

Audubon of Southwest Florida, Inc. (ASWF)  
Meeting Minutes, Board of Directors Meeting  
August 15, 2019  
The Collaboratory, Fort Myers, FL

Call to Order and Attendance: The meeting was called to order at 2:07 p.m. by President Dan VanNorman. Other board members present were Brad Cornell, Courtney Kern, Sean McCabe, Carol Newcomb, and Gerri Reaves.

Minutes of June 20 meeting approved (CN/SM).

Treasurer's Report/Dan.: Report for June and July 2019, previously distributed by email, was approved (GR/CN). A \$300 check for hosting the Annual Southwest Florida Water Resources Conference has been received. The topic will be FGCU's new water center.

### **Committee Reports**

Membership: National numbers for May are still not available, but since April national membership is down 102 to 1,241. Chapter membership is 147, up from 135 since April: 5 renewals and 3 new memberships.

Discussion of mass communication program for email account included advantages of a program such as Mail Chimp, chiefly the ability to quickly alert members to issues, votes, meetings, etc. Also discussed was the current staff and posting procedures for the Facebook account.

Conservation/Brad: He will testify at hearing re: Troyer Brothers Florida Inc.'s proposed large rock mine, which will cut across the DRGR and impact wildlife. The planned land bridges will be insufficient. Sekata Seed, a farm-seed research company, is a possible ally. Their land and business, which is adjacent to the proposed mine, will be greatly affected.

New Lee County Commissioner Sandelli's perspective on anything is not known yet.

Four Conservation 20/20 parcels are coming up for purchase. Brad will make a personal appearance to thank the Commission. He reminded the board of the importance of stressing when arguing land-use decisions that wetlands are an important component in preventing algal blooms.

He outlined the three conservation priorities approved during the RCC teleconference on Aug. 10. Regarding priority 3, Carol kick-off a discussion about planting red mangroves to "soften" sea walls on Cape Coral, as well as other strategies to deal with climate change and a planned retreat from coast in SW Florida. Gerri mentioned the importance of remembering social justice issues if/when development and gentrification seeks higher ground and traditional neighborhoods are displaced or priced out. Brad will email the action plan for those RCC conservation priorities to the board.

Audubon Florida got inserted into the toll-bill corridor (Collier to Polk Counties) signed by the Governor a requirement to consider what the state cannot afford to lose. A task force headed by Paul Gray has been set up to study the corridor. Chapters will have a role to play in the monitoring process. .

Courtney gave a summary of the Shorebird Stewardship season, which was disappointing for Black Skimmers. She will ask Andrea to submit a piece about the season for *Flyways*.

Education: Nothing to report.

Field Trips: Three trips are scheduled. General discussion ensued about possibilities for October and December outings, as well as trips to new preserve on Pine Island and other venues; Jayne will oversee the Orange River Christmas Bird Count. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day was mentioned, but no local organization seems to be organizing an event as yet.

Programs/Gerri: The program schedule for the year was distributed via email. Programs begin in September.

Publicity/Carol: She summarized what's been submitted and what will be posted. She has submitted the paperwork for the Service Learning credits for FGCU students.

Flyways/Courtney: Content is due to Courtney by the end of September for the next issue.

National & State Audubon Updates/Brad: The next Audubon Assembly will be in Gainesville in October; at least one person from the chapter will be funded to attend.

#### **Old Business:**

Update on the Fall Columbia Trip/Dan: Jayne is coordinating the trip: 12 people are signed up.

#### **New Business:**

Environmental Breakfast/Jim R: The event will be on Oct. 31, 2019, at Riverside Community Center. Ruth Watkins, president of Calusa Waterkeeper, will be the speaker. Discussion on selecting Environmentalist of the Year resulted in two possible candidates.

Status of Storage-unit Rental: Dan, Carol, and Gerri visited the CNCP to assess how much of the chapter's property remains in storage there. Some was saved and other items discarded or recycled. Dan has rented a unit at Cube Smart on Cleveland Avenue: \$85/month, first month free. Jim R. has started an inventory; he will get some keys made.

Gerri will omit mentioning still "active" former presidents in the minutes because the definition of "active" is unclear.

**Next Meeting Date**: Thursday, Sept. 19, 2019 at The Collaboratory. The program will be given by Shawnlei Breeding, Audubon EagleWatch Program Manager, Audubon Florida.

**Adjournment**: No program was scheduled. The meeting adjourned about 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gerri Reaves.