

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Board

### Williamsburg Bird Club

April 24, 2023

Conducted via Zoom hosted by Ann Carpenter; Presided by Nancy Barnhart

**Board Member Attendees:** Nancy Barnhart, Patty Maloney, Mary Ellen Hodges, Ann Carpenter, Cathy Millar, Gary Carpenter, Cheryl Jacobson

**Board Members Absent:** Shirley Devan

**Committee Chair Attendees:** Jeanette Navia, George Martin, Patty Maloney, Catherine Flanagan, Nancy Barnhart, Cheryl Jacobson, Lee Schuster

**Committee Chair Attendees Absent:** Jim Corliss

The meeting was called to order by President Nancy Barnhart at 3 pm. A quorum of the Executive Board was present.

**Secretary's Report – Cathy Millar:** Cathy had submitted via email for review the January 23, 2023 minutes shortly after the January meeting and again before the April meeting. Cheryl moved that the minutes be accepted and was seconded by Mary Ellen. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report – Ann Carpenter:** On April 22, 2023, Ann emailed the Board a spread sheet detailing the estimated income and expenses for Club Year 2023 with comparisons to Club Year 2022 which was attached separately to the minutes. She also emailed the following summary as of April 22, 2023.

#### **ASSETS summary as of April 22, 2023**

Checking/Savings

Truist Checking Account      \$8,352.50

Truist Money Market        \$7,092.75

Total Checking/Savings      \$15,445.25

Other Assets

Bird Club Fund in Williamsburg Community Fund \$10,708.92

**TOTAL ASSETS**                      \$26,154.17

**Club Year Income and Expenses Summary:** Our total ordinary income for 2023 to date is \$8,525.50.

Please note that the amount collected in dues is again lower than in 2022 and in previous years. The Club can still expect a second check from Wild Birds Unlimited in July and possibly a check from Dan Cristol for his articles in the Virginia Gazette. The Board agreed that the Club did not need the Williamsburg Community Foundation to issue a check this year from the Club's fund in the Foundation.

**Our Board approved program ordinary expenses for 2023** is estimated to be \$ 11,109.48. Other possible expenses include:

QuickBooks                              \$75.00

Bill's Book                                \$2,971.00

ISBN number book only not digital    \$125.00

Nature Camp (2-year balance from

Tom McCary Fund                      \$611.15 (Note – the Board recommended that this balance be carried forward until the balance reaches the estimated cost of a third Nature Camp Scholarship)

Based on additional estimated income and the not yet obligated expenses and those expenses noted above, the checking account above could be decreased by up to \$6,000 in Club Year 2023 reducing the Club's liquid assets to around \$9,500. (Note: This is reduced from the figure of \$11,000 presented at the meeting. This revision is based on a second review following the meeting of 2023 unobligated expenses.) Ann emphasized that 2023 includes a lot of estimates and things that we have voted on but have not yet acted on. She noted that she may get 30% off the \$157 Zoom expense with an online coupon. Concern was expressed that the net ordinary income versus expense to date is minus \$2,645 compared to minus \$788 last year. The following was discussed.

**Flyer Printing Costs:** Ann pointed out that the cost of printing each newsletter at \$2.33 plus a \$.63 stamp mailed 9 times a year equals \$26.64 per member who requests a hard copy which is more than the cost of dues. Printed copies are sent to lifetime members plus those whom we've agreed to give complimentary copies like Wild Birds Unlimited and Backyard Birder. Approximately 15 do not meet those categories and simply want a hard copy. A possibility of an added surcharge for those members was discussed. Jeanette and Cheryl objected feeling that the amount of money was not critical and many of these members are elderly. It was decided that there be a statement on the membership form reminding folks that printed copies are costly to the club and the planet and encourage them to go digital.

**QuickBooks:** Ann pointed out that it is easier for her to generate our financial reports on QuickBooks than on Excel. Currently she's been piggy backing off the CVWO account which expires in May 2024. She learned that QuickBooks will then increase their annual subscription to \$800. She has found a nonprofit company called TechSoup that will provide QuickBooks online for \$75 per year. She asked the Board for \$75 this year to test it while still on QB's subscription. She described the benefits of having the program online and that it allows access of up to 5 other members. Mary Ellen made a motion to authorize \$75 for QuickBooks online; seconded by Cheryl; unanimously approved.

**Nature Camp Scholarships:** Ann examined how we were spending the money members donated to Nature Camp plus the Tom McCary Fund with the number of Nature Camp scholarships awarded.

	2022	2023
Club Member Donations	\$780.00	\$897.00
Tom McCary Fund	\$1,474.15	\$1,400.00
Total	\$2,254.15	\$2,297.00
Nature Camp Awards	\$1,950.00	\$1,990.00
Balance	\$304.15	\$307.00
		\$611.15 Quick Books

She found a cumulative balance of \$611.15 which is not enough to fully fund another scholarship. She asked whether we should keep track of this money until we have enough for an additional scholarship or to make an unrestricted donation to Nature Camp. Lee reported that applicant numbers have been dropping and that currently all those who apply receive a scholarship. It was decided to accrue the money until we have enough for another scholarship. If there aren't enough applicants by then, we will reconsider how to use the money.

**Bill Williams's Book:** Ann reported that the estimated cost for printing 250 copies is \$2,971 plus the cost of \$125 for an ISBN number for the book only or \$295 for both book and digital version. Nancy reported that the book should be ready in a couple of months and that it has proven to be a money maker in the past as the previous version is sold out. For 250 books, the cost per book plus ISBN number will be about \$12, so selling it at only \$20 would yield a profit. Per Bill's recommendation, it will not be made digital until it has been at least a year in print.

**Concern About Deficit:** Ann noted that based on today's discussions, she will need to revise the deficit numbers for the club year 2023. She estimates that the checking account could be decreased by \$6,400 which reduces the club's liquid assets to \$11,400. Ann will later submit accurate data.

Based on Mary Ellen's observation that CDs were going up, Ann checked Truist's website and saw that the interest rate on CD's is now 4%. Ann asked if we should take some money out of the Money Market which is currently earning less than 1% and put it in a 1-year CD. Ann will go to Truist to investigate changing to a different Money Market that offers more interest and doesn't include fees. Nancy will continue to discuss with Ann how much we should maintain in our checking account and what would be appropriate to put in a 1-year CD.

**Further Causes for the Deficit:** Nancy noted the financial impact of the loss of about 25 membership dues. She reported becoming aware of a growing trend toward more small neighborhood bird clubs. They appeal to folks who have difficulty getting to our meetings, bird walks and field trips as well as enjoying birding in the familiarity of neighborhood with friends. She said that, currently, we can expect to be running a deficit when we also consider that we are currently in a 4-year \$4,000 commitment to the VSO toward the VABBA2; we are still feeling the effects of Covid including the new expense of Zoom; and the every three-year charge for our website being due this year. If we have difficulty closing the gap in the future, we can revisit our club donations (our donations should match our ability to pay for them) and the distribution from the Williamsburg Community Foundation. George summed it up saying that as we have a financial cushion that should last about 4 years, we can keep everything going as it is now and defer any changes, if needed, until 2024.

**The Flyer -Mary Ellen Hodges, Vice President (Editor):** Mary Ellen confirmed with the Board that, as usual, the newsletter would not be published in July and August and resume in September. The submission deadline for the June edition is May 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Programs – Patty Maloney, Vice President:** Patty reported the following:

- **May 24 (Fourth Wednesday):** Jan Lockwood will give a presentation on her amazing birding trip to Kenya.
- **June 8 (Second Thursday):** We will have an outdoor event at the Chickahominy Riverfront Park pavilion including an update on our Purple Martin Project from Cheryl Jacobson and Judy Jones.

Related to finances, Patty enquired if we should continue booking the library auditorium at \$90 each time or hold via Zoom only or find a cheaper venue. It was felt that we should continue Zoom because we have a dedicated Zoom audience and it gives us the advantage of booking speakers further afield. Cheryl noted that folks in the past had enjoyed in-person meetings that offered time for socializing and refreshments. It doesn't make much sense that we are paying more to the library when their time limitations prevent this. Cheryl and Patty will look for a less expensive meeting place and, in the meantime, we will continue hybrid membership meetings. There was also discussion about organizing a second monthly local Saturday bird walk that would also offer folks opportunity to get together. One concern is that more leaders would be needed. Nancy was very encouraging about getting more members involved as leaders. Nancy will get together with Jim about getting this going.

**Child Development Resources – Gary Carpenter, Member-at-Large:** Gary reported that CDR have resumed using their bird feeders again. He has bought seeds for them twice this year and expects to purchase seeds at least a couple more times in 2023.

**Conservation Committee- Cheryl Jacobson, Chairperson and Past President:** Cheryl reported seeing an increase of Purple Martins and Ford's Colony and Chickahominy with currently 24 birds at each location. She has spent \$400 for supplies and additional gourds from a \$500 donation from Master Naturalists. For the June 8<sup>th</sup> outdoor event at Chickahominy, Cheryl recommended that we advertise it as beginning with a trip to the martin colony and then gather for the presentation and refreshments. Last year, we started with the presentation and refreshments and fewer people visited the colony afterwards. Cheryl would also like to use some of the money allocated by the bird club for signage telling people about the purple martins and requesting their respect, esp. at Chickahominy where there are a lot of campers. She has talked to the ranger at York River State Park and if there are no birds this year, he will help move the gourds to another location.

George reported that he's seeing Chimney Swifts around Ford's Colony but none around Chimney Swift tower to date.

**Library Liaison/Refreshments – Catherine Flanagan:** Cathy sent the Williamsburg Public Library a list of recommendations for bird books. Cheryl asked if she can get bird books on the library's popular free app called Libby App where folks can download eBooks and audiobooks. Cathy will look into this when the library liaison contacts her in May or June.

**Membership – Jeanette Navia, Chairperson:** Jeanette reported that there are 165 paying memberships (some are family so two or more members each). This does not include those who have not renewed. Nancy sent emails to approximately 73 people in early April who had not renewed their memberships for 2023. Of those, 33 replied with renewals. There are still 38 members whom we've not heard from, including some long-time members. Jeanette enquired if we should send them one more email or delete them now. Also, there are 7 W&M students who probably have long since graduated that still get the PDF version of the newsletter. When Geoff was president, he had asked that W&M students be given a complimentary membership. Jeanette asked if we continue to send them the newsletter and count them as members. She suggested keeping Matt Anthony since he has led walks for us. Cheryl recommended that we send W&M past students an email asking if they would like to continue to receive the PDF newsletter and become a member of the club if they are still in the area. Nancy will send them emails. Nancy also asked Jeanette to send her a list of the names of the 38 members who've not renewed and she will seek a polite way to check on their intentions.

**Field Trips – George Martin, Field Trip Coordinator:** George reported the following:

- **SATURDAY, MAY 13 – PINEY GROVE PRESERVE** led by Chance Hines. The Club has been granted access for 15 members (maximum!) to visit Piney Grove Preserve in Sussex County. It is the home of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, which Chance Hines described at our March meeting. Chance recommends we take the 5:20 a.m. ferry to Surry. We will also need carpools because space for cars is very limited in the preserve. Only one spot remains open.

The next field trip will be held in September. He is considering holding it at Jamestown Beach to allow members to reconnect.

**Bird Walks/Bird Counts – Jim Corliss, Chairperson:** Jim was absent but he'd sent in the following:

- **Sunday, May 7:** Spring Bird Count, like the Christmas Bird Count, involves field teams and feeder watchers tallying all the birds they observe within our 15-mile diameter circle over a 24-hour

period. More information about participating in the Spring Bird Count will be forthcoming as the count day approaches. For now, please consider saving the date and contact Jim Corliss ([jcorliss240@cox.net](mailto:jcorliss240@cox.net)) or Nancy if you have any questions about how to participate. Nancy repeated that she would talk with Jim about scheduling a second monthly Saturday Bird Walk.

**Historian – Patty Maloney, Chairperson:** Patty reported that she's been adding things like all the thankyou notes we've received.

**Records/Liaison to CVWO – Nancy Barnhart, Chairperson:** Nancy has already discussed publishing Bill William's book.

**Nature Camp Scholarships – Lee Schuster:** Lee reported that everything is all set to go.

**Next Board Meeting:** Monday, July 24 at 3:00 pm on Zoom

Nancy Barnhart adjourned the meeting at 4:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cathy Millar, Secretary,  
Williamsburg Bird Club,  
April 28, 2023