

City of Lake Geneva Avian Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 8, 2025 6:00 P.M.

City Council Conference Room 2A

1. Call to Order: 6:00 PM by Sarah McConnell

2. Roll Call. The following members were present: Sarah McConnell, Jill Rodriguez, Kelley Happ, Karen Gallo, Victoria Ross, Beverly Leonard and Alderperson Cindy Yager.

3. Approval of Avian Committee meeting minutes

Rodriguez made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 11 meeting, seconded by Ross and passed.

4. Visitors and Comments from the Public:

Betty Volquardsen, our new member-to-be and Alderperson JaNelle Powers were in attendance.

5. Update from City Council

Yager updated the committee on the search for a new City Administrator and said the city is in negotiations with a good candidate. A very experienced new Building and Zoning Director has been hired and will be starting soon. The city will still need a code enforcement administrator.

She also said the job description for a new Parks Administrator has been approved at personnel and will move to FLR and then Council. They did add wording about a background in ecology or environmental sciences, as the Avian committee suggested. This new person will develop programs for the parks.

Yager also reported that Piers and Harbors have been working on the dam/dredging/replacing piers project. The dam needs to be dug out to the bottom for a full inspection, and there should be cost sharing with the Lake County Level Corporation and other municipalities for this project.

The city is also in the process of getting bids for creation and installation of a great new playground at Veterans Park.

She also advised that Alliant Energy will be at the April 28 Council meeting to discuss plans for expansion at their current site next to the Geneva Lake Museum. This could affect our Chimney Swifts.

6. Budget Update and 2025 Financial Review:

Our current financial status is good

7. Bird City Application

We earned High Flyer status!! Thanks to all the hard work of Ross, McConnell, and all who helped, we were able to complete the very complex application and have earned the high honor of High Flyer.

8. Birdwatching Backpacks for the City of Lake Geneva

Rodriguez is finalizing materials and will have 10 birdwatching backpacks ready to go for use in hotels and lodging in the area. She had commissioned Althea Salgada, a local graphic artist, to create a new logo and birding brochure. Letters describing the project and inviting participation went out to local hotels - several have already responded positively. We had discussed how hotels could check these free birding backpacks out to guests and suggested they put the value on the guest's room tab until the backpack is returned.

9. Climate Change Topics and Updates

- **World Migratory Bird Day Activities**

The date of Saturday, May 17 in the Smith Reading Room from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm at the library - Ross confirmed that we are all set to go. The speaker is Dr. Benjamin Zuckerberg, Ph.D., Dept. of Forest and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His topic will be "Canaries in the Coal Mine: Birds and Climate Change". Rodriguez moved to authorize the Committee to spend \$500 for an honorarium. Happ seconded the motion and it passed. There will also be activities and snacks for children. Next step is good publicity.

- **EV Chargers**

No new report.

- **Tuesday@2**

Happ reported that the “Tuesday@ 2” program at the Geneva Lake Museum on April 1 was a great success with an estimate of 75 to 80 guests learning about bird migration. It was suggested we ask the Geneva Lake Museum if we can present birding topics in April every year.

10. Purple Martin House Update

Houses are open and we are waiting for the first of the Martins to arrive - Leonard expects them to arrive in mid-April.

11. Next Meeting:

The next Avian Committee meeting is on **Tuesday, May 13 at 6 pm in Conference Room 2 A**

12. Future Agenda Items

- Update from City Council
- Budget Update and 2025 Financial Review
- Birding Backpacks Project
- Climate Change Topics/Updates
 - World Migratory Bird Day final plans
 - EV Chargers in Lake Geneva
- Purple Martin House updates
- Other
- Next meeting Date and Time
- Future Agenda Items

12: Adjournment:

Rodriguez moved to adjourn, seconded by Ross and approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, 5/7/2025

Kelley Happ