

City of Lake Geneva Avian Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 14, 2022, 6 P.M.

City Meeting Room A

1. Call to order: 6:02 by Sarah McConnell

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

3. Approval of Avian Committee meeting minutes from April 12, 2022:

Motion to approve minutes by Zimmermann, second by McConnell. Zimmermann made a motion to amend the minutes to note that Sarah McConnell called the meeting to order, not Cindy Yager. The motion to amend the minutes was seconded and passed.

4. Comments From the Public:

Mary Jo Fesenmaier was present but had no comments.

5. Financial/Budget Reports:

Three outstanding bills for printing have been submitted (for Learn to Soar project). McConnell reported that the committee is staying within our budget and that the balance is about \$3000. The next bills will be for the July Open House.

6. Learn to Soar Update, including Story Book Trail

The event was a great success for all involved. We received good press and lots of good comments. Zimmermann will have two spiral bound copies of the book made – one for the library and one for the school. It will be available for the July 1 event with the Geneva Lake Conservancy. Zimmermann will add an author page.

The committee hopes to purchase high quality signs and posts next year. The estimated cost for new signs that will better withstand the elements will be \$20,000.

7. Update on Grants:

Happ will continue to work on the grant from S. C. Johnson Company, with help from Yager, with the goal of having it ready by the end of August. An Alliant Energy grant will be a fallback if the S. C. Johnson Grant does not come through. The committee is planning to do the Learn to Soar program again next year. If we purchase new signs and the Learn to Soar discontinues sometime in the future, the signposts still could be used for educational nature signs.

8. Swift Night Out Update:

McConnell reported that SNO plans are in place for the September event. Schlitz Audubon is on schedule to begin the program. Food trucks will be available, including Fiddlesticks and maybe JoJo's. McConnell and Leonard will look into obtaining an ice cream truck and possibly a coffee truck as well.

9. Purple Martin Update and Open House event July 9

Leonard reported that the Martin houses she is monitoring have pairs, eggs, and the colony is definitely growing. McConnell reported 45 eggs in her houses, and all but three of the nesting boxes are filled. She counted 11 nests, with some having six eggs. She expects them to begin hatching this week. She also reported that curious passers-by have come to see the nests and that the record number of mayflies have provided plenty of food. Gallo reported that she does not have as many nests as she has had before. She has about three active nests and 18 eggs on the fishing pier. The boat pier has three or four nests and 13 eggs. Maxwell St. box has no nests; Warren Street box has four eggs for a total of 35 eggs. The gourds have one nesting pair with four eggs, and Sunset House also has one pair with four eggs. Roger and Nancy have not yet reported their count. Leonard commented that the Delaney St. Mercantile purchased a Martin house and has had no birds. She would like to donate it to the city and put it closer to the lake, perhaps across from Oakfire restaurant, as close to the gourds as possible. It was also reported that there are a total of 213 eggs in nine private boxes along the lakefront. Although there are still some empty nesting boxes in a few of our houses, we don't want to discourage late in the season nesting. Scouts also might find them for next year's housing.

The monitors addressed the condition of the houses and equipment. They agreed to check again at the end of the season to see what we need to do to fix each of the houses. It was also reported that we are not presently using the bird sound recording and that we could possibly loan it out.

The possibility of banding Martins also came up, so that we could track where they go and if the same ones return. Dick Nickoli of the Purple Martin Conservancy Association came to advise us when the Avian Committee was first starting the Purple Martin project, and banded some of the birds at the library site. Leonard will email him for follow-up and to see if he has successfully tracked any of the birds we banded.

The Avian Committee is planning on helping the Geneva Lake Conservancy on their bird educational project at the Children's Fishing Pier on July 1. We will be the "experts" on birds. Zimmermann has planned a Game Show with several volunteer families to feature four birds, where they live and what they eat. We can promote our Open House at the Author Fest event at the Library on July 9, as well as the Swift Night out.

The Avian Committee will host an "Open House" at the Geneva Public Library on Saturday, July 9 from 10 AM to noon, as part of the library's annual Author Fest. This will be our opportunity to tell the public about our Martin houses along the lakefront. Gallo and McConnell may be able to open several boxes to show nests and eggs if the babies are not yet fledging.

Committee members agreed to a workday at 10 am on June 29 at Zimmermann's house to help with preparations and materials for the July 1 event.

10. Calendar/Project Review and updates on partners:

A date for the Brownie Troup to meet with the City's Committee of the Whole has not yet been determined.

11. Next Meeting Date:

Tuesday, July 12 at 6 pm in Conference Room A

14. Future Agenda Items:

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Roll Call
- 3) Approval of the Minutes from June 14
- 4) Comments from the Public
- 5) Avian Committee Financial/Budget Reports and Updates
- 6.) Learning to Soar Update - Story Book Trail
- 7) Update on grants and potential grants
- 8) Swift Night Out update
- 9) Purple Martin update, including “Open House” event July 9
- 10) Brief 2022 Calendar/Project review and updates on partners (including the Tree Board, Park Commission, Geneva Lake Conservancy, Public Library, Lakeland Audubon and the Geneva Lake Museum)
- 11) Next Meeting Date and Time
- 12 Future Agenda Items

12. Adjourn:

Zimmermann moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:04 PM. The motion was seconded by Gallo and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted

Kelley Happ

7/6/2022