: Fred Blystone, Anne Carpenter, Shirley Devan, Geoff Giles, Cathy Millar, Jeanette Navia, Joe Piotrowski

Board Members Absent: None

Chair Attendees: Geoff Giles, Jeanette Navia, Bill Williams

Chair Attendees Absent: John Fennell, Lee Schuster, Barb Streb

Guests: None

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by President, Shirley Devan, who apologized for long interval between meetings which appeared to not have any ill effect.

Secretary's Report – Cathy Millar

Minutes of January 14, 2013 Board Meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report – Ann Carpenter

Ann reported that only 1 more book of Bill William's *The Birds of Virginia's Colonial Historic Triangle* needs to be sold to put the production of the book in the black, whereupon Bill handed her an envelope of undisclosed amount of money for recent sales of his book!

Ann submitted a chart of the Club's assets, income and expenses as of June 14, 2013

- Income \$8,327
- Expenses \$ 6,414
- Balance \$ \$1,898
- Total assets \$10, 127 including checking account and certificates of deposit.

Discussion ensued regarding club's income (large percentage of the annual income except for anticipated second check from Wild Birds Unlimited having been collected) being down by about \$1500 compared to last year. Membership dues are down by about \$200. Shirley voiced frustration of members stating they were leaving because of not being able to attend meetings or field trips. She wondered how to get across the importance of continuing membership to support the work/mission of the club.

Wild Birds Unlimited donations are down. Ann expressed concern about accuracy of staff at WBU keeping track of membership purchases as bird seed bought there by Deb Woodward for the Child Development Resources Feeder Project this year did not show up in the donation/rebate from WBU. Receipts are kept in an index card box at the store but the purchaser must remind the store that one is a member if not already recognized. Fred noted that the relationship between WBU and our club is built on trust and recommended not endangering it by bringing the situation to their attention. There was a general murmur of agreement.

Ann brought up the expenses incurred by the Child Development Resources Feeder Project started in 2010 with a \$500 budget. \$483 spent to date. Sara Lewis spent \$600 last year. Shirley said that \$600 was reasonable and that Deb Woodward be reminded to stay within that limit.

Shirley summarized that financially the club is OK but asked what we needed to look out for next year. The biggest expenses are the nature camp scholarships and graduate student grants. Perhaps we will need to reconsider the number of nature camp scholarships we can offer.

Fred suggested that we could solicit the membership for donations to the CDR Feeder Project.

President's Report – Shirley Devan

Shirley announced that she is stepping down from the position of president at the end of this year after having served 6 years. The nominating committee in Sept/Oct will need to seek nominees for the position.

Committee Reports:

- Newsletter: Fred Blystone expressed a lot of frustration that submissions to the Flyer arrive at the last minute each month taking the fun out of the job of getting it ready for release as leads to his being able to do little else during the last week of every month. He gave an example of members sending a full month's list of bird spotting rather than submitting observations throughout the month. He tries to get the Flyer to the printer the first or second day of the month so that bird sightings at the end of the previous month get in. Other board members wondered if the membership is even aware of deadlines for the Flyer. It was asked if Fred would like help with folding, addressing and stamping but Fred declined. It was noted how much easier electronic newsletters are to produce. Jeanette said the proportion of first class mail newsletters versus electronic remains the same: 62 by mail, 85 electronically. Fred said he would write something about timelier reporting from the membership in the upcoming summer issue of the Flyer. Fred also asked that the board consider cutting back the Flyer to 6 issues per year (currently 10). There was some discussion but no further recommendations.
- Programs: Joe Piotrowski said he has not set up any yet but will be sending out emails soon. Asked for recommendations. Shirley suggested a program about the Whimbrel study by Fletcher Smith at W&M's Center Conservation Biology.

Geoff recommended the Nightjar study by Mike Wilson and also a program by Ruth Beck about the recent changes at Craney Island.

Ann said a program about local birding hot spots would be popular.

Shirley offered to do one about Prothonotary Warbler banding.

Shirley reported that Dr. Dan Cristol has said he will again reserve the room for us at W&M for the upcoming year and arrange for permission for parking with permits.

- Field Trips: Geoff Giles reported that there are plans for the annual August trip to Craney Island with Ruth Beck.

September: Hog Island is under consideration. Bill Williams recommended getting in touch with refuge manager, John Randolph, to outline permissible areas for birding. Also recommended getting in touch with Stephen Living for details about getting a group permit, etc.

October: Grandview Beach in Hampton recommended by Bill for marsh and sea birds.

November: Shirley Plantation

December: Bird Count on the 15th.

January: Chesapeake Bay boat trip. Geoff noted that the VA Beach Birding Festival held the following weekend wants to add a boat trip to their schedule using the same captain. Hoped it would not affect rates given our group.

Other recommendations were getting together with Richmond Audubon Society to go to Curles Neck; birding for winter waterfowl along the Colonial Parkway; birding at Chippokes Plantation; coordinating with Dan Cristol when he takes his grad students to Jamestown Island; Yorktown Battlefield; Newport News Park; and perhaps a full day trip to birding hot spots in northern VA.

- Membership: Jeanette Navia passed around a print out of a detailed membership profile. Total number of addresses is 148 which translate to about 200 members. Six new members for 2013. Approximately 20 did not renew this year.
- Adopt-a-Highway: John Fennel not present.
- Records and Bird Counts: Bill Williams said he has Bill Sheehan's collection of notebooks full of 60-70 years of bird data at his house. Bill Sheehan died in 2000. Bill described how the Center for Conservation Biology has initiated the Virginia Avian Heritage Program to systematically collect/organize historical and contemporary data under one roof and to start digitalizing them. His recommendation that Sheehan's collection be given to this program was heartily endorsed by the Board.

Bill reported that he has continued Sheehan's job of daily notations of local bird data. He asked about what form these records should be maintained now and in the future, i.e. electronically. Shirley suggested using the infrastructure that the CCB puts in place. Also suggested that Bill backup his data by alternating with 2 thumb drives.

Bill also asked that we consider how to keep his book, *The Birds of Virginia's Colonial Historic Triangle*, updated. Do we consider eventually printing another book or putting it on line? Fred said there is no problem updating the book on line in its current form, adding photos and fresh data. Shirley said there are all kinds of ways of putting books on line including having subscriptions to updates. Bill said he would appreciate feedback from those who know how to make it work.

- Refreshments: Barb Streb not present but Shirley reported she has everything lined up for the fall.
- Library Liaison: Lee Schuster not present. Jeanette said she will follow up to see what books were purchased with the club donation.
- Historian: Open

New Business:

Bill Williams reported that two major contributing members of the Bird Club, Joe Doyle and Jeanne Armour, have died recently and thought some info should be gathered to honor them, as in the Flyer.

Shirley stated next meeting will be in September.

Shirley adjourned the meeting at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Millar, Secretary,
Williamsburg Bird Club
June 18, 2013