

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board
Williamsburg Bird Club
April 20, 2020**

Compiled from reports submitted via email due to Covid 19 pandemic preventing an actual face-to-face meeting.

President's Report – Cheryl Jacobson: For my report, I will begin by focusing on our three goals, one established years ago and two that are newer.

Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas2: I believe very strongly in the importance of this VSO project and am committed to its success. I have worked diligently recruiting others, training, and surveying blocks. Recently Ashley Peele, in her weekly email updates, included this information:

This week, check out our latest story, [Celebrating Top Atlas Contributors from Around Virginia](#). We highlight the top five contributors based on hours of birding time logged in each region

I was recognized as the individual in Region 11 (our area) as having completed more hours than anyone else. The VSO Board is currently fund raising and looking at needs for the final VABBA2 products. I will keep you updated on this next phase.

As you know, WBC was assigned 18 blocks. (see the list at the end of my report)

With the help of others, we ended last year with four incomplete blocks so I expected to be able to complete our assignment easily. However, as you see these blocks are all distant blocks so I had planned to travel to the area, stay in a motel several nights and hit the blocks hard. With not being able to travel because of Covid 19 and the breeding season happening now, completion became a concern. I was puzzling over this when I received an update from Dave Youker (Region 11 coordinator) with the following information. One of the blocks, Purdy SE is already now marked Complete as criteria has been relaxed. In regard to the three remaining blocks he indicated that:

Margarettsville CE:

This being the final year of the Atlas surveys, the criteria have been somewhat relaxed. What this means for the Margarettsville CE block is that you only need to code about 8 more species Probable or Confirmed to complete this block.

Templeton SE:

Dave helped out Jan by recently doing a nocturnal visit to Templeton SE. That block is now considered complete.

Cherry Hill SE:

Nancy will schedule a nocturnal visit to Cherry Hill SE and that will complete that block.

I still hope the restriction on non-essential travel will be lifted and I can do an overnight trip with a stay in Emporia to survey in Margarettsville CE. Thank you everyone who has worked on this Project!

Purple Martin Project:

This is becoming one of my favorite projects. The old house that needed significant modification was moved to Sonoco where the Purple Martins have returned. The new pole and gourd system are fully installed and awaiting Martins. Geoff Gile's wife has decided that funds donated to his WBC Memorial will be utilized to fund one Nature Camp Scholarship and the rest to establish a pole and gourd system at other locations. She remembers Geoff talking about the Purple Martins and his concern about their population decline. At this time with the funds that have been received we may be able to get two colonies established, perhaps Freedom Park and New Quarter Park.

VSO 2020 Annual Meeting: I have attempted to keep you informed as issues developed concerning the meeting and cancelation. Interestingly, there was no cancellation penalty listed in the contract between the dates of 1/31/20 and 4/1/20.

Most of the members of the WBC Planning Committee and one Club member made donations and their meeting registration fees to minimize the financial loss impact to WBC. I want to thank them for their generous support of WBC. Ann's report will detail that status but it appears that it will be minimal, under a \$100 loss. The VSO Board is looking at restructuring their Annual Meetings and may go to a less structured event with the focus being an annual field trip.

Williamsburg Bird Club Assigned VABB2 Blocks

- 1). Tunstall SE (Cheryl Jacobson)-COMPLETE**
- 2). New Kent SE (Cheryl Jacobson)-COMPLETE**
- 3). Toano SE (Rose Ryan)-COMPLETE**
- 4). Walkers SE (Shane Gill/Cheryl Jacobson)-COMPLETE**
- 5). Providence Forge SE (Rexanne Bruno) COMPLETE**
- 6). Roxbury SE (Bill Williams) COMPLETE**
- 7). Brandon SE (Geoff Giles/Cheryl Jacobson) COMPLETE**
- 8). Charles City SE (Cheryl Jacobson) COMPLETE**
- 9). Disputanta North SE (Frank/Lark Smith/Cheryl Jacobson) COMPLETE**
- 10). Sebrell SE (Bill Williams Team) COMPLETE**
- 11). Surry SE (Shirley Devan/Cheryl Jacobson) COMPLETE**
- 12). Claremont SE (Cheryl Jacobson) COMPLETE**
- 13). Savedge SE (Nancy Barnhart) COMPLETE**
- 14). Templeton SE (Jan Lockwood)**
- 15). Cherry Hill SE (Nancy Barnhart Team)**
- 16). Margarettsville CE (Jason Strickland)**
- 17). Purdy SE (Rexanne Bruno Team)**
- 18). Emporia SE (Geoff Giles/Cheryl Jacobson Team) COMPLETE**

I have also been focused on creating birding experiences while we are unable to attend activities in person. To do this, I am exploring, with others, the way to do virtual meetings and birding. If you missed the first ever virtual bird walk at Galveston Island you can still experience it at: https://www.facebook.com/GalvestonNature/videos/604561480402718/?comment_id=604572117068321¬if_id=1587317000352141¬if_t=feedback_reaction_generic

I found the experience enjoyable, although it does have limitations. Scott Hemler also attended and commented on especially enjoying it because he had never been to Galveston. For me, it felt like being on a marsh and I loved seeing the Neotropic Cormorants again and had many good views. We also saw Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Blue-winged Warbler, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Willets, and others. The narration was excellent and very educational about the species.

We will start small as we learn. Dean Shostak is working with the Sonoco proprietors to do our first trip to their location to see the large Purple Martin Colony and to learn more about Martins. Of course, there are other species nearby that we will see.

Dean is also exploring fall guests who can do the programs via Zoom if we still are unable to meet in person.

Treasurer's Report – Ann Carpenter: The overall financial health of our club is good with monies in a checking account, Money Market and two CD's. Members make annual donations to the following categories: dues, Bill Sheehan/Ruth Beck Ornithology Research Grants, Bill Williams Nature Camp Scholarships, and seed for feeders at the Child Development Resources center. The club has received other special or designated donations including those for the Purple Martin houses, donations from the

local birding stores and memorial donations for past presidents, Bob Long and Geoff Giles. Donations to date for the Geoff Giles fund are \$2,450.

Your dues have made possible the publication, printing and distribution of the club's newsletter, The Flyer. Your dues are also used to give honoraria to our meeting speakers. The club has provided financial support for printing the Williamsburg Birding and Wildlife Trail Brochure and made informational rack cards available throughout the community. To date in 2020, the club has approved and awarded four Research Scholarships to William & Mary Graduate students. The fourth scholarship was made possible by a generous donation from Dr. Daniel Cristol. He donated his payment from the Virginia Gazette for the outstanding articles that he writes for them. Considering the increasing cost of Nature Camp Scholarships and the unknown expenses involved with the planned VSO annual meeting, the Board voted earlier this year to award only two Bill Williams Nature Camp Scholarships. However, the club provided the logistical support necessary to award the Jeanne and Mike Millin Nature Camp Scholarship.

In past years, the Club has made donations of \$200 to \$500 to the following organizations: The Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory, the Center for Conservation Biology, the Historic Virginia Land Conservancy, the Williamsburg Regional Library, the Community Cloud Forest Conservation in Guatemala and the Virginia Society of Ornithology Breeding Bird Atlas. With the current stay at home restrictions, the Board has not been able to meet to review and discuss updated financial reports, so it has not made recommendations regarding 2020 donations to these organizations. But there is funding available to make donations in amounts like that made in the past. The Board will review these programs when it can meet in some form soon.

In February, the Club cashed out one of our three C.D.'s. We were anticipating having to provide an interim payment to the VSO conference hotel prior to the final due date for receiving all of the registration and banquet deposits. With the cancelation of the conference, those funds are now available to support this year's financial obligations. You may have heard some concern about the Club's financial situation considering the cancelation of the VSO Annual meeting. At the time of the meeting cancelation, the club had only incurred costs of \$650. Due to the generous donations from members of the planning committee of their registration and banquet deposits, the Club was able to recoup \$542 leaving a balance of \$108 from our checking account.

We have been able to support all these programs because of the generous support of Bird Club members over many years. Note however, that there has been a recent decline in funds received from our members. Dues donations have declined by almost 20% from 2018 to 2020. But, thanks to some support in special categories, overall total donations declined by only 6% during the same period. On the other hand, because of the current stay at home directives, the club will save funds in the current year in categories such as the printing and mailing of The Flyer and for the Speaker's Honoria.

Assets:

CHECK BOOK	\$ 5,324.47
MM	\$ 7,793.77
CD'S	\$ 5,414.06
TOTAL	\$ 18,532.30

Geoff Giles Fund to date (checks Ann has been informed of or deposited through April 20, 2020)

Christopher & Erica Giles	\$ 1,000.00
Mitchell Byrd	\$ 200.00
John & Marilyn Adair	\$ 100.00
Jennifer Hawkins	\$ 1,000.00
Elizabeth & Ruslan Rasiak	\$ 150.00
	\$ 2,450.00

VSO Accounting- Note that this VSO spreadsheet does not match the earlier Treasurer's report. These figures are correct.

Expenses			YR
09/29/18	Fort Magruder deposit	\$ 500.00	2018
02/14/20	Amazon - Banquet and Breakfast tickets	\$ 16.60	2020
02/21/20	Walmart - raffle tickets	\$ 9.61	2020
03/20/20	Certified Letter to Ft. Magruder	\$ 5.80	2020
	paypal fees	\$ 118.10	2020
		\$ 650.11	
Donations	from Planning Commtee Members		
		\$ 80.00	2020
		\$ 100.00	2020
		\$ 95.00	2020
		\$ 100.00	2020
		\$ 140.00	2020
		\$ 40.00	2020
		\$ 555.00	2020
Deficit		\$ (95.11)	

A spread sheet of WBC's income and expenses to date is attached.

Current Balance Income versus Expenses: \$3,607.44, a large portion from the Geoff Giles Memorial Fund.

Outstanding Expenses:

The Board will need to review and make recommendations regarding 2020 donations. The 2019 versus 2018 donations are noted in the (): Williamsburg Regional Library (\$200/\$200), Historic Virginia Land Conservancy (\$250/\$200), Center for Conservation Biology (\$250/200), Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory (\$250/\$200), Cloud Community Forest Conservation (\$500/\$0) and the VABBA2 (\$500/\$0). Other outstanding expenses will be for Speakers at future meetings, the Christmas Bird Count and future seed purchase if needed for CDR as well as unknown administrative expenses (see Jeanette Navia's email).

Expenses we will not incur in 2020: Spring Bird Count, Speaker fees for Spring Meetings, reduced cost for Newsletter, VSO dues (\$25 – paid in December), and probable reduction in requirement for seed at the CDR.

Secretary's Report – Cathy Millar: Cathy submitted via email to the Board the draft of the February 10, 2020 minutes with an addendum of a timeline of the club's activities since that meeting. Mary Ellen Hodges moved that the minutes be accepted. The motion was seconded by Ann and Gary Carpenter.

Vice President/Editor (The Flyer) – Mary Ellen Hodges: At the February 10, 2020, meeting of the Board, I noted that I had used Arial 12 as the font for the main text in the January and February newsletters, and we discussed my using a different font that would better maximize the available space for articles and still be readable by aging eyes. Following the meeting, I sent samples of 7 font/size combinations to all members of the Board soliciting their comments. The Board members who responded indicated that they preferred Arial 11, and I started using that font with the March newsletter.

Because of the curtailment of club activities due to the spread of COVID-19, Cheryl Jacobson, WBC president, decided, with my support, that the club would not publish an April newsletter. We do plan to publish a May newsletter, although to minimize risk of infection to members we will distribute the newsletter by email only and will not produce printed copies. We hope to include in the May issue a special section with the personal reflections of members on the meaning of nature and birds to their lives in a time of special challenges posed by the pandemic. The deadline for submissions to the May newsletter is close of day, Saturday, April 25.

Membership/Webmaster – Jeanette Navia: To date, there have been 134 renewals. 41 people who were members in 2019 have not yet renewed their membership. I suggest I give Cheryl a list of these email addresses, and she can send an email to these members only, rather than send to the whole membership. That would keep people who have already paid from paying a second time. (This happens every year).

There are three new members to whom I have not yet sent a membership packet. I have had a "discussion" (read: argument) with my husband about how much black ink I have been using to print out the 16 pages each for the membership packet (not counting the name tag). We are constantly going through black ink cartridges. In the past, I have asked for reimbursement for black ink cartridges; I believe I've only done this twice, ever. I was planning to suggest that instead of my printing everything out from my computer, I make copies at FedEx and get reimbursed for the copies. Keith believes making copies at FedEx is less expensive than what it takes to print out from home. I have said I don't mind donating the ink, and that's where the argument comes in. To review, these are the pages in the membership packet:

- Welcome letter (1 page)
- Local area birding hotspots (2 pages)
- Local birds to look for (1 page)
- Reminder to use parking pass and wear badge to meetings (1 page - very little ink)
- Parking pass (1 page)
- VSO Checklist of birds (2 pages)
- Bill/Nancy's Summary of bird data (8 pages)
- Name tag

Because of the coronavirus, I have not gone to FedEx to see what their pricing is. I have looked into uploading the files and having them print out the files for me, but this is a ridiculously high price, about 50 cents per page. I checked Office Depot, and their prices are the same. I'd like to discuss this matter. It's much easier, of course, for me to print everything out, but I have been buying probably four or five cartridges a year at \$25 each, and Keith and I rarely print anything else out (we do some printing, just not nearly as much as I print out for the bird club). Perhaps if we had (do we have??) an account at FedEx, we would get better rates?

As I've said before, all the materials listed above, except the Welcome letter, the reminder to bring the parking pass, and the name tag can be found on the website.

Do we want to discuss how to make the packets smaller? Do we want to discuss ways to reimburse me for the ink?

Changing the subject to the search program for the website that I brought up at the last meeting: I have not yet looked into how good the new search program is. I agree that Google has a great search engine and perhaps we should stick with that. I just don't like all the confusing ads! I could do a little more research.

Cheryl response: I would like to table decisions until we can meet in person or have a Zoom Board Meeting (probably in the next two months). I think the Board should review what is in the packet...this is a new day when we try to cut down on paper and if it is on our web site it seems like definitely an issue to discuss. And, of course, we should look at reimbursement for the copying. If you had a receipt to send to Ann, we could pay you for several cartridges now.

Jeanette also shared a nice thank you note sent to our club by Robin Thadry for our generous funding of her master's research project through the Bill Sheehan/Ruth Beck Ornithology Research Grant.

Member-at-Large/Assistant Editor – Gary Carpenter: CDR Report:

As an ongoing community service our Club provides bird feeders, seed, suet, and maintenance of all bird feeding equipment to the Child Development Resource (CDR) center in Toana. CDR is a critical provider of programs for babies and toddlers with disabilities or developmental delays, or those at risk for delay. The feeding station is located just outside the large picture window of the Developmental Playgroup Room and brings birds to the attention and delight of children, staff and parents every day. Sometimes the sight of the birds at the feeders provides a wonderful opportunity to expand a child's view of nature, widens their knowledge base and assists in building their language skills.

The CDR seed donation project is one of the special categories to which our club members generously donate each year when they renew their memberships. Besides Sara, other Club members who have been directly involved in the CDR effort in the past are Adrienne Frank, Gary Driscoll, and Deb Woodward. I have been delivering seed and providing maintenance of the feeding station since 2016. Seed is purchased from the Club's partners at both Wild Birds Unlimited, and The Backyard Birder. In 2019 the Club's Board of Directors approved an annual budget of \$600 to support this project. Thus far in 2020 I have made only one purchase of seed for the project, and, with the current coronavirus shutdown, it is impossible to estimate how many purchases will be necessary for the year. It is very likely, however, that we will be well under budget for this year.

We have heard before about how the feeders at the CDR benefit "stressed" children by calming them as they watch birds 'up close and personal' at their feeders. Here is an anecdote that was passed along to us in mid-December. Marilyn Canaday, playroom supervisor and "seed filler" at the CDR reported that "... recently our coordinator ... of the CDR program came in to assist us with the children. She happened to work closely with a little girl who was having great difficulty separating from her mother. They watched the birds together to calm her and afterwards, she raved about how important the birds are to our little friends. I so AGREE!" So, I think as members of the Williamsburg Bird Club we can be proud of our CDR Seed Donation project and agree that is a benefit to our community.

Records – Bill Williams: Bill has resigned and Nancy Barnhart has volunteered to assume this very important role. There will be an article in the May Flyer regarding the duties of the position. Thank you, Bill for your years of work in this regard. Bill indicated that Records began in 1977. Bill Sheehan was the Chair until 1999 at which time, Bill began and has done it since.

Liaison to CVWO -Nancy Barnhart: CVWO is currently conducting the 24th College Creek Hawkwatch. Brian Taber, Bill Williams and I started on March 1. We had to stop for a few days at the end of

March/early April after the Parkway was closed to vehicular traffic, but I am now continuing to count 4-5 days/week through bicycle access.

March 2020 set a new one-month high count record with 1618 raptors moving north. This record was due to the huge number of Turkey Vultures migrating north. I will be writing a short report for the WBC Newsletter with more information.

Respectfully submitted
Cathy Millar, Secretary,
Williamsburg Bird Club,
April 20, 2020