

**City of Lake Geneva Avian Committee
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 6, 2021, 6:00 P.M.
City Council Chambers**

1. Call to order: 6:00 PM by Alderperson Flower

2. Roll Call. The following members were present: Cindy Flower - Alderperson, Carol Zimmermann, Jill Rodriguez, Beverly Leonard, Karen Gallo, Kelley Happ. Sarah McConnell was excused. There were no members of the public present.

3. Approval of Avian Committee meeting minutes from June 2021

Motion to approve minutes by Zimmermann, second by Gallo. The motion was passed.

4. Comments from the Publics

There were no comments.

5. Purple Martin Update:

Leonard reports a successful season. Every house on the lakefront has produced pairs and eggs have been noted at most of the houses. Houses that were not active at Fermano pond and the Museum pond were relocated to the lakefront. We are learning that clustering the houses gives good results. She also reported problems with birdsong magnets being damaged or removed. Will look into moving them closer to the library if possible. Gallo asked about purchasing more houses, followed by a discussion about more houses/encouraging the birds to fill the houses we have.

6. Story Book Trail Long Term Status

Zimmermann brought up need to start a fund for routine maintenance of the signs. Rodriguez said that using "Cookies for a Cause" funds does not fit the grant criterion; it was suggested we put a line item in our budget. Zimmermann suggested \$300. We may need to upgrade the plastic covering on the signs, as they are not holding up well. It was also mentioned that Stephanie Klett (VISIT Lake Geneva) will be featuring each park in the Lake Geneva area and will mention the Story Book Trail.

7. Swift Night Out Plans

Zimmermann requested a task force for this event. Rodriguez reminded us that the library will be closed from July 15 until early 2022 for asbestos removal, but she will ask them to put the information on the marquee. The library will host the Schlitz Audubon eagle program on July 8. Rodriguez will ask the library to pass out information (stickers) for our Swift Night Out program. The group discussed possible food vendors, permits for vendors and yard signs.

8. Publicity for Events – past and future

Zimmermann, McConnell and Happ will meet to plan publicity for a number of activities, including educating the public on Purple Martins, "Cookies for a Cause" and Swift Night Out. Gallo noted that people are reading our signs about the martins along the lakefront. The end of July should be a good time to see the babies – gear the publicity for this time period. We have "Cookies for a Cause" from Simple Bakery in August and will need a rack card for this. We also need to let the public know that the bird kit backpacks will still be available – they can call and checkout. We will also need full-scale publicity for Swift Night Out.

9. "State of Where We are Discussion"

Topics already discussed.

10. Budget Status

Briefly reviewed and discussed the Detail Ledger of the Avian Committee from January through June. We have budgeted \$900 for Swift Night Out, and will need funds for the Bird City application in January. Rodriguez pointed out that we have a large carry-over from funds not spent due to the pandemic. Zimmermann will generate a draft budget and needs to know what money can be budgeted and what is restricted. Rodriguez suggested we spend some of our reserves, perhaps to upgrade our Story Book Trail signs. Flower will check with the city about the budget status and let us know when our budget is due – they may not have an in-person presentation this year. Zimmermann suggested we add a budget line item for educational outreach for such things as reimbursement for educational materials. Flower reported that our budget is due to the city on **September 10** and the first meeting will be held on September 23

11 Bird Walk Update:

Zimmermann reported the feedback from our bird walk was very good and suggested writing another grant to the Environmental Education Foundation to subsidize in the future. It was noted that students at St. Francis and the group from Traver School had been exposed to educational materials prior to the bird walk and showed more interest than the students from Eastview, who had not had prior exposure. Discussion followed about how to include Eastview students who might be interested in this program. Zimmermann suggested a few lessons (3 hours) that could help them get started. Agreed to discuss further with Mary Jo Fesenmaier (Eastview librarian).

12. Cookies for a Cause Update:

Rodriguez reported that the application is completed. The Avian Committee has the month of August. We will need to supply them with rack card information and volunteers to package the cookies. Rodriguez will email details to Zimmermann so she can work on the rack cards.

13. Christmas Bird Count and Christmas Tree Walk:

We will help Audubon promote the bird count (our Facebook page, etc.,) Rodriguez would like ideas to update our ornaments at the Christmas Tree Walk. She will submit our application as soon as she gets notice.

14. Next Meeting Date & Time: Tuesday August 3 at 6 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

15. Future Agenda Items

- Budget
- Purple Martin Update
- Swift Night Out Plans
- Publicity for Events – past and future
- Christmas Tree Walk at the Museum
- Cookies for a Cause Update
- Bird City Application

Adjourn: Zimmermann moved to adjourn, seconded by Leonard and approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Kelley Happ
7/23/21