

City of Lake Geneva Avian Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 13, 2021, 6:00 P.M.

Council Room 2A_ and online

1. Call to order: 6:12 PM by Alderperson Flower

2. Roll Call. The following members were present: Cindy Flower - Alderperson, Carol Zimmermann, Sarah McConnell, Beverly Leonard, Jill Rodriguez, Karen Gallo, Kelley Happ. There were no members of the public_in attendance, either in person or online.

3. Approval of Avian Committee meeting minutes from March 2, 2021:

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

5. Purple Martin Update:

Leonard reported that all martin houses are up, repairs made and cleaned for the season. Thank you to Neil and the street department for the repairs and installation. All volunteers are on board for checking the houses. One house had an old squirrel nest, so Neil installed a squirrel guard to prevent squirrel access. Leonard and Gallo led a discussion about purchasing another 14-unit house, possibly a buy one/get one offer. Leonard reported a total of 102 nesting holes on our martin houses. The new martin sign is ready to be installed whenever the street crew can fit it into their schedule. We are now on watch for the first arrivals.

6. Four Seasons Nature Preserve and Park Board Collaboration:

McConnell attended the Park Board meeting and reported that they are onboard with our ideas, and that we should involve them at the point of actual work. She advised us to proceed carefully so that we don't intrude on their committee plans. Our plans include cleaning the birdhouses and improving signage. Rodriguez reported that her Interact Club students are willing to help with clean up. Zimmermann noted that on Friday (April 16) a group from the Avian Committee, the Geneva Lake Conservancy and students and teacher from St. Francis School would meet at the nature preserve to plan the student's Story Book Trail project.

7. World Migratory Bird Day Update:

Zimmermann outlined three projects the committee is working on for World Migratory Bird Day, which is May 12 this year:

1. The fifth grade class at St. Francis School is working on a Story Book Trail project to install at Four Seasons Nature Park. The students will study bird migration and write a story about the birds that are likely to appear at the nature center. Their story will be posted on a series of boards along the main trail to share with the public.
2. The Avian Committee is working with the Geneva Lake Conservancy and the Lakeland Audubon Society to co-host a bird walk at the Conservancy's Bromley Woods on Friday, May 7 for the 5th graders at St. Francis School. The Avian Committee and Lakeland will provide information on the birds we are likely to see, as well as additional resources for bird identification and conservation information.
3. Press release and story about Purple Martins migration back to Lake Geneva, nesting habits and the involvement of the Avian Committee to help protect and preserve these birds. It was agreed to time the release with the arrival of martin babies and our new sign

installation, most likely in May. Happ will work on a press release for approval at the next meeting.

8. Learning to Soar (Students and Girl Scouts) Update:

Zimmermann shared her screen, captured in an email sent to the committee members, and requested that this information be included in the April minutes. She explained that the Girl Scouts (4th and 5th grades Eastview School) would meet with volunteers from the Committee to earn an Animal Habitat Badge. Three sessions will help the scouts learn about bird identification, threats and positives for birds in the area. The first two presentations will be conducted by Gallo and Zimmermann outdoors, and the third will include a walk to the lakefront to learn about Purple Martins and their nesting habits and babies. Zimmermann requested money from the budget to create certificates for the scouts upon successful completion of their badge. In addition, the scouts will provide feedback with a list of what they think students would like to know. This is part of their community involvement badge requirements.

9. Storybook Trails Update:

Zimmermann, McConnell and Rodriguez have scheduled an April 16 site visit to Four Seasons to acquaint the students with the preserve and help them visualize birds returning. They will generate ideas for an upbeat story with lots of illustrations for their Storybook that will appeal to other youngsters.

Zimmermann moved to approve the transfer of funds, including \$500 from our Environmental Education grant for the Geneva Lake Conservancy and \$160 to Lakeland Audubon for the bird walk. She also requested approval to spend \$550 from our Grow Native fund to pay for the Storybook Trail signs (10). Please see the attached Budget Request for details. Rodriguez seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

10. Bird Walk Update:

Zimmermann explained that the Learn to Soar students from St. Francis School will participate in the 2021 Kettle Moraine Bird Festival at Bromley Woods for a bird walk and speaker to further acquaint them with birds' migration. The walk is hosted by the Geneva Lake Conservancy, Lakeland Audubon Society and the City of Lake Geneva Avian Committee. The event will take place on Friday, May 7 from 9:30 am to noon. Maddie Olivieri from the GLC will create and distribute a press release and link to their social media. Kevin Dickey from Lakeland has provided a list of birds the students might see and Zimmermann will create a bi-fold brochure for students with this information.

11. Financial Report:

Flower is working on the financial report and will bring it to the next meeting.

12. Next Meeting Date & Time: Tuesday May 4 at 6 p.m.

12. Adjourn: McConnell moved to adjourn, seconded by Gallo and approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Kelley Happ
4/21/21