

**Draft Minutes of the Board
Williamsburg Bird Club**

April 15, 2024

Conducted via Zoom by Ann Carpenter; presided by President Nancy Barnhart

Board Member Attendees: Nancy Barnhart, Patty Maloney, Ann Carpenter, Mary Ellen Hodges, Cathy Millar, Donna Benson, Deborah Humphries, Cheryl Jacobson

Board Members Absent: none

Committee Chair Attendees: George Martin, Jim Corliss, Catherine Flanagan, Patty Maloney, Nancy Barnhart, Cheryl Jacobson, Gary Carpenter, Shirley Devan

Committee Chairs Absent: Jeanette Navia, Lee Schuster

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

WBC Records Archive at W&M Library Update: Nancy reported that Jay, the archivist, has suggested that, in the next few months, we hold an open house to introduce to the community and students that our records are available to all. The activity will also promote the presence of our club. The library will arrange this activity. Deborah enquired if we could hold a general membership meeting at the open house to increase our visibility. Parking would be a challenge. Nancy will mention it to Jay who ultimately decides how/when the open house is presented.

Secretary's Report – Cathy Millar:

Cathy had submitted via email a draft of the January 29, 2024 Board minutes twice for review and correction. Ann Carpenter moved that the minutes be accepted; Deborah Humphries seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. Cathy will submit the minutes for posting on WBC's website.

Treasurer's Report – Ann Carpenter:

Ann submitted a spreadsheet detailing the income and expenses for Club Year 2024. Below is a summary of Assets as of April 13, 2024.

ASSETS

Truist CD	\$ 4,000.00
Truist Checking Account	\$ 7,900.64
Truist Money Market	\$ 4,746.51
Total Bank Accounts	\$16,647.15

Other Assets

Bird Club Fund in

Williamsburg Community

Fund: \$12,722.16 (based on value as of 3/31/2024)

TOTAL ASSETS \$ 29,363.81

Club Year Income and Expenses Summary:

Our total ordinary income for Club Year 2024 is \$7,985.50. The amount collected in dues and other member donations are again lower than in previous years. (2024: Dues - \$3202.50; 2023: Dues \$3,532.50; Other member donations – 2024: \$1815; 2023: \$2,363). Expenses to date are \$5,598.43 with estimated additional planned expenses of \$6,828.40 for total estimated expenses of \$12,431.78. The Projected Deficit of Ordinary Income versus Ordinary Expenses is (\$4,446.28). It is difficult to project investment income at this time. We have chosen not to take a distribution from the

Foundation fund, but that can be revisited each year. This year's distribution of \$347.99 was reinvested into the Fund. The club can still expect another check from Wild Birds Unlimited (\$500) and interest from the CD (\$82).

Adding to a potential deficit is the Current Balance in Carry-Forward funds for future Nature Camp Scholarship awards of \$644.15. When needed this could be funded from a Foundation distribution from the Bird Club Fund.

Ann added that the Williamsburg Community Fund's value has increased in value since the \$12,500 we'd initially invested in the fund. She also noted that there is a continuing decrease in the number of dues being paid amounting to \$500 less than last year. Ann highlighted that the actual and planned 2024 expenses are over \$12,000 with the spreadsheet detailing all the planned expenses, including Bill's book. As a result, there is a projected deficit of \$4,446.28.

Ann noted that in the future we can make more money available by claiming rather than reinvesting the profit from the Williamsburg Community Fund which is projected to be higher next year. Plus, there will be the interest from the CD. The cost of The Flyer has been dropping as there are now only 14 people/organizations receiving a printed copy.

Nancy feels that with encouragement we can get another \$500 in dues collected. She also reported that there is no update on the progress of Bill's book other than they are working with a different printer that may cost less.

George commented that the \$4,446 deficit might be an overstatement of sorts in view that Bill's book, which will eventually be a money maker, is a one-time expense; and that in 2025, we will have completed our donations to VSO for the VABBA2. Ann and Nancy agreed that with the assets we have, we can keep the deficit going without any issue and are in good shape to commit to our regular donations. Another one-time expense this year was the \$500 donation to the W&M Library when we submitted our records.

Ann noted that other than the \$150 Purple Martin Conservation membership, she's received no requests from Cheryl for monies for purchase/upkeep of purple martin housing. Cheryl reported that \$250 would suffice this year. A vote was required to add this as an expenditure. Deborah Humphries made a motion to add the expense of \$250 for maintenance of purple martin gourds. Mary Ellen Hodges seconded it followed by unanimous approval.

Nancy reviewed with us the club donations we typically make that needed to be addressed this year. They are as follows: Center for Conservation Biology - \$500; Coastal VA Wildlife Observatory - \$200; Community Cloud Forest Conservation - \$500; Historic VA Land Conservancy - \$250; Purple Martin Conservation - \$150; VABBA2 - \$1,000; and Williamsburg Regional Library - \$200. It was unanimously agreed to continue these donations.

The Flyer – Mary Ellen Hodges, Vice President (Editor): Mary Ellen suggested that our new board members, Deborah Humphries and Donna Benson write a short biography for the newsletter to introduce themselves to the members. They agreed to try to get them done by the May newsletter. Ann noted that due to impending surgery, she won't have the YouTube link for this Wednesday's membership meeting immediately available but hopes to have it in time for the next newsletter. The deadline for the May newsletter is April 26th.

Programs - Patty Maloney, Vice President: Patty reported the following:

- **April 17, 7:00 pm:** Ornithology Research Grant student reports on their research.
- **May 15, 7:00 pm:** Presentation by Nancy Barnhart on her birding adventure in India.
- **June 26, 6:00 pm:** Outdoor gathering at the Chickahominy Riverfront Park with updates on the Purple Martin Project by Cheryl Jacobson and the project team.

Pat added that Joe Piotrowski has volunteered to give a presentation about his 90- day birding expedition in Mexico sometime in the autumn.

Nancy added that Rexanne Bruno has donated many ornithological books, games, and puzzles to be used as door prizes at our meetings. Shirley Devan also some donations.

Past President & Conservation Chair – Cheryl Jacobson: Cheryl reported that the ‘scout’ Purple Martins have been arriving at the club-sponsored gourd housing. The pair at York River State Park have returned.

Members-at-Large – Deborah Humphries and Donna Benson: No comments except for Deborah remarking that it is warbler season! She suggested that any club member who photographs a Prothonotary that is banded should send the band numbers to her or Shirley.

Membership – Jeanette Navia: Jeanette was absent but had emailed Nancy a list of 36 members who haven’t renewed their 2024 membership. She had enquired if it was ok to delete them. Nancy asked that she wait a week while she contacts some of them whom she thought would be interested in continuing membership. Regarding the issue of a cut-off date, Mary Ellen noted that our By-Laws state that it is April 1st. We have not really been enforcing it but are now determined to make a point of reminding members early each year that they will not get the newsletter, field trips & program announcements and all the other benefits of being a member if they don’t renew by April 1st. The new policy will be put in the newsletter. Cheryl recommended that we should try to ascertain the reason when members choose not to renew.

A discussion about sending hard copies of the newsletter resulted in reaffirming that it not being an option for new members; but those who’ve been receiving them be grandfathered after they’ve been asked if they would accept a digital one. The membership/renewal form needs to have the option for hard copy removed.

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

- **Saturday, April 20:** Newport News Park led by Jason Strickland. Meet at the parking lot by the ranger station at 8am.
- **Saturday, May 18:** Chippokes State Park in Surry County led by Nancy Barnhart starting at 8am. This last field trip of the season will require taking the Jamestown Ferry, probably at 7:20 am. We will car pool to consolidate the number of cars. Lunch at Surry Seafood to follow.

Bird Walks/Counts – Jim Corliss, Chairperson: Jim noted that our Spring Bird Count is on track for Sunday, April 28.

He reported that per result of his request to find someone to take over his compilation duties, Shirley Devan has volunteered. She will start working with him on this year’s CBC.

Regarding Bird Counts, Jim has been discussing with Hugh Beard about splitting his Middle Plantation sector into 2 sectors because it covers 2 separate geographic areas. A second sector leader would be needed. Hugh wants to keep the southern sector that includes Governors Land. The northern sector needing a leader contains the Warhill area. Jenny Wyckoff’s name was mentioned. George Martin expressed an interest.

Library/Liaison & Refreshments – Cathy Flanagan: Cathy hasn’t heard from the library. Because fewer members have been attending the in-person meetings, she asked for food suggestions to prevent bringing too much. Cookies and packages of trail mix were suggested.

Ann suggested that we try starting the social time and light refreshments at 6:30 pm followed by the meeting at 7 pm. Raffles will be held at the end. We will start at this upcoming April meeting.

Records/Liaison to CVWO – Nancy Barnhart: Nancy reported that she didn't have anything for CVWO. Regarding records, once the book is ready, it will be available in no time. In the meantime, Nancy and Bill have been keeping the records current.

Nature Camp Scholarships – Lee Schuster: Lee was absent. Nancy and Ann reported that the two scholarships from our bird club and the one from the Mullin scholarship fund have been paid for.

Liaison to VSO – Shirley Devan: Shirley reported that the annual meeting of the VSO is being held via Zoom on May 2nd and the guest speaker is Dr Ashley Peele who will share interesting data from the VABB2. She also noted that, for the first time ever, the enrollment to the VSO field trip to SW Virginia has been cut off at 100. She also reported that the VSO is sponsoring The Virginia Big Day on May 4th. Xavier Gitre, a student at Virginia Tech, is organizing a state-wide birding big day. All the money raised will benefit the VABB2. The funding for the VABB2 is now at \$225,000 out of the goal of \$300,000. Currently, descriptions of the bird species and designing the website are being addressed. It is due to be launched in autumn 2025.

Assistant Editor – Gary Carpenter: Gary noted that he has not received a copy of Bill's book for editing yet.

New and Continuing Business

Lights Out, Cape Henry Audubon – logo: Nancy described Lights Out being a program to get cities to turn off the lights in buildings during the 2 months of spring and autumn migration from 11pm to 6am. It has been difficult to implement because landlords prefer keeping lights on to increase market appeal. Cape Henry Audubon Society in Norfolk is working to get Norfolk to adopt the program. They are trying to get support from local clubs and we unanimously agreed that they could use our logo on their website as supporters of their efforts.

By-Laws: Interest in making changes? Nancy noted that the idea of updating our by-laws has not gathered momentum. It had initially been brought up because of the idea of adding one or two more members-at-large. It was thought this could be addressed later.

Ann expressed concern about Jeannette stepping down from her Membership/Webmaster Chair. Not many members have the skill set she has to replace her. Shirley noted that Jeannette is covering two different jobs: webmaster and membership. Perhaps, she might keep one while another person assumes the other. Nancy noted that Jeanette's been doing a Herculean job and that we should be looking around for qualified folks should they be needed.

Next Board Meeting: Nancy proposed Monday, July 22nd at 3 pm.

Nancy Barnhart adjourned the meeting at 4:23 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Millar, Secretary,
Williamsburg Bird Club
April 21, 2024

