

Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society
Board Minutes
Monday, November 30, 2009, 6 p.m.
Book and Bean, Berea, Ohio

Present: Gayle Albers, Kit Birch, Nancy Brewer, Liz Clingman, Nancy Howell, Terri Martincic, Penny O'Connor, Terry Robison, Mary Anne Romito, Tom Romito, Stan Searles, Diane Sigler

1. Annual Appeal Letter: 1,000+ copies assembled for mailing following the Board Meeting.
2. Cooperation with Cleveland Metroparks on invasives / Weeders in the Wild:
Terry Robison distributed Cleveland Metroparks Pre-Proposal Initiative for a grant request to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. It will be for a project to remove Lesser Celandine and woody invasives from Rocky River and Big Creek Reservations. WCAS will support and offer knowledge or mapping of infestations. Metroparks will match grant funds, and the project will mean some paid positions to remove the target plants.
3. Reflections on Stakeholder's meeting Vision 2020 brainstorming session:
 - a. Tom asked each person present to share ideas about the session.
 - b. Some thoughts: Attach larger goals generated in the session to specific projects. Penny noted the importance for our membership of making the bird connection. Stakeholders are waiting for the review. Will want to make a wish list, a list of what each group is working on now, and what we can do immediately, as compared to what we want to do long-term.
 - c. Diane would like to compile the comments from the large sheets and post-it notes used in the session.
 - d. Group decided that 6 months is too long to wait to meet again. May meet again after 3-4 months. In this session we could brainstorm specific projects for the Stakeholder group.
 - e. Several commented that they did not have a chance to see and consider all of the ideas before being herded into a group.

- f. Mary Anne Romito commented that it worked well overall, suggested that the summary written by Tom Romito be sent to all of the stakeholders.
- g. Kit volunteered to write an article on Vision 2020 for the February 2010 newsletter. She reminded everyone to send their articles by January 1.
- h. One category had no takers: Marketing. Why? Comment: There were not many marketing people there. Also, focus was on everyone picking their most treasured issue. Tom asked what the group can do when we need money and marketing? Stan felt that the group will step up. Many felt this will evolve; the session was a first step. Diane commented that the intent of the brainstorming session was to tackle the whole picture.
- i. Stan pointed to the Green Neighborhood Certification that Wendy Weirich proposes. Embrace Metroparks initiatives. Other groups are potential partners as we expand. Meeting was more to define a product than the means. It was “wildly successful” for that purpose.
- j. Don’t let others define us
- k. Tom mentioned that other leaders saw connections at the meeting, that they had not seen before.
- l. Connection between birds and habitat.
- m. Terry Robison suggested that WCAS join with LEAP, Lake Erie Allegheny Partnership. He will notify us of meetings. Leap is a biodiversity group which may help to bring in funding.
- n. Stan Searles mentioned that fundraising should be largely grant writing. Gayle Albers offered help with marketing and grant writing, possibly a blog.
- o. Terry Robison wrapped up: Look to do advocacy and get a focus, do what you do best, and don’t bite off too much. Think the Important Bird Area as a place, not just birds. A model might be the American Chestnut Foundation. Other nonbirding member potential...
- p. NEORS is another group with similar interests in the watershed, may find a way to involve them.

4. Audubon Mini-Grants for 2010

Nancy Howell will coordinate WCAS proposal. Due by December 15. Total available is a bit over \$3,000. Will add information on

partnerships into the proposal, circulate to other board members for input.

5. Freshwater Futures Grant

Diane will work on this proposal. Will focus on technology, and request funding of a summer intern to run data.

6. Conflict of Interest Policy

Mary Anne proposed a policy. Stan Searles moved we adopt it. Nancy Howell Seconded. Carried unanimously
Will be added to WCAS website.

7. Bird Trail at the Zoo

- a. Stan reported that existing bird trail had all bird houses the same. Staffer who worked on it has retired.
- b. Gayle Albers would like to develop a better trail and have signs to tell about species using various habitats and types of houses.
- c. May frame as a climate change study
- d. Will need houses with predator guards, enlist help of scouts or vocational carpentry students for construction. Need a plan to monitor houses on a seasonal basis.
- e. Will need support of Zoo staff
- f. Nancy Howell suggested we first survey the habitats then look to decide on the type and location for the trail, houses, signage.
- g. Motion to support: Liz made the motion, Mary Anne seconded. Carried unanimously

8. Plans for WCAS potluck and silent auction December 12, 2009

- a. Board arriving at 5 p.m. to set up, need some raffle tickets
- b. Items not bid upon can be donated

9. Date for May walk and Birdathon?

- a. Saturday, May 22 or Saturday May 29 (Memorial Day weekend)
- b. Will delay decision until January Board Meeting.

10. Rocky River Important Bird Area Breeding Bird Survey, Year 5 will be taken up at the January 2010 Board Meeting.

11. Will send an e-mail blast for people to take part in Squirrel Survey by student from Trent University in Canada.

12. Next Board Meeting will be Monday, January 4, 2010, at 6 p.m. at Sandwich Delights in Berea. Book and Bean is closing!