

South East Volusia Audubon Society

February 8, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Marsha Cox, Bill Cox, Richard Fasse, Rachel Smith, Joyce Riddel, Gail Rogers, Dean Spears, Jane Talbot, Mary Schreiber, Liz Merachnik

Agenda Items:

Review minutes for approval

Reports

Finance

PuMa

P4B

Rachel Chisolm Elementary

Newsletter

Field trips

Programs (22/23)

Conservation

Volunteer/membership Recruitment

Ken's bowl

Nominating Committee work

GBYBC

AOB

Finance Report

Jenifer is away, but Marsha reported that SEVAS is selling Purple Martin (PuMa) gourds for \$15 to have names printed on them in memoriam. The names also define the individual gourds for tracking and data collection purposes. Three are already for Don Picard, Richard Domrowski and Nancy White. Three more names have been sold and on order for \$75 total. \$110 was deposited in the bank this week including the PuMa money plus donations.

Ken Parks donated a hand made pottery bowl, which will be sold at the farmer's market. It features pictures of John Audubon pelicans. If any members are interested, let us know.

Purple Martins

PuMa gourds and nesting materials are up. No PuMa's have been spotted yet. Christie Miller has volunteered to do the paperwork and coordination for participation in the PuMa Watch. Data goes to the PuMa Association Martin Watch database. Christie may host a volunteer training day/kick off event on April 16th. Marsha is looking for early risers to take a boom box to the Marine Discovery Center (MDC) to play dawn song to attract PuMas. Anyone interested in volunteering should notify Marsha or Richard.

Chisolm Elementary

Rachel reports that the Plants 4 Birds (P4B) garden location has been approved by the principal and they are now moving into the planning stage. Marsha and Joyce will meet with Lindley's Garden Center folks this week to survey the site. Lindley's will be doing a site design, providing a plant list, selling the plants at whole sale prices, and helping with planting. Hope is that the school will be part of the planning and planting, so they take ownership of the project. This will be a multi-year project. First part is to provide seeds, berries and food to attract birds. Next year the goal will be to create a different habitat, maybe something around the retention pond. Also to encourage citizen science projects around those sites, how much has the soil improved since the plants were installed? Also possibly involve the Special Ed teachers and make the program more accessible. Goal is to teach the kids, then the kids become the teachers and spread the word.

Rachel is also working to setup a backpack program at the school library. Backpacks would have binoculars, a binder with kid friendly activities about birding, nature, and how to ID birds, Sibley's bird

guide and/or Sibley's flashcards. Backpack would be donated to the school for kids to check out over the weekend and bird with their families. Rough cost estimates are:

- Backpack \$10
- Bird guide \$19.95
- Flash cards \$14.99
- One inch binder \$5
- Vortex binoculars \$289

Total \$339.82, sales tax will not be paid. Rachel is hoping Vortex may donate binoculars since only a few pairs would be needed. Carson binoculars are less expensive at approximately \$100, but Vortex comes with a lifetime warranty. The school would have to "take ownership" of the binoculars so the warranty may become more important since kids may damage them. Suggestion to start with 1 or 2 backpacks and see how successful the program is, then possibly bring to local libraries or the MDC. P4B has some money to donate to this program, and members might want to sponsor backpacks.

Action items: Marsha and Joyce to meet with Lindley's Garden Center at Chisolm Elementary to plan the P4B garden

Plants 4 Birds

Additional garden sites in the city are being considered. Joyce or Liz will report next month on the city possibilities, but the project is moving forward!

On the MDC site, more plants are being ordered on Friday. These plants will provide more color and diversity to the site. Mary and Dean volunteered to help plant, Joyce will notify all when it is time to plant. According to Audubon standards, the planned bird bath should be located in the shade, so a new location will be selected and the existing signage can be moved. The post will remain and get a different sign since posts are in concrete.

Action item:

Joyce will notify folks when it is time to plant new plants at the MDC
Bill will follow up and explore Audubon bird bath standards

Field Trips

Marsha went on the Tuesday bird walk today, walks are 2 hours long in local areas. Some new people attended today's walk. 20 species of birds were seen. Next Tuesday walk will be at Turtle Mound and the following Tuesday at Ponce Inlet Jetty. Marsha suggested turning one of the Tuesday walks into Birds and Brunch. The next big trip is to Orlando Wetlands on February 25th. Birds and brew is planned for February 23rd at Half Wall, Jenifer will be leading. All trips are posted in Meetup, Facebook with a pointer to Meetup, and in the newsletter. Mary brought up that Don would like a better way to get a count of folks planning to attend trips.

Marsha will check with Don about Birds and Brunch and issue of communicating about field trip participant count

Communication Committee

Marsha suggested a communication committee be formed since there is so much activity going on, the chapter is getting bigger and people need to know what we are involved with and what our mission is. We have a newsletter, Meetup, Facebook, e-mail blasts and the web site, how do we make sure everyone is seeing our communications and that our message is consistent. This would be a short-term committee to review our present communication system, come up with a strategy, recommendations and to make changes where needed. Committee will be Richard, Dean, Mary and Jane. Richard will setup a meeting.

Action item: Richard will setup a meeting for the communication committee consisting of Richard, Dean, Mary and Jane.

Programs

There are 2 remaining programs for this season. Thursday will be a virtual tour of the Marine Science Center Bird Hospital. March's program will be Melissa Lammers, the new Audubon Florida Board member representing our district. She will be presenting on conservation issues specifically focusing on land use and water.

Marsha would like any suggestions for programs for next year.

Conservation

In keeping with our mission, Marsha would like the chapter to be more focused on conservation. There is no chair for this area this year, and the goal is to get someone in that position for next year. Marsha suggested that everyone go online to Florida Audubon and sign up for the Advocate newsletter, which details many current environmental issues. For example, there is currently legislation proposed to reduce the financial benefits of solar installations. The Advocate can keep chapter members updated and involved.

Minutes

Marsha asked if there were any additions or corrections to the January board meeting minutes. Richard moved to accept the minutes, Mary seconded and all voted yes.

Bill also brought up the issue in the survey that non-board members don't know what SEVAS is doing outside of bird walks. Previously there was a business meeting at the programs, but Bill thought most folks were not interested. Suggestion is to publicly summarize activities of interest at the beginning of programs. Liz suggested asking the audience if more information is wanted, for example doing a zoom survey during the program. A link to the minutes and where to go for more information could be put in the chat on the zoom meeting.

Bill will work on this for meetings going forward

Nominating Committee

The nominating committee typically works towards having a slate of officers for the April meeting. They ask folks if they want to continue in their current jobs and try to recruit for openings. Previously the committee was Richard and Mary. Bill is hoping we can have more sub committees to delegate some of the work. Mary would like to see new blood in the nominating committee. Suggestion to have a ½ day strategic planning board meeting, swot analysis, discussion of how to get more active participants to take more roles in the matrix, how to recruit. Liz suggested announcing what is needed at the beginning of all activities including field trips. Announcement could include our mission statement and need for volunteers. Dean said people don't know that we need more folks to participate. Richard suggested a picnic retreat. Bill pointed out that you have to ask people to participate rather than wait for them to volunteer. Rachel asked if we have anything on the web site listing positions, job descriptions, and time expectations to encourage younger folks to volunteer.

Liz suggested a once-per-year board "drive" where board members are asked to bring in 1 new candidate. This would be a great time to do that.

Action item: Richard and Bill will work on the org chart

Nominating committee will meet when org. design has been reviewed

Bill or Marsha will work on getting info about volunteer needs information out

Other business

Jane asked where to get a logo embroidered on a shirt. Beach Side Embroidery, located next to The Little Theater in New Smyrna Beach will do this. Bring your own shirt or canvas bag for embroidery.

Meeting adjourned at 5:10

Minutes submitted by Jane Talbot

