



Saint Paul Bird Alliance

Board of Directors Minutes Monday, November 3, 2025, 5:00 – 6:30 PM

**Amherst H. Wilder Conference Center
451 Lexington Parkway North
St. Paul, MN 55104
Conference Room 2510**

1) Welcome and Call to Order

The Saint Paul Bird Alliance Board of Directors meeting was held on Monday, November 3, 2025. President Kiki Sonnen called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. Those attending were Vice-President Debbie Brown, Treasurer Neil Carlson, Monica Bryand, Lucas Lin, and Craig Cox.

2) Review / revise agenda

No revisions.

3) Approve Last Month's Minutes

Neil motioned to approve minutes with one revision, Monica seconded. Unanimously approved.

4) Treasurers Report (Neil Carlson)

Neil provided the following update on our current assets as of November 3, 2025. Checking and savings total \$42,978.87.

- US Bank Checking: \$12,449.94
- US Bank Savings: \$13,440.79
- US Bank Certificate: \$17,088.14 – Maturity date is July 10, 2026
- TruStone Certificate: \$35,408.77

Neil also noted that we now have our new Tax ID number.

5) Review & Analysis of October Program (All)

The Board agreed the program was very interesting. The program is available on YouTube. The next program is about Great Grey Owls and is on Zoom. Land of Lakes is taking leadership of the program planning. SPBA continues to suffer from the lack of an active Program Committee.

6) Updates of Collaboration between Saint Paul Bird Alliance and Land of Lakes Bird Alliance in programming, events (including field trips), and tech support. (Kiki Sonnen)

Kiki reminded the Board that she and Marian Weidner wrote an op-ed and submitted it to the Star-Tribune. The subject is the need for bird safe features in building and zoning codes. It was published. Kiki got good feedback on the op-ed. Kiki attended a get together with Land of Lakes Lisa Keitel about training field trip leaders.

7) Grants Program (Craig Cox)

Craig directed the Board's attention to the example he sent around looking at one option to reduce the total grant requests to meet the \$15,000 allocated in the budget for grants. Craig noted that the draft approach models what a new policy of limiting grants to no more than \$2,000 might look like. Craig noted that one outcome was that it was hard to make room for new grantees. Ideas surfaced by the Board to improve the grant program in the coming year included: provide preference for organizations with annual revenue less than a specified amount and for organizations working in Ramsey and Washington Counties; clarify that grantees must tell us if they are using a fiscal agent. We will set aside time on the December agenda to approve grant requests and talk more about changes to the grant application and process for the coming year.

8) Discussion of Ethics, Conflict of Interest, Guidelines, Boundaries (Kiki Sonnen)

Kiki raised concerns that we do not have a documented conflict-of-interest policy or a process for Board Members to acknowledge and agree to that policy. Monica reported that UBC has a conflict-of-interest policy that would likely apply to SPBA. She volunteered to circulate the policy to Board Members for review.

9) Annual Appeal Update (Kiki Sonnen)

Kiki reported that the email appeal is drafted in MailChimp and ready to send to members. Amanda will work with Greg to post a full pdf of the annual report to our website and will add a link to the report in the donation appeal. The Board would like our appeal to go out at least a few days before Give to the Max – November 20th, which means the email needs to go out before November 19th. The Board then recommended we include another appeal for donations in the December email.

10) Winter Bird Count (aka Christmas Bird Count) (Kiki Sonnen)

Kiki report the Winter Bird Count is set for the 20th of December. Kiki is reaching out to Count team leaders to remind them to check if previous participants will participate this year. She noted that process is proving to be very time-consuming. The Board agreed it would be very helpful to have a volunteer Winter Bird Count coordinator. The plan is to announce we are looking for a volunteer coordinator at the December program.

11) Communication & Outreach (Kiki Sonnen for Amanda Rice). The Board enthusiastically agreed that, thanks to Amanda, our outreach and communication effort is going very well. The Board wants to thank Amanda for her excellent work.

12) Conservation Committee Updates (Debbie Brown & Monica Bryand)

Debbie reported that the Committee met on September 20 and that Landscape Revival personnel are now participating in the committee. There is a new Kestrel box at Pig's Eye! Monica and Debbie noted that Committee members really want to be in the field working on projects. The next Committee meeting is in December. Saint Paul Parks will participate in that meeting to explore opportunities for joint projects.

13) Motion to Adjourn

Monica moved to adjourn at 6:22 pm. Neil seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.