

City of Lake Geneva
Avian Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 2, 2021
2021 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CST)

Committee Members: Beverly Leonard, Sarah McConnell, Jill Rodriguez, Karen Gallo, Carol Zimmermann, Kelley Happ, and Cindy Flower- Alderperson

1. Call to Order

Chair and Alderperson Flower called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm

2. Roll Call

Present: (in the Council Chamber) Alderperson Flower, virtually present) McConnell, Rodriguez, and Zimmermann

Excused: Leonard, Gallo, and Happ

Chair and Alderperson Flower declared a quorum

No members of the public were in attendance (in person or virtually).

As the committee secretary was excused, Zimmermann volunteered to take notes. Rodriguez moved to approve this, seconded by Flower, approved unanimously.

3. Approval of meeting minutes from February 2, 2021

Rodriguez moved to approve the minutes, second by McConnell with comment that amendments were needed.

Discussion: McConnell moved to amend the minutes to reflect the correct spelling of the last name of President of Visit Lake Geneva – **Klett**. Zimmermann noted that Gallo had requested minor changes to item 4c. as noted below. With those corrections, the minutes were approved unanimously.

The Committee agreed this should be tied in with the Migratory Bird Day publicity and festivities in May. **Gallo will lead an effort, with Leonard, to** ~~We will also plan~~ **public outreach events**, such as an educational walk as the martins repopulate their houses along the lakefront, and plan a talk at the library as COVID conditions dictate. **Leonard, Gallo, McConnell and Happ committed to prepping and tending bird houses this year.**

4. Discussion/Recommendation regarding World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD)

Zimmermann and McConnell reported that the current Learning to Soar students will use a Project-Based Learning structure to create a storybook and a temporary storybook trail as a focusing event for WMBD. The story they create would focus on migratory birds and the environment at the Four Seasons Preserve. The plan is to use grant funds from the Environmental Education Grant (allotted for materials) to produce laminated copies of the book pages (that serve as trail markers) and to purchase stakes for a temporary installation. McConnell noted that the park board was excited about this possibility and Zimmermann noted that this will be another way the Avian Committee will engage with partners, such as the Lakeland Audubon Society, the Public Library of Lake Geneva, and the Geneva Lake Conservancy.

This project will be the focusing event for public outreach and education, as well as outreach to social and traditional media. Rodriguez and Zimmermann also noted that area Girl Scout troops have been invited to join in the effort as well.

Rodriguez also noted that the Public Library, with the support of the Rotary, is planning a community engagement project which will focus on the quality of the Lake – conservation/recycling with a reading component. Storybook trails may be a next step.

5. Discussion/ Recommendation regarding Purple Martin publicity

Rodriguez noted that both adult and children's materials, including the bird kits, are ready. Library staff would like to begin lending these materials. Rodriguez will find out when a photo opportunity may be available and let members know so that we can take pictures to publicize the new acquisitions.

McConnell noted that the Wisconsin Purple Martin Association is looking for mentors to help current and potential Purple Martin house hosts. She has volunteered. An expert from that association is planning to come to visit our colony. That might also be a good focusing event for public outreach and education. McConnell will keep the Committee updated on potential dates.

Flower noted that she had received some material in the mail, including a Purple Martin supply catalog and a letter from Purple Martin Conservancy Association. Flower will email a copy of the correspondence to members and will get the catalog to Leonard or Gallo.

6. Discussion/ Recommendation regarding Four Seasons Nature Preserve updates and plans

Flower and the rest of the members thanked Sarah for attending the Park Board meeting. McConnell reported that the Park Board is excited about the collaboration and support from the Avian Committee. McConnell noted that the Park Board is in the process of analyzing the parks and signage and are considering trying to make the signage for the parks more uniform. The Park Board will be taking the lead to determine the type and location of an entry sign for the Preserve. They would, however, be interested in help with highway signage and are fine if the Avian Committee works to post material the display cases at the entrance to the park.

McConnell indicated that it would be helpful if one of our members to attend their planning sessions. She will attempt to be that liaison. Flower, Rodriguez, and Zimmermann all indicated that they would be happy to step in as back-ups if needed. McConnell also noted that there are two grants from the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin that the Committee should consider – probably in 2022, to fund additional avian-oriented projects at the Preserve. These include the "Go Outside" and the "Quiet Trails" fund.

In terms of native plantings, Rodriguez indicated that the Geneva Lake Conservancy has a new outreach person for Conservation@Home who will focus on public education and outreach.

For repairs to bird houses and other physical projects, Rodriguez also indicated that the high school students with whom she works might be good candidates for this, but will need a plan and direction.

7. Discussion/ Recommendation regarding Learn to Soar update- Potential projects for students and Girl Scouts

Zimmermann referred to the updates in item 4. Rodriguez also noted that the Geneva Lake Conservancy is now planning for a spring bird walk. Zimmermann and McConnell noted that this would be a possibility for the students as well as something to offer the Girl Scouts.

8. Future Agenda Items

The following were recommended as agenda items for the next meeting

- 1) Call to order

- 2) Roll Call
 - 3) Approval of the minutes from March 2, 2021
 - 4) Comments from the public
 - 5) Purple Martin Update
 - 6) Four Seasons Nature Preserve and Park Board Collaboration Update
 - 7) World Migratory Bird Day Update
 - 8) Learning to Soar (Students and Girl Scouts) Update
 - 9) Storybook Trails Update
 - 10) Bird Walk Update
 - 11) 2020 Financial Report
 - 12) Other current and proposed projects, grants, and public outreach updates
 - 13) Next Meeting Date & Time
 - 14) Adjourn
9. Next meeting Date & Time
April 13 – 6:00 pm – Conference Room A
PLEASE NOTE: This is a change from our usual day. This is the second Tuesday of the month (not the first).
PLEASE NOTE: We are requesting the meeting location be Conference Room 2A
- 10. Adjourn**
Rodriguez moved to adjourn, seconded by McConnell. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Carol Zimmermann