

City of Lake Geneva Avian Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 6, 2022, 6:00 P.M.

City Council Conference Room 2A

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, Sarah McConnell, Beverly Leonard, Kelley Happ, Karen Gallo via phone link. There were no members of the public present.

3. Approval of Avian Committee meeting minutes from December 2021

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

4. Comments from the Public

There were no comments.

5. Bird City Application:

There was an increase in the price of application to Bird City from \$125 to \$175 this year. Zimmermann moved to approve the cost increase in our application. Rodriguez seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. The committee also voted to approve the Resolution from the December 28 Common Council meeting regarding Lake Geneva Bird City. The goal is to upload the 2022 Bird City Application and the fee by January 15 before the January 31 deadline.

6. Swift Night Out:

Swift Night Out is scheduled for September 8, 2022. McConnell reported that she has reserved this date with Schlitz Audubon, as they did such a good job last year and are very popular with attendees. She is also looking for other ideas for good speakers. It was suggested the Wild Ones has a speaker's bureau. It was also suggested that a good topic could be birds adapting with climate change.

7. January Strategic Meeting *

This special meeting was held on Thursday, January 6 from 6 to 8 p.m. in lieu of our regular meeting time, for strategic planning and setting priorities. Zimmermann made a series of posters with time lines and tasks to help us focus our time and energy. Please see attached document for details. Members of the committee signed up for various tasks as noted in the document.

McConnell suggested that the Tree Board might be good to partner with for adult outreach and advocacy. She will contact them to see if there are possible areas of overlap that we can take advantage of. Possibly we can have a program on "Birdscaping."

Kelley will check with Dr. Gerry Green from the Geneva Lake Conservancy for information about native plantings instead of mowing in certain areas, maybe at the disc golf park. It was suggested we could host/co-host a public education event at Horticulture Hall for the promotion of native plantings and bird-friendly ecosystems. We can also address local ordinances including no tree and shrub trimming during the nesting season.

Committee members also discussed our Youth Outreach program, including the birdwalk with the Geneva Lake Conservancy. Discussion centered on how we can include more public school students in our activities. We also agreed that we would work with the Girl Scouts every other year to avoid duplication.

We also agreed it would be a good idea to schedule a bird talk/walk this summer at the library to introduce the public to our Purple Martin colonies and show them the new hatchlings. Gallo suggested we add this as a NEW EVENT. Rodriguez thought that mid-July might be the best time and further suggested we do this outreach twice – once on a weekday morning and one on a Saturday morning. A promotional idea to help publicize this event could be a coloring contest.

A discussion was held about creating a list of birds that might be seen at various parks and birdwatching locations in the area, possibly in collaboration with the Park Board. However, it was suggested by Zimmermann that we hold off on this project until the Park Board's goals are established. It was agreed to table this topic for now.

Rodriguez mentioned that maybe we could use "Cookies for a Cause" donations to help fund this project. She will apply for next year's "Cause" as soon as it opens up

We all agreed that we don't need any additions to our Martin houses at this time. We would like to fill up all the houses we have now.

* See attachment for monthly task list and project leaders

8. Partnership, Funding Opportunities and Potential Grants:

Several possible sources for grants include "Go Outside," The Urban Bird Treaty, Alliant Energy for more signs, and S.C. Johnson's grant program. We all need to pursue information on each. A discussion ensued about repairing/replacing the current storybook trail signs with a longer lasting acrylic or Plexiglas material. Flower suggested collaborating with the Park Board about the signs, including the idea of commercial advertising on the signs to help cover costs.

A small group meeting date was set for Thursday, January 13 to continue discussing grant ideas and sign materials. We agreed that two major areas need funding this year: the GLC birdwalk and the Storybook Trail.

9. Next Meeting Date and Time:

Thursday, February 10 from 6 – 8 p.m.

Committee members agreed to move our Tuesday night meetings to the second Thursday of each month to accommodate everyone's busy schedules.

14. Future Agenda Items

- Bird City Application update
- Next steps for Swift Night Out
- Strategic Planning Update, including potential grants
- Learn to Soar Program
- Great Backyard Bird Count
- Reviewing local ordinance issues

Adjourn:

Zimmermann moved to adjourn, seconded by Happ and approved. Meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Kelley Happ

1/28/2022