

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board

Williamsburg Bird Club

January 18, 2017

Andrew's Hall, Room 101, W&M, Williamsburg, VA

Board Member Attendees: Bill Williams, Cheryl Jacobson, Judy Jones, Ann Carpenter, Cathy Millar, Gary Carpenter, Deane Gordon, Geoff Giles.

Board Members Absent: None

Chair Attendees: Lisa Nickel, Shirley Devan, Jim Corliss, Jan Lockwood, Bill Williams, Jeanette Navia,

Chair Attendees Absent: Lee Schuster, Tom McCary

The meeting was called to order at 6 pm by President Bill Williams. Bill greeted the board complimenting them as a "well-oiled machine". The main purpose of this meeting is to begin planning the club's 40th anniversary celebrations.

Secretary's Report – Cathy Millar: Cathy had emailed the minutes of the last meeting held in October shortly after that meeting for review and corrections were made at that time and then emailed it again just before this meeting. The minutes were approved by consensus.

Treasurer's Report – Ann Carpenter: Copies of a current spread sheet that Ann had prepared were distributed and briefly reviewed. Ann noted that our current deficit of \$1338 accidentally did not show up on the spread sheet but will send out a corrected form in a PDF file. She reported that we spent more last year than we took in with a resulting deficit of almost \$1700. The year before though, we had the Ruth Beck Memorial Fund which has financially put us in excellent shape. Minus the monies that we took in the calendar year of 2016-17 dues, our check book ended at \$10,272.31 and Certificates of Deposit at \$7,980.76 yielding a total of \$18,253.07 in assets. Ann noted that much of the deficit was due to the added Nature Camp Scholarship we gave last year.

Chairperson of Refreshments – Ruth Gordon: Ruth reported that she and Geoff Giles are providing the refreshments tonight and refreshments are arranged for the February meeting. There will be a sign-up sheet at the back of the room to organize providers for the rest of the year.

VP of Programs – Cheryl Jacobson: Cheryl reported that she has programs arranged for all our meetings until our summer adjournment. Speakers are needed for our September, October and November meetings.

Chairperson of Field Trips – Shirley Devan: Shirley reported that she has field trips scheduled through February and is open to suggestions for March onward. She prefers scheduling the field trips on the 3rd Saturday of every month to avoid conflicts.

Publicity: Bill Williams started a discussion about more ways of getting the word out about our club's activities via social media.

- Bill recommended that we arrange with Dan that for each meeting we have upcoming field trips and programs and bird pictures projected up front until the program begins.
- Shirley has been posting our events in the Williamsburg Gazette and Daily Press. Bill suggested adding the Williamsburg Yorktown Daily. Judy Jones volunteered to help Shirley investigate doing that. There was a question of whether Dan Cristol could help us via his column.
- Bill enquired about how we are getting word out to W&M students. Lisa Nickel, as Associate Dean of Research and Public Services at the Swem Library, gets copies of *Student Happenings* which contains posts of activities from student groups. She said she would look into whether outside groups are allowed to post in it. Cheryl commented that the president of the W&M Bird Club gets our emails and she announces our activities to the club.
- Judy Jones suggested that the web sites williamsburgfamilies.com and HamptonRoads.com could be good avenues to spread the word.
- Shirley commented that we need to remember to post all the activities on the Club's FB page.
- Bill asked that all posts emphasize that this is our 40th year and welcome everyone.

Chairperson of Bird Counts – Jim Corliss: Jim reported that the Spring Bird Count will be Sunday, April 30th and the Christmas Bird Count on Sunday, December 17th. Bill recommended that the dates of these counts be also projected on the front of the room at each WBC meeting and elsewhere as many times as possible. He is hoping that we can increase the number of participants from 133 to 150 this year.

Scholarships: Bill enquired about the current status of Nature Camp Scholarships and W&M Grad Student grants. Judy said Lee Schuster had been in charge and she assisted her with the Nature Camp Scholarship from our bird club. Applications for the W&M grants are vetted by Dan Cristol. Ann Carpenter will send Bill a copy of the letter that she's written in the past to the business dept. of the Biology Dept. offering them the opportunity to select candidates. A letter should probably be sent out this month as the decision is made by March. Shirley noted that we have to tell the Biology Department how many grants we are offering. We gave 4 last year keeping each grant at \$599 for tax purposes. Dan Cristol had requested the 4th one last year to help an undergrad student. For the moment, we collectively agreed to 3 this year.

40th WBC Anniversary Celebrations:

Bill commented that technically the club is well into the 40th year having started in Sept. 2016. He recommended celebrating in September as that was the month the club was started in Andrews Hall.

- **Planning Committee:** Bill's wife, Arlene, has already volunteered to assist. Bill asked the Board to think of club members to invite to participate in this committee which is a short term commitment and offers a way of sharing in the ownership of the club's success. Bill will announce at tonight's meeting that we are interested in volunteers.
- **Student Art:** Bill proposed that we do something with student art including elementary & middle schools and possibly even the W&M Bird Club where there is one very talented bird

artist (Megan Massa). One approach would be to contact an existing group of mostly master naturalists (one of them being our club member, Patty Maloney) which meets once a month and who work in every one of the York County elementary schools and to ask them to contact an art teacher with the proposal that our club is celebrating its 40th anniversary and would like to invite students to contribute art work. The parameters would need to be worked out but could be something like a favorite bird represented by photos, drawings, carvings, etc. The resulting art work could be shown at Wild Bird's Unlimited and Backyard Birder and result in giving students pleasure in participating and also bringing in relatives of the students who'd never been in those stores. No contact has been made to date about this project with the store owners.

Judy Jones suggested that if there are a sufficient number of participants that we mount the pictures on backboard and put them on display in the public library. She reported that each school gets a month so would need to identify a slot. She also proposed that if some of the art is exceptional and if we could get permission from student and parents, we then could make notecards that could be sold to the bird club. Shirley Devan suggested talking to Megan Massa, member of W&M Bird Club and talented artist, about doing an illustration of the Red-headed Woodpecker for notecards. Ann Carpenter said she had a friend at Colonial Heritage who has all the equipment for making notecards.

Bill hinted that he and Arlene are working on something that is along similar lines but a little more elaborate. He also said Arlene's flower shop could sell any notecards that might be produced.

The group agreed that the art project was worth pursuing. Bill said he would talk to Patty Maloney. Judy said she had a contact in the James City County schools. Bill said Deb Taber would be someone who would know who to contact at Walsingham Academy.

- **Showcasing the Club's 40 Years of Accomplishments:** Bill explored how we can show people what the club has done to provide opportunities to study and learn about birds and promote bird conservation during the club's existence and how we have invested our money in the community. He said he would like to collect how many field trips there have been over 40 years; how many speakers we have hosted at our meetings; how many scholarships we have given to young people and the amount of money we've invested; how many grad student grants we have awarded which he noted is also a return on an investment in W&M for their willingness to host our club; and how much money we have invested in library contributions.

Bill said he has all the copies of the WBC newsletter which led him to think that they should be all digitalized and put in an archive for an online data base. Shirley commented that a lot of info was collected for the 30th anniversary and that we should just be able to add data from the last 10 years to come up with pretty accurate results. There was speculation as to how much of this info Cynthia Long might already have in binders.

Bill then noted that we need folks to gather this data and that in this case we can divide these tasks amongst the board members as we have the resources at our fingertips. Shirley said the Nature Camp Scholarships go back only about 10 years. Bill thought the grad student scholarships were started back in the 1980's. Shirley said we have all the names of the grad students up until the 30th anniversary.

Bill commented that the projects (ex. Blue Bird, Purple Martin, Spring and Christmas Bird Counts, bird walks at NQP) in which the club has been involved should also be noted. Discussion then followed how to showcase what the club has accomplished. Bill suggested putting the info in our newsletter and also having the info on a poster that is shown at the anniversary meeting and at earlier meetings if possible. Others suggested articles in the newspaper. Shirley reported that she'd received an email from Greg Lilly, editor of *Williamsburg's Next Door Neighbors* magazine, asking if there was anyone in the bird club that we would like to feature. Shirley said she would email him back suggesting an article highlighting the bird club and perhaps include interviews of important contributing members like Bill. Jan enquired how this info can be still made available after the anniversary is over. Bill replied that the immediate thing would be to have it all on our web site. But that the broader issue is still about getting as much publicity out as possible this year via as many forms of communication as possible.

Judy suggested a power point presentation at our Sept. anniversary meeting. Bill has the one done at our 30th anniversary and would only need to be updated. Jan suggested a cake with 40 candles for the occasion. Deane asked if we had a list for the club's first year of the field trips taken and birds seen and where. Bill said the field trip announcements would be in the newsletters. The group agreed that it would be interesting to note what birds were common 40 years ago versus what is common now and that that info would be a great addition to the anniversary slide show.

Bill then asked who was willing to tackle these projects.

- Jim Corliss said he'd like to collect data on historical count.
- Cheryl Jacobson said she'd collect data about the speakers and their subjects that we've hosted.
- Shirley Devan said she would assemble data about field trips. Deane offered to help.
- Jan Lockwood would work on info about NQP walks.
- Jeanette Navia thought she'd be able to access info regarding contributions to the library.
- Ann Carpenter will look into data regarding Nature Camp Scholarships and grad student grants.
- Deane Gordon offered to look into getting the student art project underway and getting a James City County contact for it. Deane added that he has assembled the \$700 martin house and it is ready to be put up at the New Kent Forestry Center.

Cheryl enquired how we could have access to the old newsletters for the purpose of compiling the info. This reinforced the need to get them digitally archived. There were several proposals. Cheryl reported that Matt Anthony had once said that he could try to get them archived. Lisa said she could pay people to scan them at Swem. Shirley said that we ourselves could scan them and put them into PDF. Bill reported that when someone is ready to do it, he would supply his much valued collection of newsletters.

Bill also thought that he, Fred Blystone and a couple of others could go thru the current membership list and determine who the people are who are 40 year members and also note

those who sadly are no longer with us for the purpose of honoring them at the anniversary meeting.

Next Meeting: Monday, February 6 at Bill William's home at 1 pm.

Bill adjourned the meeting at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Millar, secretary,
Williamsburg Bird Club
January 24, 2017