Saint Paul
Bird Alliance

Board of Directors MINUTES Monday, October 5, 2026, 5:00 – 6:30 PM

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

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xxx Zoom

1) 5:00 Call to Order
    a)
2) Bird sightings
    a) Monica: UBC Spanish language walk, Barred Owl, and Cooper's Hawk, seeing folks view them through the scope was fun; Micki 8 pairs, 1 Coot and 1 Gadwall far Western Montana, why is that?; Jennifer, drove 90 minutes to Gaylord for 5 minutes, next day drove 10 minutes to see a Sabine's Gull for an hour. Kiki—Calvary Cemetery, 50 to 100 Flickers, all of a sudden, a Merlin came in and went low to the ground in a circle, Flickers came back. KS big white patch on the back end of Flickers. Craig—saw nothing but White-Throated Sparrows. Neil—Sherburne event was difficult and rainy. The tent grew smaller—saw about 200 people. Food trucks; 400 to 500 people there, despite rain. A large number of Trumpeter Swans, in their element, twitting about. Jeff—went down to Bass Pond, did waterfowl bathing, (a la forest bathing). Allison—Great River Journeys, saw 8 Bald Eagles with the kids
3) 5:05 Review and vote on minutes of our September Board meeting:
    a) Moved to approve Jeff; second Neil. Approved by acclamation.
4) 5:07 Treasurer's Report (including Insurance coverage) (Neil)
    a) Compared with previous report, savings decreased by about $60; Neil willl trace that discrepancy down.
    b) Checking and Savings $54,826.03
        i) Checking 2071 $22,649.51

ii) Savings 3181 $14,694.09 +$725 [donations; Thank you letters have gone out.]
iii) Certificate of Deposit $17,482.43

5) 5:12 Grants update (Craig)
    a) Nothing new, $8,080 in total of grant applications, about half of what is expected. Kiki—some orgs put in report, but no money ask? Just the applicants. Craig sent a link today. If have time to read proposals, linked to Google Drive, might be helpful. Will vote on approval at the December meeting. Read and let Craig know if you have questions--preferably before the December meeting! Hamline-Midway feels swamped, so thinking about applying next year. Do we want to reach out to Belize? Not a 501 c3; $500,000 limit to budget? Fiscal agent—go through an organization that is 501 c3. Community Garden—part of Community Council, which is 501 c3. Rochester has a relationship with a Central American Nature Center. Yes but an org with lots of Money and Retirees.
        i) Craig is hearing that he is not asking Belize for a proposal.
6) 5:22 Program Committee update (Micki)
    a) Miscommunications about Jennifer Ackerman booking: Paired with Land of Lakes Bird Alliance; confusion about which were confirmed; once questioned, were confirmed. Now $3,000--$1500 for each Bird Alliance, 11 of Feb, Zoom party to attract donations, potentially. Ackerman marked the day off.
    b) Do we want to stick with $300 honorarium? Is it a rule or do we want to be flexible (gets complicated).
    c) Communications about programs need help: Micki wants it to be much more structured. “Get rid of cacophony” to hear voices clearly.
    d) Monica—Need to communicate that this is not the normal. Take it from grants; a one-time exception.
    e) Neil, do we have a contact on LLBA? Too busy to talk at the time.
    f) Bring forth some guidelines? Jeff—still $300? And be good? Micki—how many people do we have on program committee? Wouldn’t do anything without the vote of the board.
    g) Stan T.—went over, Camera Club pitched in. Jeff—optics are not good [when say one amount and allow another]
    h) Motion: Make an exception for Jennifer Ackerman, we will contribute $1,500. Moved by Micki, second by Kiki. All in favor; passed by acclamation
    i) Debbie, grateful to Micki, for energy; if partnership not working, need to know this. Micki: If we could discuss at an upcoming meeting*

j) Motion to approve Micki as program committee chair. Moved by Monica, seconded by Debbie. Approved by acclamation

7) 5:35 Conservation Committee report (Monica & Debbie)
   a) Nice to have 3 articles in last Cardinal. Small issue on Kestrel story: Fix on Website and run a correction. 20 kestrels fledged; give correction to Greg to help fix.
   b) St. Paul rec: Claire Lamberg, new contact for us.
   c) Visit Keystone WMA in December; annual retreat at Monica's house Dec. 21.
      i) Lead shot splinters in Condors and other birds of prey; gives them lead poisoning from deer guts, etc.
         (1) No reason to use lead, Craig says; at shooting ranges, where is all that lead going?

8) 5:42 Make Way for Ducklings Project (Kiki)
   a) KS conceived—providing wildlife corridors in a certain area; bridges over freeway or train tracks, also possible tunnels. Millions of dollars in federal and state transit funds to fund passageways for wildlife. Not much land acquisition; just us advocating for this switch in right of ways in railways. Ramsey County Public Works, MN DNR, DOT . . . small neighborhood groups. KS writing $50,000 grant applications to McKnight, and two other big funders.
      i) Mapping and GIS stuff; need a staff person. Big piece of property, East Side, Maplewood, White Bear Lake, Gem Lake, …lots of parks and open space, waters (lakes, streams). How much does a wildlife byway cost? Dakota County just got a million $ for a land bridge.
      ii) Need to develop [hotspot]. If built one, have a model, then build on success—Micki
      iii) Christopher Smith, big Herp expert, works for MNDOT, tries to get tunnels for turtles and snakes . . .
      iv) Debbie—big project, first learned about it reading the Cardinal. Are you planning on leading Kiki? I am planning on writing grants—Kiki. Stephanie Hinkerson, helped with Hamline-Midway project.
      v) Monica, there's one in Duluth. We're talking Millions and Millions.
      vi) Any grant they will want to know Who and Where—Monica. Kiki—GIS and community and DNR know the hotspots where animals are being killed. Get the District Council to buy in, then the legislator to back it
      vii) Jennifer—would they give funding to support the information gathering? Kiki—that's what we hope. Monica, East Side has a lot of

low-income people. Spending on animals [but what about] people still suffering?

viii) Neil—two-pronged approach, Where animals cross road and human fatalities. MN Crash database. After he takes a brief scan: Let's just say there is carnage—all over the place. Geolocated. Whole state is a crash site: Jeepers, creepers . . .

ix) Debbie—should be data; and how about partnerships? Not really our expertise…

x) Craig—just a little too generic. I would try to link with humans. It's hard to raise money to study something. Kiki—if there's money to do the thing. Micki ask the wildlife federation if they have thought about it? Kiki—LWV, Pheasants, Ducks Unlimited,

xi) Craig—we cannot do it without paid staff; don't' want to hire staff for this. In another position, talked to all of the police forces in the Metro, the amount of time they spend picking up dead deer is unbelievable.

xii) Neil—I move to table. Second by Craig.

xiii) Craig, find an organization who can really handle this and then support them (Monica's idea)

xiv) Monica—long term projects, lowest cost is $500,000

b) Motion to table this passes.

9) 6:05 Communications (Jeff; Micki and Monica) N,B, these docs were distributed for our September meeting—just started discussion

a) Update on Communications Sustainability

b) Communications Committee Chair DRAFT

c) Communications Chair and Media Internship DRAFT

d) Newsletter guidelines DRAFT

--need volunteers to filter applicants.

i) Jeff--Move to discuss: These two stipends for the chair of the Communications Comm, $2,000 annually; and $500 for the internship, probably semester, so $1,000. Allison seconded.

ii) Jeff—my new awareness that Greg is looking to peel off and not be the center of communications. Responsibility of chair would be what he's doing, strategic planning, social media, working with the intern.

iii) Micki—first need to say whether would set aside the money. Job description—in the beginning, second graph—as chair, you would bring together the volunteers . . . that make it work. So the BoD still sets the direction. Okay, says Jeff.

iv) Easy to change—enthusiasm for birds and support for SPBA's mission. [full stop suggests Micki]. Jennifer—we can convert them later.

v) Jeff—if we are going to extend a financial stipend to someone, we would want them report up to us, allow us to give them feedback.

vi) Craig—if we could find the right person for this, it would be more impactful than the grants we have approved. If we could really get communications going, it would be a great impact compared to grant program.

e) No stipend to exceed $2,000 for chair or co-chairs; Each intern would be a $500 stipend; so a total of $1,000.

f) How about if they don't do the work—Debbie? Need a statement of goals and deliverables, chair would develop goals for intern in turn.

g) Kiki, chair would be hired first, then an intern comes along a bit later.

h) Monica—if I were applying, heard intern: Nope.

i) Jennifer—for the internships, can we make it a year-long internship, nine months, or per year. Concordia St. Paul . . . agreement for a one-semester intern. Jeff—it's a lot of credits?

j) Invitation to recruit a person. Ideally, a known person to us.

k) Vote on motion—carries by acclamation.

10) 6:25 President's Report (Kiki)—Emerging issues. Hillview development is on AHAT territory, a lot of neighborhood folks are upset—industrial uses. Have to do a full EIS, some 600 acres. A lot of urban explorers going onto the property. This weekend someone drove through the Army gates. Developer wants to smash old bunkers. Neighbors and Met Council say if bulldoze the area before EIS, would dig up toxins.

a) OCT 21 the Environmental Quality Board will decide on whether to smash things or not. 550 homes only access is through County I; will be a great number of semis and other construction machines.

b) Send letter to PCA? Neighborhood has been organizing a lot.

c) Neighbors who are opposed are Shoreview; but the property is in Arden Hills.

d) Will send a letter—Kiki will draft, if Micki will help.

e) Allison moved; Craig second; vote approved by acclamation.

11) Interest of time, field trip in Maplewood, John shared his sign-up sheet with all the emails. Possibly sent out CC instead of BCC. Discussed at volunteer meeting, K. is a valuable person and bird leader. Jeff would like to focus on the volunteer; at that moment, would have been nice to acknowledge that. Make that crystal clear: We are

sorry they had their unwanted attention. Care for the safety of volunteers; look forward to continued volunteering.

12) Micki—discussed it long enough that she understood we cared

13) Another policy that we should have written down.

14) Jeff—volunteer onboarding, would be useful to do.

15) 6:40 Adjourn – Next BoD meeting Nov. 2, 2026