

Audubon of Southwest Florida, Inc. (ASWF)  
Meeting Minutes, Board of Directors Meeting  
August 20, 2020

Fort Myers Regional Library--Outdoors & Observing Physical Distancing Guidelines

Call to Order and Attendance: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Gerri Reaves. Other board members present were Dan VanNorman, Jim Rodenfels, Carol Newcomb.

Minutes of June meeting approved (No July meeting as usual) (JR/DV).

Opening remarks: Jim Rodenfels reminded BOD that we need to abide by the “conflict of interest” bylaw.

Treasurer’s Report/Jim: Reports for June and funds for field trip supplies approved (DV/CN)

- Jim bought supplies (masks, water, Kleenex) for field trips for \$18.02.
- Audit for past 2 years has been turned over to Gerri and Dan and should be complete by September meeting.
- A grant was received for \$500.00 and specifies that the money should be used for “bird protection” solely. Some suggestions to use the money on:
  - FGCU Bird collisions to buildings Service Learning project (Gerri)
  - Construction of bird boxes for kestrels and bluebirds (Dan)
  - Continued shorebird monitoring
  - Construct shade shelters for shorebirds made from old campaign signs (plastic) and PVC pipes. (Dan)

### **Committee Reports**

Membership/Jim: Activity has been minimal. No new members to report.

Conservation/: In Brad’s absence Gerri reported on:

- RCC: Quarterly meeting update; letter re: M-CORES Southwest-Central Florida Connector: We discussed the content of the letters and are all in agreement that the letter, as written, is fine to send subject to some slight revision of the opening paragraph to clarify and emphasize the letter’s argument. As a reminder, it was discussed that Conservation Committee (CC) does not need ASWF BOD approval about signing on to letters and agreed that Brad, Sean, and Pete, who has reservations about the letter, can finalize the letter and resubmit it for Gerri’s signature.
- EvCo update: signed on to two letters:
  - “On behalf of the Everglades Coalition, a 62member coalition focused on restoration, preservation and protection of the Greater Everglades, we write to urge you to deny the resolution to permit iHeartMedia & Entertainment, Inc. to install radio antennae in the Bird Drive Recharge Area (BDRA).”
  - “USACE Back Bay Coastal Storm Risk Management Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement: The Everglades Coalition therefore asks that Miami-Dade County and USACE to adopt a locally preferred plan that protects the natural environment, including the biodiversity of the Everglades ecosystem in

coastal Miami-Dade, that includes adaptation strategies for future sea-level rise and flooding, properly accounts for equity, and that works holistically with other ecosystem restoration projects.”

- Sign-on to Audubon Florida’s letter re: DEP convening a Technical Advisory Committee for stormwater

Education/Jim: Jim shared that not much is going on so he is taking advantage of the email blasts going out to include an educational website and/or article. SanCap Audubon board member, Karl Werner, inquired about our educational outreach program.

Field Trips/Jim: 11-12 people attended the August 8 field trip to Hickory Swamp Preserve followed by a visit to a native plant nursery across the street. Participants seemed to really enjoy the walk and nursery visit. Field trips for the remainder of 2020 are published on the ASWF website.

Programs/Gerri: Board is in agreement that monthly programs will not take place until it is safe to hold meetings because of the ongoing pandemic. Gerri asked if we would give a \$50 donation to Doug Tallamy’s program on Zoom through Venice Area Audubon & Audubon Florida. Because we donate money, the Zoom presentation will be offered to ASWF members and is scheduled for September 22. Jim proposed we approve \$50 to \$100 to VAAS. (JR/DV unanimous approval)

Publicity/Carol: No activity. Board is in agreement that the emails from Jim about upcoming field trips generate enough attendees that field trips do not need to be advertised in *News-Press* or other media.

Newsletter/Jim R.: Board is in agreement that a September *Flyways* is not necessary; however, a December newsletter is required by bylaws. Teddy will create December newsletter. In lieu of no newsletter, Jim will continue to add 3-sentence newsworthy items to email blasts.

National & State Audubon Updates: Gerri reported that State Audubon is seeking ways for Audubon chapters to become more inclusive and is asking that RCCs add a fourth priority to the usual three presented at Audubon Assembly in October. The Assembly will be online this year.

**Old Business:** The board determined that there will be no Environmental Breakfast for 2020. Environmentalist of the Year award will take place at Annual Meeting 2021. There will be a scholarship awarded to FGCU student in October.

#### **New Business:**

- FGCU Service Learning opportunities & volunteers: Only one of three postings remains active. Gerri posted three Service Learning opportunities for FGCU students. Jim reported he has gotten names of 2 FGCU students to help with field trips and one with Gmail account maintenance. Gerri reported we have received several inquiries about FGCU SL projects and volunteering in general. No inquiries about FGCU Bird/Building Collision SL Project yet. Building bird boxes and shorebird shade shelters can also be a good SL project for students.

**Next Meeting Date:** The board meeting will be held Thursday, September 17, 2020. Location TBD.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Carol Newcomb