

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board

Williamsburg Bird Club

February 26, 2021

Conducted via Zoom, Invited by Dean Shostak; Presided by Cheryl Jacobson

Board Member Attendees: Cheryl Jacobson, Dean Shostak, Tory Gussman, Mary Ellen Hodges, Ann and Gary Carpenter, Cathy Millar, Shirley Devan

Board Members Absent: Bill Williams

Chair Attendees: George Martin, Jim Corliss, Lee Schuster, Catherine Flanagan, Nancy Barnhart

Chair Attendees Absent: Jeanette Navia, Patty Maloney

The meeting was called to order by Cheryl Jacobson at 2 pm. A quorum of the Executive Board was present. The order of the meeting was altered to accommodate an attendee who needed to leave early.

Bird Counts/Bird Walks – Jim Corliss:

Bird Walks: Jim proposed that we continue bird walks at New Quarter Park. Cheryl reported that Scott Hemler is eager to resume leading the fourth Saturday monthly walks. After discussion about safety precautions while the pandemic persists, it was decided to limit, for the time being, the walks to 10 people to facilitate social distancing of 6 feet. Masks are required as well as no sharing of optics or books. Invitations will be sent only to WBC members. Cathy Flanagan agreed to take reservations for the walks. The first 10 people to email her will be accepted. She will create a waiting list in case anyone cancels. Jim Corliss made a motion that NQP bird walks resume on the fourth Saturday of every month using the listed precautions. Ann Carpenter seconded it. It was passed unanimously. The first walk will be held March 27th.

Spring Bird Count: Jim proposed Sunday, May 2nd, for the annual Spring Bird Count as prime time during spring migration. Everyone approved the date. He will check with the sector leaders for availability. Covid precautions will be decided on according to latest COVID statistics as the date nears.

Christmas Bird Count: Jim reported that he has submitted our data to the Audubon data base. He thanked everyone who participated.

Secretary's Report – Cathy Millar: Cathy had shared the November 20, 2020 board meeting minutes via email after the meeting and a second time with an addendum just before this meeting. Shirley Devan moved to accept the minutes as written; Ann Carpenter seconded it. Unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report – Ann Carpenter: Ann reported on the following as of December 31, 2020.

Assets and Balances

Checking Account:	\$ 3,772.16
Money Market:	\$ 9,209.47
Subtotal:	\$ 12,981.63
CD's:	\$ 5,451.53
TOTAL:	\$ 18,433.16

2020 Net Ordinary

Income: \$ 13,648.90, an increase of \$2,754.60 from 2019. There was a slight increase in all categories of donations but most of the increase can be attributed to the Geoff Giles Memorial fund (\$2,625)

Expenses: \$11,117.98, a decrease of \$1,043.10 from 2019. Although there were no Nature Camp Scholarship expenses, there were several new categories of expenses, example, purple martin projects.

Report of Income and Expenses 2020 versus 2019 spreadsheet was attached to the minutes.

Interest and Div.: \$ 45.36

Net Balance Income versus Expenses: \$1,234.80

A detailed spreadsheet (Yearly Fiscal Summary) showing comparisons from years 2009 to 2020 was attached to the minutes.

ASSETS AS OF FEBRUARY 21, 2021

Checking Account: \$ 6,652.23

Money Market: \$ 9,434.55

Subtotal: \$16,086.78

CD's: \$ 5,453.32

TOTAL: \$ 21,630.20

A spreadsheet showing current income and expenses to date (February 21, 2021) was attached to the minutes. Total income to date is: \$4,722.30 (including interest). Ann noted the donations made in memory of Tom McCary. Total Expenses to date: \$222.26.

A spreadsheet (**Club Year 2021 Income and Expenses**) the outstanding income (not received or deposited) and list of outstanding expenses, was added to the minutes.

Ann pointed out that we had cashed out one of the CD's in 2020 in anticipation of paying bills for the VSO meeting we were hosting before the registration money had come in. The pandemic cancelled the meeting so that money has been sitting in the Money Market.

Cheryl complimented Ann on the thoroughness of the reports.

A review followed of how much money we wanted to appropriate to the various organizations we support, for which Ann had prepared an analysis. They were as follows:

Nature Camp: Due to the pandemic, we didn't send anyone to Nature Camp in 2020 but received \$1,415.00 in Bill Williams Nature Camp donations in 2020. To date in 2021, \$810 has been donated towards the Bill Williams NC amounting to a balance of \$2,710 for Nature Camp. \$485 has been donated in the Tom McCary Memorial. There was some question about whether this was designated for Nature Camp. Ann reported that taking into account what Bill Williams had written as a tribute to Tom in *The Flyer*, plus her conversations with Tom and his attorney, Andy Woods, last year, there was strong evidence that Tom wanted the donations to go to Nature Camp. She added that a substantial donation from his estate may also be forthcoming to the bird club. Last year, she had recommended to Tom and Andy that they make any estate donation to Williamsburg Community Foundation where the donation is invested and the annual earnings returned to our club if so designated. She has had no further conversation about this. Ann asked for input from us whether she should respond to Tom's family that we are targeting, at least the memorial donations, for Nature Camp. Shirley recommended, and it was agreed upon by all, that for now we acknowledge to Tom's brother, Ben, that the memorial fund of \$485 received to date will be designated toward Nature Camp for 2021. The award for Nature Camp this year is \$690 for a ten-day program. Ann recommended that we also send a modest contribution to the scholarship fund to be applied as needed to help sustain their financial aid program for financially needy campers. Lee Schuster reported that WBC is sending 2 students (the 3rd dropped out) this year. One of the students is a Bill Williams recipient and the other a Millin recipient. Shirley Devan moved that we contribute \$690 to Nature Camp to a general fund to support efforts for which funds are needed. Mary Ellen Hodges seconded the motion. Motion was carried unanimously.

Research Grants: Ann noted that we made 4 awards last year (one more than usual) because Dan Cristol had donated his earnings of \$500 from the Virginia Gazette for his bird column to the bird club for a fourth student. She hasn't heard anything from Dan this year. She noted that she has associated the

money that the club makes in donations from Wild Birds Unlimited as being a source available for grants because of our club's history of using the profit from selling bird seed for research grants prior to our association with WBU. She noted that with WBU money included, we have \$3,052 available. Four grants cost a total of \$2,396.00. Ann Carpenter moved that we offer four grants, each at \$599; Gary Carpenter seconded it. The motion was carried unanimously. Ann will contact the business manager of our offer.

Center for Conservation Biology: Cheryl noted that Bryan Watts's February presentation on Whimbrels highlighted their important research on collecting data that can be used in programs to provide protection for migratory birds in South America and she asked that we consider increasing our donation to CCB. Shirley made a motion that we increase our donation of \$250 to \$500 with a note to target their work in South America. Gary seconded it. The motion was passed unanimously. Cheryl asked Cathy Flanagan to find out from Bryan Watts if he has suggestions for specific Central/South American groups that we can donate to in the future.

Maintenance of Purple Martin Houses Sponsored by WBC: Cheryl requested that a new category be made for monies to be used for future maintenance repairs of the 4 purple martin colonies that have been established. She asked that \$100 be made available in the budget. Ann Carpenter recommended that it be made a line item in our budget based on inventories. Gary Carpenter moved that we make a budget of \$100 available as a line item. Seconded by Ann Carpenter. The motion passed unanimously. Cheryl submitted a list of the monitors for the 4 colonies: YRSP - Sherry Hancock h2osherry@gmail.com; 202-578-7691; NQP - Dean/Valerie Shostak 757-880-4697 deanshostak@icloud.com and Casey McLaughlin clmclaughlin@email.wm.edu 631-278-1247; Chickahominy Riverfront Park - Bill Vanzetta 757-846-8009 Viaziano66@gmail.com; and VIMS - Diana Gordon Cell and text (804)824-0185 Acadiamarathoner@gmail.com 1452 Mercer Road, Gloucester Point, VA.

CDR Seed Purchase: Ann reported that we have a budget of \$600 available for CDR. In 2019, we barely spent \$400 and Gary purchased seeds only once in 2020 before CDR was closed due to the pandemic. Gary reported that he got a letter from CDR that they are moving into the Messmer Community Center on Waller Mill Road. No date has been provided and nothing was said about continuing to feed birds. He will ask about their intentions in future communications. Gary said he will probably need help to take down and re-erect the feeders.

The Board agreed to continue funding to the following organizations as before.

VA Breeding Bird Atlas 2: Upon Shirley Devan's recommendation, we will continue to donate \$500. Further monies may be requested this year.

CVWO: \$250

Community Cloud Forest Conservation: \$500

Historic Virginia Land Conservancy: \$250

Purple Martin Conservation: \$150

Williamsburg Regional Library: \$200 Lee Schuster noted that the amount is appropriate. Guide books are needing replacement. The library is seeking more eBooks which are generally more expensive. Cathy Millar requested that the book, HOPE IS HERE, that Bryan Watts mentioned about the Whimbrel, Hope, be on Lee's next list when the library asks for recommendations.

Ann Carpenter moved that we continue to donate to these groups as previously funded. Gary Carpenter seconded it. The motion was passed unanimously.

Field Trips – George Martin: First order of business was whether the club will restart field trips. It was suggested that we employ the same precautions we have established for bird walks and limit the number of people to what the state of VA allows for outdoor gatherings, which is currently 25. Carpooling would be up to the driver (ex. whether riders have had both vaccine shots). April was

suggested for first field trip. A sign-up procedure would be necessary. A local spot, like Newport News Park or Chippokes Plantation State Park, was recommended so carpooling wouldn't be a big issue. Gary Carpenter moved that we resume field trips in April as noted above. George Martin seconded it. The motion passed unanimously. George Martin will make the plans for the 3rd Saturday of April and report to us.

Addendum: Jason Strickland will lead a bird walk at Newport News Park April 17th.

Cheryl Jacobson reported that Andy Hawkins has requested that info be posted in an upcoming *Flyer* on a WBC field trip that he would like to organize in June (date to be determined) on Warbler Road where he will be a host at a campground. Andy wants his contact info in the statement. It was noted that there is not much parking available along the route but by then many participants will probably be vaccinated and may agree to carpool. This group would also be limited to 25. It was agreed to give Andy a spot in our newsletter. George is not responsible for this field trip.

Addendum: Andy has agreed to host the walk May 14th when there are fewer leaves on the trees and fewer migrants. There will be a limit to the number of cars so carpooling will be necessary. Will need to decide what to do if there are participants who aren't vaccinated.

Cheryl noted that Bryan Watts's presentation has stirred an interest in seeing the Whimbrels leaving Box Tree Creek near Machipongo on the Eastern Shore for their arctic breeding grounds. Groups leave by the thousands around 2- 3 hours before sunset from May 23-26. The Nature Conservancy opens the gates to the observation dock at 3pm. George will explore the idea for a field trip.

Addendum: George contacted Alex Wilke at The Nature Conservancy who reported that they hadn't decided yet whether the public would be allowed on the observation dock (it was closed 2020 due to pandemic)

Records/Liaison to CVWO – Nancy Barnhart: Nancy reported that Hawk Watch starts on College Creek on Monday, March 1st from about 9am to 1 pm. She invited folks to join her.

The Flyer – Mary Ellen Hodges, Vice-President (Editor): Mary Ellen was open to suggestions for the April newsletter. Cheryl suggested that there be an article informing members what projects club money supports. The following board members agreed to write one paragraph: Cheryl – CCB, Cloud Forest Conservation and Purple Martin Conservation; Ann – CVWO; Shirley - VABBA2; Tory – Historic VA Land Conservancy; Lee – Williamsburg Regional Library and Nature Camp; Dean – Ornithology Research Grants; Gary – CDR; and Mary Ellen – Flyer/Printing and Mailing.

Plans for Future Membership Meetings: Cheryl noted that last year we missed some regular meetings due to the pandemic and that, whereas meetings have been normally adjourned during the summer, we held meetings last summer to make up for cancelled meetings and to keep members in lockdown engaged. After some discussion, it was decided to take June and July off and plan for an August newsletter that would come out before the August meeting.

Membership/Webmaster – Jeanette Navia: Jeanette was absent but Ann reported that about 50% of the dues have been received. Mary Ellen agreed to have a reminder on the first page of The Flyer to renew membership and that a membership form is included.

Programs – Tory Gussman and Dean Shostak, Co-Vice Presidents: Tory and Dean reported on the following programs.

- **March:** "The Birds of Ghana" speaker Bob Ake

- **April:** The four Bill Sheehan/ Beck Ornithology Research Grant award recipients: Casey McLaughlin and Jasmine Whelan will discuss their coordinated studies of the effects of sublethal dietary mercury on levels of the stress hormone corticosterone in birds and on feather quality. Robin Thady and Lauren Emerson each conducted research aimed to reduce bird collisions with man-made structures. Robin evaluated the effectiveness of certain attributes of acoustic warning signals, such as frequency level and whether sound changes over time, increases a bird's attention to its surroundings, while Lauren studied whether lighting conditions affect the risk of bird collisions with windows.
- **May:** "Climate Change and its Effect on Food for Migrating Birds" speaker Dr. Amanda Gallinat.

Next Meeting: Friday, June 11th at 2pm.

Cheryl Jacobson adjourned the meeting at 3:48 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Millar, Secretary,
Williamsburg Bird Club,
March 3, 2021