



Saint Paul Audubon Society
Board of Director Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2024
Anpétu Téča Education Center, Roseville, MN

Call to Order

The monthly St. Paul Audubon Board of Directors meeting was held on Monday, May 6, 2024. President Greg Burnes called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. Those attending were Vice-President Kiki Sonnen, Treasurer Jim Stout, Secretary Craig Cox, VP of Communications Martha Douglas, Neil Carlson, Rebecca Flood, Monica Bryand, Debbie Brown, and Amanda Rice.

Recent Bird Sightings – Announcements

Board members shared their bird sightings.

Approval of April 2024 Board Meeting Minutes

Martha moved to approve the April Minutes; Rebecca seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Treasurers Report

Jim reminded the Board that Neil would become Treasurer at Thursday’s General Meeting. Jim and Neil have been working together to ensure a smooth transition.

Jim provided the following update on our current assets:

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|----------------------|----------|
| US Bank Checking | \$19,977 |
| US Bank Savings | \$3,009 |
| US Bank Certificate | \$26,011 |
| TruStone Certificate | \$33,170 |

The TruStone certificate will mature on February 20, 2025. The US Bank certificate matured and was renewed for a 7-month term. I’m not sure I got this right. I can run past Jim.

Board of Directors

Debrief, Follow-Up, Next Steps

What do we keep or enhance? What do we get rid of? What do we improve?

Comments and suggestions from Board members included:

- It would be good to train our volunteers to be more engaged with our audience and partners; Greg asked if anyone is involved in another volunteer organization that provides training for their volunteers. Following the meeting, Amanda provided

information from other organizations about onboarding volunteers (see Addendum).

- The scheduling of our field trips needs to be reevaluated and made more amenable to a more diverse community. A more varied schedule designed to attract a specific community would be ideal.
- Field Trip participants would benefit much more if there were more than one leader to ensure everyone had a good experience. Monica noted that UBC bird walks always include three or four leaders, with leaders in the front, middle, and back of the group.

The Board concluded that we need to seriously evaluate what we are doing – be intentional, deliberate, and strategic – when we plan events, programs, and communications.

Greg asked the group to brainstorm a list of our current events, programs, and activities to inform a more comprehensive evaluation. The Board identified the following for further evaluation:

1. Big River, Wild River Journey
2. Explore the Three Rivers Park process for training and evaluating volunteers.
3. Committee membership and work
4. Take another look at our website.
5. Help with bird identification.
6. Suggest hotspots for people interested in birding.
7. Chapter Meetings
8. Warbler Weekend
9. Winter Bird Count—find a new person to help get volunteers engaged.
10. Butterfly Count
11. Advocacy
12. Social media

The Board agreed that all our activities must be inclusive and welcoming and that everyone should have a good time. We need to take a strategic approach that develops activities specifically designed to appeal to specific audiences, communities, and potential partners.

Following further discussion, the Board suggested the following principles for how we plan and execute all our events and activities:

- Everyone has a good time.
- Everyone feels welcome.
- Everyone feels as if the event or activity was worth their time.
- Emphasize and explain our mission and invite people to participate.
- Communicate a history of where a bird walk is being held.

Chapter Name Change Assessment

The Board agreed to send the letter and survey email to the list of engaged people as defined by MailChimp, which is about 800 people. The target date for sending the email is May 15. We

will also put the letter and survey links into the Cardinal. The Board also agreed that the individual responses should be compiled and available online to Board members. Board members will then be able to review individual responses.

It was suggested that we assign a thorough review of individual responses to a committee of Board members, which could analyze the results and deliver them to the Board.

Upcoming Events

Greg noted the following upcoming events that we have discussed.

- June Board/Volunteer Thank You Party: The Board agreed that none of us have the bandwidth to organize and implement this party in June. We will look for another date and place to do this.
- Landscape Revival – June 1st, 9 am – 1 pm

Committee Updates

Conservation Committee

No report

Communications

No report

Education Committee

Kiki reported there has, so far, been very little interest from members in being on the committee.

Program Committee

Greg reports that the first five programs are set for next year and that there is a good list of ideas for filling out the rest of the series. Greg asked the Board to please send in ideas for more BIPOC speakers.

Grants Committee

No report.

Nominating Committee

No Report

Motion to Adjourn

Neil moved to adjourn the meeting. Jim seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Next Meeting

There is no scheduled in-person meeting until September. However, if an issue needs immediate attention, we will convene a Zoom meeting.

Addendum #1

Following the meeting, Amanda looked up a few things that we discussed for potential program enhancements and thought they could go in at the end for future reference.

Three Rivers Park District - volunteer training
page: <https://www.threeriversparks.org/page/volunteer-training-center>

Accessibility references: <https://www.birdability.org/>

Minneapolis Audubon event: GUIDED BIRDWATCHING FOR PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY CHALLENGES Sunday, May 26, 2024 10:00 AM 11:30 AM
Roberts Bird Sanctuary 4124 Roseway Road, Minneapolis, MN, 55408 United States (map)
We will meet at the shelter at the western edge of the Rose Garden parking lot.
This outing is appropriate for birders with a range of mobility challenges including birders who use wheelchairs, walkers, or canes, as well as those with difficulty walking, but all birders are welcome. We expect to see many species of bird at close range. All birders from beginner to experienced are welcome. Binoculars will be available for those who need them.
Please dress for the weather.

Birdability®/accessibility description: The terrace is just feet from the parking lot. The path is paved and has curb cuts from the parking lot. Disability parking spaces are available and accessible portable toilets are located nearby. There are a few benches on the terrace. We will spend the first 45 minutes on the terrace. For the second half of the event, we will take a short, easy, OPTIONAL hike into the sanctuary along Bossen Lane. Bossen Lane is mostly level and wide and is hard-packed dirt or gravel. There may be mud after a rain. There is one bench several hundred feet in.

<https://www.minneapolisaudubon.org/events-list/guided-birdwatching-for-people-with-mobility-challenges>

Addendum #2 Board Elections

Board Elections

Due to canceling our May in-person chapter meeting, we moved to electronic voting, as Section 6.5 of our bylaws allowed. On May 12, 2024, the election email went to all 2,483 names on our chapter's email list. 50.1% of the email recipients opened the email, and we received 132 unique votes (the survey tool does not allow multiple votes from the same email address), all of which were YES votes. Per the email, the survey was closed at 10 a.m. Sunday, May 19. The following candidates are duly elected for their stated terms (one year for officers and two years for directors).

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| President: | Greg Burnes |
| Vice President: | Kiki Sonnen |
| Treasurer: | Neil Carlson |
| Secretary: | Craig Cox |
| VP Communications: | Martha Douglas |
| Director: | Amanda Rice |
| Director: | Debbie Brown (not up for election this cycle) |
| Director: | Monic Bryand (not up for election this cycle) |

