

Audubon of Southwest Florida, Inc. (ASWF)  
Meeting Minutes, Board of Directors Meeting  
April 18, 2019  
Masonic Lodge, Fort Myers, FL

Call to Order and Attendance: The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by President Dan VanNorman. Other board members present were Brad Cornell, Sean McCabe, Carol Newcomb, Gerri Reaves, and Jim Rodenfels. Also in attendance were hospitality volunteers Jim Convery and Carol Mariany.

Past Presidents still active in chapter: John Cassani, Don Doggett, Bill Hammond, Connie Jarvis, Mary Lee Mann, Vince McGrath, & Maria Quasius.

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

Treasurer's Report/Jim: Report for March 2019, previously distributed by email, and the following annual-meeting expenditures were approved (GR/BC): \$260 for printing and mailing postcard; \$220 for food.

### **Committee Reports**

Membership/Dan & Jayne via email: March National membership was 1340 (down 41). Chapter membership was 142 (down 5), with 2 renewals, and 6 new memberships. Reasons for declining numbers are unclear, but might be because local expirations have not been sent since the end of 2018. Also, a review of local and national memberships for the annual meeting indicates much duplication and triplication, particularly on the national list. Since Jayne has resigned from the board, Jim R. is willing to do membership on a temporary basis only.

#### Conservation/Brad:

The Lee County Commission's transmittal hearing for rock mining (aka "deleting map 14") on April 17 was well attended and lasted a full day. The transmittal was approved 3 to 1, with Commissioner Mann voting no. Commissioner Kiker was not present due to illness. Amendments to the Lee County Comp Plan Amendment require a super-majority.

On May 22, the proposed reduction of Lee County wetland protection will be before the County Commission.

Audubon Florida lost the case against the private boardwalk proposed on Little Estero Island Critical Wildlife Area in Fort Myers Beach. However, FMB, not DEP, has the ultimate authority, and FMB will not approve it.

Summer Nesting stewardship has started; Audubon Florida has hired Andrea Centolla.

Education/Jayne via email: No education funds approved last month have been spent. Veterans Park Arts Academy Middle School Club ended before Lee County Schools' spring break in March.

Field Trips/Jim R.: Jayne recently led a Barefoot Beach program and field trip sponsored by another organization. Carol reported that Marta Avila of Florida DEP has offered to participate in bilingual field trips; Carol will work with her to plan those.

Dan: Jay Watch training will be held May 7 at Hickey's Creek; Cheryl Black's Burrowing Owl survey on Cape Coral will take place on May 10 and 11, with the actual survey occurring on June 1.

Programs/Gerri: Tonight's program was originally scheduled for last December and cancelled due to the presenter's jury duty. The day after the last board meeting, it was discovered that Rick Vorell, Town Ambassador for Babcock Ranch, originally scheduled for tonight, no longer works at the ranch.

Phil Flood of SFWMD will speak at the annual meeting, our last program for the season.

Publicity/Carol: Emails are no longer accepted by the *News-Press*. Only online calendar postings are accepted, and the system offers no way to verify the postings. Despite posting tonight's meeting, publicity didn't occur for tonight's program.

Dan: Only Pete is monitoring Facebook now. There were various last-minute invitations to participate in Earth Day celebrations, but there is no one to cover. Hopefully the chapter will organize an event for next year's fiftieth anniversary.

National & State Audubon Updates: Brad reported that Corkscrew Swamp has just hired a new director, Dr. Lisa Korte. Sean discussed the sign-on letter from EvCo regarding the Army Corps' Lake O regulation schedule. Dan will check with Pete about responding to it.

**Old Business/Jim R.**: Plans continue for the Annual Meeting on June 1. Information about volunteer assignments were distributed and reviewed. Gerri distributed a copy of the program for proofing and will create a PDF of the final program for Jim to have printed. Teddy will create the postcard for the annual meeting if necessary.

The ballot will include Courtney for reelection to the board and Gerri for reelection as secretary. Meanwhile, board members will brainstorm for new nominees to add to the ballot.

A new coordinator and leader for the fall Colombia trip is needed. Six people are signed up and seven are needed for the trip to go through.

**New Business**: Carol's suggestion that the board seriously reflect on the chapter's philosophy and goals (e.g., expansionist versus focused) was well received. Discussion can begin at the next board meeting.

Jim B. will soon email the board a Google Analytics report on website; programs, field trips, and membership get the most hits.

Authorization for Dan to rent a storage unit approved (JR/JR).

**Next Meeting Date**: Thursday, May 16, 2019; board meeting only at Carol N's.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m. The program, "Monitoring the Movement of Black Skimmers During Nesting Season in Southwest Florida," was presented by Blake Jacoby.

Respectfully submitted by Gerri Reaves.