

# South East Volusia Audubon Society

## December 6, 2022 Meeting Minutes

**Attendees:** Bill Cox, Marsha Cox, Jane Talbot, Richard Fasse, Mary Schreiber, Dean Spears, Joyce Riddel, Bob Creedon, Bob Chew, Jenifer Russell

### Agenda:

- Christmas Bird Count
- Reports:
  - Communications
  - Conservation
  - Plants for Birds
  - Newsletter
  - Field Trips
  - Farmer's Market
  - Programs

Marsha said Liz Merachnik had to resign from the board due to extensive damage at her organic farm. Marsha thanked her for her support and asked the group if anyone knows someone who can replace her on the board.

### Christmas Bird Count:

Marsha reported that the count will be on December 30<sup>th</sup>. All leaders are in place, but Michael Brothers who was to handle the Tomoka Landfill area had to back out. National is OK with this area not being covered. Permission is needed to bird the landfill, but it is a great place to bird especially for gulls. Jenifer will collate the results.

### Communications Committee:

Bob Creedon has taken over the chair from Richard Fasse. He attended his first meeting with the team two weeks ago, with the next meeting scheduled for Monday December 12<sup>th</sup>. He was able to review all of the tools we are using, and sent out an email with an "outsiders" perspective on each item and some ideas. Generally, all of the tools are pretty strong, Facebook, Meetup and the newsletter all work well. There is some opportunity to use a common approach and get everyone more aligned.

Bob suggested that we just use two platforms to post meeting notices as using more is too difficult to coordinate. He brought up the issue of knowing or defining who is a member and who is not. Are you a member if you pay dues or if you are only on the email list? Bob suggested having a member's only list, possibly a member's only Facebook page. Some things should be locally controlled, such as elections. Membership form has a liability release on it, so having folks sign up is important. Bob suggested having one meeting per year for members only, or some other special benefit for being a paying member. Suggestion also to have an "honorary members" category without requiring dues for folks like Gail Domrowski and Maureen Pickard.

Dean added that when he took over the membership committee there were three lists, Don's birding list, paid members, and a general roster. Now everything goes to everyone and payment is not required. Dean would like to include in the database who is a paid member. Jenifer, as treasurer, has the list of who is a paid member but she doesn't have email addresses or possibly even full name. Membership role has increased. An audit was done 1.5 years ago to weed out folks who were on our mailing list but didn't have any interest.

Richard brought up folks like Bobbi and Gail who wanted to be kept up on what happens at the board meetings without becoming board members.

The Communications Committee will discuss this issue at their meeting and bring to the board meeting in January.

### Action items:

- The Communications Committee will discuss issue of membership lists and what is considered a member at their meeting

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**Conservation Committee:**

Bob Chew reported that the Riverside Conservancy is looking to borrow a pontoon boat to do cleanup in the lagoon. If they can't borrow one, they will look into getting funding for a rental. Dean and Bob are helping clean the river goat at the end of 442 in Veteran's Memorial Park. They will try new ways of cleaning without jumping in the muck.

Lisa Mickey from Battle Island Adventure Club (a private club beachside towards JBs which has regular Tuesday speakers) has asked SEVAS to do a talk on January 10<sup>th</sup>. Bill, Marsha and Joyce will speak, and anyone else who would like to participate is welcome.

Conservation Committee meetings will be held at Riverside Conservancy.

**Action item:**

- Marsha will contact Lisa Mickey to arrange speaking at Battle Island Adventure Club.

**Plants 4 Birds:**

Joyce reported that events will be held at Babe James Center on December 8<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 to clean up the garden and plant new plants. The city has an issue with kids being exposed to bees, and one of our plants has a lot of bees. We may consider moving that plant to another garden. May also have the kids parents sign a release similar to a permission slip for field trip participation so the kids can help with the garden. Menard (a neighbor who has agreed to keep an eye on the garden) will be presented with a t-shirt and book on local birds as a thank you. Another event will be December 10<sup>th</sup> at Myrtle Park, we will install signs and plant new plants. On December 17<sup>th</sup>, Joyce will meet with Pawpaw to walk through the MDC garden taking notes on how to correctly prune plants in the garden. She is hoping to get someone from Pawpaw to prune and keep the garden up to snuff annually. Joyce is meeting on January 4<sup>th</sup> with the Chisolm Elementary 4<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher to get approval for the garden layout and design. She is hoping to meet with Rachel over Christmas break about supplies and events to plan after the planting is done. Planting should be mid-January. Money from the grant should be coming in, the spending report has been filed. Joyce has a core group of volunteers, but could use some new people. She will attend the Battle Island Adventure Club meeting on January 10<sup>th</sup> in hopes of getting new people interested. She will also as Pawpaw for volunteers.

**Newsletter:**

Mary reports many technical issues with the December newsletter. She does have a PDF of the newsletter and will be working to send it out.

**Farmers Market/Tabling:**

Marsha reported two successful tabling events at the New Smyrna Beach farmer's market. We signed up new members, brought in some money, added folks to the mailing list and got the word out about our mission. Marsha would like to do the market at least once per month. She was hoping to focus on shorebirds and the problems caused by the recent storms in January and Purple Martins in February (or vice versa). Special thanks to Dean for setting up the tent!

**Programs:**

Thursday December 8<sup>th</sup> the speaker will be Jason Fischer from Disney Avian and PuMa projects.

Speakers have been scheduled for January and February, but we need someone for March. Anyone with ideas for speakers should contact Marsha.

Marsha sent \$50 donation to the Marine Science Center as a thank you for hosting our group.

Jenifer suggested adding something in the bylaws about allowing up to a specific amount of expenditure without board approval, maybe less than \$100?

**Treasurer:**

Jenifer reported lots of donations from the farmers market and new members. Balances are:

\$7,612 total

\$1,660 memorial fund

\$1,874 Plants 4 Birds  
\$3,078 general fund  
\$1,000 FLEDGE

Bob Creedon asked if it is an important goal to have more paid members. Jenifer noted a significant increase in our budget last year from increased membership dues; Joyce noted that we currently have grant money for our gardens but we will need money from other sources to sustain them; Bill pointed out our fixed costs such as PO box, MDC room rental, website, meetup and zoom.

Marsha pointed out that we received two \$100 donations this week from people who appreciate our work, one member who lives in Ft. Lauderdale and doesn't get to the area very often but wants to support our mission.

Gail Domrowski is now ready to have a plaque put on the Richard Domrowski memorial bench. Funds will come from the memorial fund.

Dean said he used to get notifications from Meetup when a new person signed up to join our Meetup group, which allowed him to send them a welcome message with information on how to join SEVAS. This is no longer working. He is also no longer able to post pictures and summaries of events. Richard will investigate.

Jane asked about task to setup a form for job descriptions. Most folks have already started or completed their job descriptions, so a form is no longer needed but Mary was looking for some guidance.

**Action item:**

- Jane or Joyce will work with Mary on her job description

Bob Creedon mentioned the opportunity to bird Hidden Lakes Golf Course on a Monday at 4:00 pm. We would pay \$10 per golf cart to rent, which can be shared by two people. Bob Chew said the owner of the course is very interested in birds. He spotted a bald eagle and many other birds there. The outing can accommodate approximately 20 carts. Bob Creedon will arrange a date.

**Action item:**

- Bob Creedon will arrange the outing at Hidden Lakes Golf Course.

**Minutes:**

Meeting minutes submitted by Jane Talbot

Meeting adjourned 5:05pm