

City of Lake Geneva Avian Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 12, 2023, 6:00 P.M.

City Council Conference Room 2A

1. Call to Order: 6:00 PM by Sarah McConnell

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

3. Approval of Avian Committee meeting minutes from August 2023

Motion to approve minutes by Zimmermann, seconded by Rodriguez. The motion was passed.

4. Comments from the Public

District 3 Alderperson Peg Esposito was in attendance to ask for suggestions/ideas on how to keep gulls off the new roof of the Riviera. Their droppings run off the rooftop and into the lake and caused an e-coli breakout in the swimming area. The city had to close the beach for a day. She was inquiring from the Avian Committee of any ways to discourage the birds from perching on the roof. Several suggestions were offered, and committee members offered to research other effective methods.

She also said she's on a mission to make sure Hillmoor property is not a profit maker for people or organizations who do not live in Lake Geneva, and to keep it natural.

5/6. Budget Update/Financial Review

The Avian Budget for 2024 was submitted September 11. We are asking for \$25 more than we did last year, and will be using the \$1,100 carry over from last year. In the report our budget priorities were spelled out. The format for us to present the budget is different this year – we will not present directly to City Council. Our budget request will go to the Finance, Licensing and Regulation Committee for budget consideration. The meeting will be at 4 pm on October 17. Rodriguez will be there to answer questions, but probably will not have the opportunity to speak. FLR will then report back to City Council for approval. Many thanks to Zimmermann and Rodriguez for their work on preparing this year's budget request.

Yager inquired if we submit our budget through Public Works department. Answer was that we have our own account; it is not under Public Works. The budget request notice comes from Laura Pisarcik, Finance Director, and we send it back directly to Laura.

Zimmermann made a **motion** for committee members to create a report on activities or projects they were involved with as soon as they are completed, and store them in the Google Docs. This could be as simple as a short paragraph about the activity, photos, costs, etc. to make it easier to put together things like budget or Bird City applications. This was seconded by Happ and passed unanimously. Committee members were requested to write a summary of their event and either post it in Google Docs or send it to Zimmermann. For example Leonard and Gallo will report on the Martin project; Rodriguez the Christmas tree and library backpack projects; Learn to Soar and Ornithology Conference is Zimmermann, SNO is McConnell, Yager is signs and parks and World Migratory Celebration is Happ.

7. Swift Night Out Recap

Applause!! The event was perfect. The weather was great, the Schlitz Audubon presentation was excellent and the swifts showed up by 7:15 in large numbers, circled the chimney for 10 or 15 minutes, and then dove down in just at dusk. Everything went well and we received great posts on social media – see Lake Geneva Lake Life. We estimated that there were 250 or more people inside the museum and another 50 to 100 outside watching the sky. Yager commented that publicity was much better this year.

Happ suggested the possibility of setting up a donation bin and splitting any proceeds with the Geneva Lake Museum for next year's event.

8. Purple Martin Colony Update

Leonard and Gallo reported that the Purple Martins left in early August for their annual fall migration and it is now clean up time. They will work with our three Martin house volunteers to clean out and repair all the nesting boxes and get them ready for winter. The committee had previously talked about presenting a program at the library about our Martin boxes and showing the visitors what's inside them. We agreed it is a worthwhile teaching project and that people like to see the nests, so we will re-visit this topic next year.

9. Calendar Project Review:

November 14 and 15 are the dates for the Christmas tree decorating project at the Geneva Lake Museum. The theme for our tree this year is cardinals and members are already collecting little cardinal ornaments.

We selected the date of **Thursday, September 5, 2024 for the Swift Night Out** event. McConnell commented that the migration patterns seem to be moving earlier each year, so we agreed upon a slightly earlier date than previous years. Zimmermann suggested making 50 to 100 new rack cards advertising Swift Night Out 2024 and using some of them in conjunction with our tree at the museum.

It was suggested that if we are able to do Cookies for a Cause next year we use the money to offset the Schlitz bird program.

10. Partner Updates

Rodriguez reported on the Rotary Club Butterfly Garden project. It needs to be funded and finished by May 15. They will be planning a Grand Opening in early May and hope to have Roy Diblik of Northwind Perennial Farm and possibly others for speakers. This would also be a good opportunity for the Avian Committee to talk about Purple Martins.

11. Christmas Tree at the Museum

See item number 9.

12. Other

The City Council will be meeting with various committee chairs on Monday, September 19 to make recommendations for the new Park Director's job and where this person should be placed on the organizational chart. McConnell agreed to attend the meeting for the Avian Committee.

12. Next Meeting:

Next Avian Committee meeting is on Tuesday, October 10 at 6 pm in Conference Room 2 A

13. Future Agenda Items

- Update Financial Review for 2022/2023
- Brief 2023 Calendar/Project review
- Update on Potential Grants
- Partner Updates
- Reports on events filed in Google Docs
- Christmas Tree Event at Geneva Lake Museum
- Other

15: Adjournment:

Zimmermann moved to adjourn, seconded by Happ and approved. Meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, 10/2/2023
Kelley Happ