

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board

Williamsburg Bird Club

January 14, 2019

Freedom Park Interpretive Center, 5537 Centerville Rd. Williamsburg, VA

Board Member Attendees: Cheryl Jacobson, Melinda Cousins, Ann Carpenter, Cathy Millar, Gary Carpenter, Shirley Devan, Judy Jones

Board Members Absent: Bill Williams

Chair Attendees: Jeanette Navia, George Martin, Jim Corliss, Lee Schuster, Catherine Flanagan, Rose Ryan, Nancy Barnhart

Chair Attendees Absent: Deane Gordon

Guest Attendee: Geoff Giles (mentoring field trip chairpersons).

The meeting was called to order by President Cheryl Jacobson at 1:30 pm. A quorum of the Executive Board was present.

New Board Members: Cheryl Jacobson welcomed everyone and especially new members to the Board, George Martin, Catherine Flanagan and Rose Ryan. Each board member gave a brief introduction of themselves.

Secretary's Report – Cathy Millar: Updated minutes had been shared with the board the week prior this meeting. Judy made a motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Shirley and unanimously approved. Cathy noted that when she became secretary 6 years ago, the paper copy of minutes was also being burned on compact discs for backup purposes. She enquired if it was still necessary now that the minutes are stored digitally. Jeanette who manages the club's web site confirmed that the minutes are all on our website. In the discussion in which the group agreed that back-up on compact discs is no longer needed, it was revealed that there was a need to have Jeanette's access codes to the club web site shared in the event Jeanette were not available. It was decided that a copy of these codes be kept with the secretary and treasurer.

Treasurer's Report – Ann Carpenter: Ann distributed a spread sheet of the club's assets, income and expenses for 2018 and an account balance sheet for the years 2012-2018. The total income for 2018 was \$9538 which was down by almost \$1300 from 2017. Expenses were also down (\$10304) from those of 2017(12703) which had included club anniversary costs. Ann noted that we have made a down payment of \$500 for the 2020 VSO Annual Meeting. She reviewed our current assets: Check Book - \$2618.93; 3 CD's totally \$8127.47 and Money Market- \$5002.84. Our total assets are \$15,749.24. She noted that there is a trending down of the monies we have in those three accounts over the last three years but that the money is there to be put to good use.

The money annually contributed by the club to various groups was reviewed as follows.

- **Child Development Resources:** Ann brought up the issue of setting a budget for supplying bird seed and suet to CDR which had been discussed last year and deferred until we learned the total cost for 2018. Gary who monitors the feeders spent \$508. He stated he gets called by CDR about every 6-8

weeks for another 40 lbs. of seeds. Judy made a motion that we appropriate \$600 for bird supplies for CDR. Ann seconded and approval was unanimous.

- Virginia Society of Ornithology: Shirley requested that we consider a more substantial contribution to VSO in 2019 and 2020 to support expenses of finishing the Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas 2. Paid block busters (experienced birders) are needed to collect data for underserved blocks in southwest and central southern parts of the state that are outside population areas. VABBA2 Director Ashley Peele has reported that they expect block busters to expend three field days (5-6 hours per day) of survey work per block. The estimated cost of each priority block is \$570. We pay \$25 dues to VSO. Melinda suggested a donation of \$500 to support the completion of a priority block. Shirley moved that we donate \$500 to VABBA2 this year. It was seconded by Melinda and approved unanimously.

-Community Cloud Forest Conservation: Cheryl noted that she'd previously shared an email from Bill Williams in which he suggested that we brainstorm how we can help fund the CCFC in Guatemala. Cheryl noted reasons for supporting CCFC. This is a country where many of our migratory birds are killed. The CCFC attempts to address all the issues of the local culture that impact the conservation of birds including farming techniques, providing markets and reforestation. Public education is not free after the 6th grade so poor families prioritize sending their boys and the girls do not receive any further education. One of CCFC's programs, WALC (Women for Agroecology Leadership for Conservation), offers a leadership training and empowerment program to provide the knowledge for young women to improve their lives and livelihoods on small-holder farms. Another program, Kids & Birds, includes teaching them about ecology, Agroecology, reforestation and birding. This has so greatly enhanced their appreciation of birds that boys who'd by tradition received a sling-shot on their 10th birthday voluntarily at the end of this program burn the sling shots that had once been used for killing birds. She added that VSO is a cosponsor of CCFC. A discussion ensued. Geoff had suggested that we make a donation to CCFC allowing them to choose which program(s) are in most need of it. Melinda suggested making a donation of \$500. Shirley moved that we donate \$500 to CCFC this year. It was seconded by Melinda and approved unanimously.

-Williamsburg Regional Library: Lee Schuster, Library Liaison Chairperson, reported that the \$200 currently budgeted is sufficient. Ten to twelve bird related material per year are purchased from this fund.

-Virginia Land Conservancy: It was noted that VLC continues to purchase significant parcels of land which helps protect habitat. Melinda proposed raising the donation to \$250.

*** Geoff expressed concern about spending more money when there are upcoming VSO hosting expenses. Shirley noted that most of the VSO expenses will come due the month of the meeting in 2020. Participants in the 2020 Annual Meeting will pay meeting registration fees beginning about 8 weeks in advance of the Meeting date and up to the date the Meeting begins. These fees will be deposited in the Bird Club's checking account as they arrive. The budget for the Annual Meeting is designed so that the Bird Club will incur a minimum loss if participation is very low and there is a chance that the club will make money.

Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory: Nancy pointed out that this is CVWO's 25th anniversary and proposed raising the donation to \$250.

-Center for Conservation Biology: Shirley noted that since Bryan Watts is going to be our keynote speaker for the 2020 VSO annual meeting, she proposed increasing this donation also to \$250. Geoff enquired if Dr. Watts was getting a speaker's fee. Cheryl noted that when she's offered it in the past when he's spoken to our club, he's usually refused it. The speaker fee for Dr. Watts is covered by the VSO budget and at this time the committee has not discussed an amount for him. She reported that it's common for nationally known speakers to charge \$1000 plus which is beyond the club's proposed budget.

A motion was made by Melinda to increase the donation to VLC, CVWO and CCB to \$250 each and leave the WRL donation at \$200. It was seconded by Judy and passed unanimously.

Historian - Chairperson Rose Ryan: Rose is new to the position and just setting up. She was asked to send invoices for cost of supplies to Ann. Cheryl reminded the Board to send newspaper articles or any other written format that mentions the WBC to Rose.

WBC Website: To keep the website up-to-date, Cheryl requested that any material which mentions dates for upcoming events or important news or special photos that we send to Melinda for the newsletter be also copied to Jeanette for including on the website and to Cheryl to keep her informed.

The Flyer- Vice President Melinda Cousins: Melinda thanked Shirley for assembling the November issue while she was out of town. Melinda is pleased with the info folks are sending in. She reported that the normal deadline for contributions is the last Saturday of the month.

She also reported having been contacted by a new B&B, Serendipity Inn, in the Lightfoot area about advertising in The Flyer. The owner has a lot of bird feeders and keeps issues of the Flyer at her facility for guests. Melinda is enthused about money from advertisers helping to defray the increasing cost of producing the newsletter and sending copies in the mail. She proposed 2 x 2 inch ads at \$20 or \$25 per month being placed on the last page of the Flyer. We would need rules about what constitutes appropriate advertising. Cheryl asked that Melinda email us suggestions for what the ads would look like. Melinda added that she will bring requests for questionable ads to the Board for final decision. Cheryl noted the importance of adding that the ads did not reflect the club's endorsement. Ann moved that we allow advertising in the newsletter. Judy seconded it and it was unanimously approved. As part of our club's public outreach, Cheryl noted the importance of having some hard copy Flyers available to the public at bird stores. Melinda suggested that the ads for Wild Birds Unlimited and Backyard Birder be pulled out of the Flyer and put on the advertising page and that the stores not be given a free ride anymore. The entire board rejected this idea because both bird stores already contribute so much to the club.

At Large Position & Newsletter Assistant Editor: Shirley has been currently serving as Newsletter Assistant Editor as well as Member-at-Large and would like to be recognized as such in the club's list of officers. Melinda readily agreed to do so. It will appear as Assistant Newsletter Editor/Member at Large because the Executive Board list of officers currently barely fits the newsletter page.

VSO Annual Meeting 2020: Cheryl reported that preparations are up-to-date. Shirley announced that she'd just been notified by Rexanne Bruno that she had received notice from the Ft. Magruder that menus would be available mid-late March, as they'd been promised when the Bird Club signed the contract. Judy requested that Cheryl ask Rexanne to write a brief status report for our newsletter about the annual meeting we'll be hosting in 2020 to keep the general membership informed.

Bird Counts/Bird Walks – Chairperson Jim Corliss: Jim reported that the Christmas Bird Count yielded 120 species which tied the record. The quantities were down possibly because of the weather. There were 7 or 8 high counts, and one first, the Yellow-throated Warbler, which had previously been only a count week bird. There were about 110 participants with the number of feeder counters down a bit. Jim will submit a report to the newsletter.

The date for the Spring Bird Count has yet to be determined.

Cheryl asked Catherine Flanagan to write an article for the Flyer about the CBC tea she holds at her home with folks who are interested in birds but would benefit from help in how to identify them as well as coaching in participating in the CBC.

Jim reported that he is tweaking the list of upcoming bird walks. His goal this year is to arrange 12 unique locations for the bird walks. There is a need for new walk leaders. Cheryl suggested that having a pair of leaders or teaming experienced walk leaders with a new person might reduce reluctance of folks volunteering due to fear of inexperience.

Field Trips- Chairperson George Martin:

Cheryl noted that because we put the upcoming boat trip on the list serve without giving adequate notice to local Master Naturalist members and other local groups, seven people from North Carolina signed on and locals got put on the wait list. Cheryl requested that the period of accepting checks from club members be moved up earlier in December so that we can then email local groups at least a week ahead of the list serve. She supported the request adding that the boat trip is the kind of field trip that can inspire folks to join our club.

George Martin reported on the following two field trips.

- **Sunday, January 20:** The boat for the Chesapeake Bay field trip is full with 61 attendees. Andrew Rapp will be guide assistant/data recorder. The weather forecast is not good but we go out unless the captain cancels. Cheryl informed us that the policy for cancellations is that if folks cancel by the Wednesday before the trip their check will be torn up. If there are enough folks on the waiting list to fill cancellations made after Wednesday, again their check will be cancelled. Otherwise there is no refund. If the trip is cancelled due to weather and an alternate date is established, folks that can't go on the new date are refunded. (After this meeting the captain did cancel the boat trip due to weather conditions and the date was reset for February 3rd.)
- **Saturday, February 16:** Dutch Gap led by Rose Ryan.
- **March:** Geoff reported the possibility of Ellison Orcutt taking us to Curles Neck. When we went last year on the first week of March, it was too late for Snow Geese. There has been a large flock since November. Cheryl suggested that we explore the possibility of going in February and have

2 field trips that month. Geoff said an alternative March field trip could be Little Island and Back Bay. Cheryl added that the Eastern Shore would be another good area to see Snow Geese.

- **May:** Cheryl reported that she would like to try to have an overnight field trip planned that would go to our priority blocks on the North Carolina border. It is the only way she can see our fulfilling that responsibility. May is a good time for breeding activity.

Programs- Vice President Judy Jones: Judy reported on the following programs for 2019.

- **January 16th:** Atlantic Coastal Birds by Bob Schamerhorn
- **February 20th:** DGIF Bird Conservation Programs by Sergio Harding
- **March 20th:** The Biology of Feathers by Maureen Eiger
- **April 17th:** William and Mary 2018 Grant Recipients.
- **May 15th:** TBD
- **June, July, August:** no programs
- **September 18th:** Migrating Birds and their Diets by Chance Hines
- **October 16th:** Update on Noise Research (Acoustic Lighthouse) by John Swaddle
Nature Camp Scholarship Recipients (Lee will send the recipients notice of the change of date from September).
- **November 20th:** TBD

Other Business:

Ann reported that we need to vote on whether this year we are going to again award in April three grants to W&M students recommended by Dan Cristol at the amount of \$599 each. Judy moved that we do so. Shirley seconded the motion and there was unanimous approval.

Next Meeting: March 18th at 1:30

Cheryl adjourned the meeting at 3:15

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Millar, Secretary,
Williamsburg Bird Club
January 16, 2019

Following Discussions by the Board via Email:

- On February 22 Cheryl Jacobson proposed that the Board approve the expenditure of \$300 to purchase one Purple Martin House and to restore several others. Melinda Cousins has offered WBC a great discount. Cathy Millar moved that the Board approve \$300 for the Purple Martin Project. Judy Jones and Shirley Devan approved the motion.