

City of Lake Geneva Avian Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 1, 2021, 6:00 P.M.
City Council Chambers

1. Call to order: 6:03 PM by Alderperson Flower

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

3. Approval of Avian Committee meeting minutes from April 2021

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

4. Comments from the Publics

There were none.

5. Purple Martin Update:

Leonard reported that the birds are back and all martin houses are open, and birds are making nests. Gallo reported that eggs were observed— four at the boat pier; five at the fishing pier, with possibly more nests being made, with birds using the “helicopters” seeds. McConnell reported five more eggs and two more nests. The new sign is up at the west end pier —thanks Street Dept. Leonard reported that although landlords at our selected locations gave us permission to place magnetic birdcalls, some of them have been removed or destroyed by tenants. A discussion followed about educating the parking staff about our birdhouses, as they seem to be getting questions from the public. Discussed how we could provide brochures, have them direct people to our signs or otherwise let them know our bird houses are being monitored and tended by Avian Committee. It was suggested we create a small sign, laminated and attached to each of the poles letting people know that the houses are open, but that the holes may not be visible. Flower will contact Seth, parking manager.

Karen met a couple at the park that wants to get involved. He’s a graphic artist – maybe he can come with up with an idea – she will talk to him.

6. Celebration of Girl Scouts

The Girl Scout Troop Leader, the girls and their families are invited to attend the City Council meeting on June 14 to be honored. Zimmermann commented that we have lots of good photos she will use in a physical and electronic version of a scrapbook. The physical scrapbook she will give to the Mayor and Council to see, and they will then present it to the Troop. The electronic version will go to the Troop leader who can then distribute it to the girls.

7. Celebration of the Story Book Trail

Great event at Four Seasons, with a large turnout including the first and fifth grades at St. Francis school, their principal and pastor, Mayor Klein, representatives of the Park Board of Commissioners, our partners (Lake Geneva Library, Geneva Lake Conservancy, Lakeland Audubon, Environmental Education Foundation, Visit Lake Geneva).

Lots of great photos were taken – we need to do a press release about the event. Happ and Zimmermann will work on this project.

McConnell reported that she cleaned and decorated two bulletin boards with birding information and explained needed repairs to the park board reps. we still need to encourage better signage – move the large lovely sign to a more visible location.

St. Francis School is working on re-accreditation this fall and has requested some kind of plaque recognizing their relationship with the City's Avian Committee and their environmental activities. McConnell will work on a plaque for the school to be ready by fall.

Flower suggested including the Park Board with some of our activities. Maybe they can help make the Story Book Trail signs permanent. Zimmermann suggested we ask one of the St. Francis students to present the students' birdhouse to the Park Board at a Council meeting.

She also suggested that the Avian Committee take time to think about the "State of Where We Are. " We have had so many activities we need to take a moment to thank our strategic partners. The group also applauded Zimmermann for the all time and hard work she has put into all of these projects.

Discussion followed about making the Story Book Trail signs permanent and the commitment it would take. Agreed to make this an agenda item and discuss further.

8. Bird Walk Update.

We hosted students from St. Francis, Traver and Eastview Schools on a Bird Walk and speaker at the GLC's Bromley Woods. Students from St. Francis and Traver seemed to be very well prepared for the bird hike - Eastview students were not prepared in advance and seemed to get less out of it. Zimmermann has met with the principal and the curriculum director at Eastview to encourage them to participate in the Learn to Soar Program. If they do so, we will need to proceed slowly with a pilot program, a master teacher or an afterschool club so as not to overcommit.

We need to re-group and discuss what we did well and where we can do better or different – maybe after the Swift Night Out we can write another grant for a bird walk next year.

Flower shared a thank you note from Jill Lorenzi for the bird walk.

9. Swift Night Out Update

We are set with our plans for September 9 at Geneva Lake Museum. McConnell reported that the library is also having a Schlitz Audubon bird program on July 8. This is planned as a program for children – ours should be geared more for adults. Hope it is not the same. She will ask the Audubon group to look at the Museum facility to see if it will accommodate flying a raptor inside. Flower suggested we tag team with the library to promote both events.

We need to procure food vendors – pizza, ice cream and coffee. We will need to get permits for this Food will be scheduled for 5:30 to 8:30. Vendors should be set up by 5 pm. The program starts at 7, but people may want to eat through the program.

10. Lake Geneva Crossings Outreach

Gallo related a conversation with a resident at Lake Geneva Crossings regarding possible programs for the residents. After discussion, it was suggested we share our calendar of events with them and also let them know of Lakeland Audubon's website and newsletter. Gallo will pursue to see how active they want to be.

11. Next Meeting Date & Time: Tuesday July 6 at 6 p.m.

13. Future Agenda Items

- Purple Martin Update
- Story Book Trail Long term status
- Swift Night Out Plans

- Publicity for Events – past and future
- “State of Where We Are” discussion
- Budget Status
- Bird Walk Update
- Cookies for a Cause Update
- Christmas Bird Count and Christmas Tree Walk at the Museum

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

Respectfully submitted
Kelley Happ
6/30/21