

Audubon of Southwest Florida, Inc. (ASWF)  
Meeting Minutes, Board of Directors Meeting  
March 21, 2019  
Masonic Lodge, Fort Myers, FL

Call to Order and Attendance: The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by President Dan VanNorman. Other board members present were Brad Cornell, Jayne Johnston, Carol Newcomb, Gerri Reaves, and Jim Rodenfels. Also in attendance was volunteer Jim Convery.

Past Presidents still active in chapter but not currently serving on the board: John Cassani, Don Doggett, Bill Hammond, Connie Jarvis, Mary Lee Mann, Vince McGrath, & Maria Quasius.

Minutes of February 21 meeting approved. (JR/CN)

Treasurer's Report/Jim: Report for February 2019, previously distributed by email, was approved (BC/JJ).

### **Committee Reports**

Membership/Jayne: February National membership was 1381 (up 16). Chapter membership was 147 (up 11), with 6 renewals, and 6 new memberships. Expiration letters and event tables have bolstered memberships.

Conservation/Brad: (held prior to board meeting; Sean in attendance)

The vote on the Lee County Comp Plan Amendment was postponed until April 17. The problem with it, as Brad explained in a long email to Commissioner Brian Hammon, is that it incentivizes, albeit unintentionally, the development of wetlands. In addition, the text is complicated and poorly written. It allows industrial and commercial development once a permit is obtained. Currently, only one house is allowed per 20 acres, but that would change. Opposition to the change to the plan amendment approved. (BC/GR)

Shorebird Stewardship: Courtney is finishing up the winter season; nesting is starting early for some birds. Audubon Florida will be hiring the next steward to start in April.

Board members should be signed up for both state and national alerts. For example, given the proposed reduction of wetland protection under the Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS), the chapter's goal is "to shame the EPA," so the volume of emails/signatures is very important. After the water crisis in Southwest Florida resulted in two thousand tons of dead wildlife on beaches, not including birds, the preservation of wetlands is critical, but their destruction has been accelerated.

Education/Jayne: Reimbursement for posters approved. (BC/JR)

Field Trips/Jim R.: Only one person besides Jim R. and Teddy showed up for the Ding Darling bicycle tour on February 24. There will be a Barefoot Beach program and field trip in April.

Programs/Gerri: Next month, Rick Vorell, Town Ambassador for Babcock Ranch, will speak about the ranch's "History, Amenities, and Future Vision." (Note: The following day, another program was scheduled.)

Publicity/Carol: Publicity was good for tonight's program; however, *Florida Weekly* now wants payment for being listed in the calendar. Carol will inquire about the cost as a point of curiosity.

Newsletter: Send items for the Spring *Flyways* to Courtney no later than the end of March.

**Old Business/Dan**: The chapter had exhibit tables at the Burrowing Owl Festival, February 23; the Bicycle Theater Tour at Fort Myers Regional Library on March 13; and Wings Over Water Festival on March 16.

Jayne gave an update on the Colombia trip planned for fall 2019: Five people are signed up for 12 spots. The deadline is July 4 and a minimum of 7 is needed.

**New Business:**

- Brad reported that Corkscrew Swamp is looking for new director. The Audubon Assembly will be October 25-26 in Gainesville.
- Dan will forward an email about Audubon Florida's advocacy training.
- Tonight program announcement disappeared from the website; Gerri will notify Jim B.
- Jim R. discussed the planning for the Annual Meeting on June 1 at the Collaboratory. Nominations for the board are needed. GR agreed to be secretary for another term; Courtney will tentatively continue for another term as a director and as *Flyways* editor. The annual-meeting postcard will be mailed in April.
- Jayne distributed a detailed proposal re: training and long-term plans for education, outlining both costs and projected income. Authorization for Jayne to pursue the plans approved. (BC/??). A laptop has been donated for chapter use.
- The board will address confusion about responsibilities and overlap for website, email, newsletter, Facebook, etc. at the June meeting.

**Next Meeting Date:** Thursday, April 18, 2019.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m. A program about Burrowing Owls by Beverly Saltonstall and Pascha Donaldson of Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife followed.

Respectfully submitted by Gerri Reaves.