

# City of Lake Geneva Avian Committee Minutes

Tuesday, Jan 26, 2025 5 p.m.

Lake Geneva City Hall; Conference Room 2A

**Members:** President – Sarah McConnell, Secretary – Kelley Happ, Jill Rodriguez, Beverly Leonard, Karen Gallo, Victoria Ross and Alderperson JaNelle Powers

**1. Call to Order:** 5:01 p.m. by Sarah McConnell

**2. Roll Call. The following members were present:** Sarah McConnell, Jill Rodriguez, Kelley Happ, Karen Gallo, Beverly Leonard and Victoria Ross. Alderperson JaNelle Powers was absent. Others present: Betty Volquardsen and Peg Esposito from Friends of Hillmoor

**3. Approval of minutes from December 9, 2025**

**Motion to approve** amended minutes by Ross, seconded by Rodriguez

**Voice Vote:** approved

**4. Comments from the Public:** Volquardsen commented that Friends of Hillmoor will be glad to help with the Dark Skies project. She also commented that Friends of Hillmoor has joint interest in our grant project/land preparation site and has liability insurance that covers their volunteers.

**5. Financial Report:**

No discussion at this time

**6. Policy and Ordinance Initiatives:**

**a. Exterior Lighting Standards/Dark Sky Ordinance.** Ross will meet with Adam McCulloch again in late January to review the final draft of an ordinance the committee wishes to submit at an upcoming Planning Commission meeting. It was agreed that April would be best to give us more time to prepare. Committee members agreed we should submit the information to Alderpersons in advance. Suggested a good video “More light not safer”. We need to educate the community on why this is important.

**b: Climate Related Topics.** No discussion at this time

**7. Annual Events and Applications:**

**a. Swift Night Out:** McConnell confirmed the new September 10 with Schlitz Audubon. She also brought up tuckpointing the city is planning at the Museum’s chimney. Leonard wondered if a bid for this work has been accepted, and when it might take place.

**b. Bird City Application:** Ross will send committee members a draft of the application and has requested that we all help edit the document. Comments are due back to Ross by Jan 26. She also relayed that photos from previous Bird City applications on their site seem to be missing. Other information we could add - Esposito confirmed that “No Mow” May is a city ordinance. She will also check to see what other chimneys in the area (former Olive Oil shop, St. Francis school) are capped and if they can be uncapped. Also confirmed that the Water Department has capped their chimney.

Ross will check at City Hall to see if Bird City decals are still available. If not, we have money in our budget to reprint them.

Ross will also contact David Winger to request a Resolution from the next Common Council meeting. A new one is required every other year.

Happ will take photos of the content in our Hotel Birding Backpack project for the Bird City application.

**c. World Migratory Bird Day:** Gallo will request a Tuesday@2 talk at the Museum in May. We would like to give an educational program on important topics – Dark Skies and Migration issues.

## **8. Projects and Partnerships:**

**A. Hotel Birding Backpacks:** no new reports

**B. Purple Martin/Kestrel houses:** Leonard met with Tom Earle about storing supplies at Public Works and about the use of netting in landscaping – it presents a hazard to birds. He said the City removes landscape netting when grass starts to grow. Earle suggested taking this up with the DNR – they could enforce this with landscapers throughout the state. McConnell will contact the DNR regarding use of landscape netting – this might be a good topic at the Tuesday@2.

**C. Native Plant Grant Project:** McConnell contacted White Pelican Farm regarding plants that might be available through the grant. Esposito and Volquardsen (Friends of Hillmoor) have helped suggest possible plants and Esposito designed an illustrated list of plants and photo of the proposed site. McConnell received a quote from a local contractor who is willing to prepare our proposed 30' x 5' foot site at Hillmoor for \$1500.

**Motion:** Ross moved that the committee authorize spending \$1500 for preparation of the soil at Hillmoor for our native plant grant. Second by Happ

**Voice vote:** Carried

Committee agreed that we would rope off the designated area before the work this spring.

## **9. Adjournment:**

**Motion** to adjourn by Ross, seconded by Leonard

**Voice vote** carried at 6:10 p.m.

## **Next Meeting Date and Time**

The next Avian meeting will be held on **Tuesday February 10 at 6 pm in Conference Room 2 A.**

Respectfully submitted

Kelley Happ

Secretary, Avian Committee