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 **MRVAC Board Meeting Minutes: March 24, 2022**

Present via video teleconference: Pam Albin, Amy Simso Dean, Lee Ann Landstrom, Doug Mayo, Ken Oulman, Matthew Schaut, Walt Stull, Steve Weston, Bob Williams. Documents distributed ahead of time: February minutes, treasurer’s report, agenda, grant proposals. Matthew called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Youth Birding: Amy Simso Dean, a cofounder and leader of MYBirdClub (Minnesota Youth Bird Club) reviewed her experience at starting a school bird club. MYBirdClub wants to expand its mission from schools to the larger community to teach birding and inspire the next generation of environmentalists and conservationists. It wants to partner with MRVAC for a) grant money so it won’t have to charge people to participate and b) a fiscal partner to help acquire and administer grant money. The board generally liked the fit of the two organizations. Rob volunteered to work with Amy to develop a proposal that takes care of details to be presented at the April board meeting.

Secretary: On Rob’s motion and Walt’s second, the February minutes were approved unanimously.

Website: Rob reviewed the fixes done to the website problems in the past several months that included updating JavaScript plugins, getting rid of outdated webhooks and ensuring that grant requests go to more than one person.

Treasurers Report: Walt cashed in a matured CD. He also reported that the National Audubon member funding has arrived. He reviewed how our StarChoice Credit Union account worked. We have three CDs, one maturing next month and the other two in the fall. Earlier Walt reported year-to-date income is $18,717; expenses, $4,559; and net worth was $63,415. He’s working to make sure that Benevity, an organization that handles matching funds, sends funds to the new bank.

Membership: Pam said through March there were 112 paid members and 76 that need to renew. There are plans to send out reminder emails more regularly. There are 779 people on the email list, an increase since last month.

Old Business:

Board elections – Matthew agreed to begin setting up a nominating committee that was discussed in February to ensure that open board positions were filled and that spring elections went smoothly.

Grants requests:

* Sax-Zim Bog ($5,000) – Discussion turned up a concern that our donation and impact would be trivial to a much larger land-purchase project that the Friends of Sax-Zim Bog proposes. Given the agenda, the board moved to other items.
* University of Minnesota Press ($3,000): On Matthew’s motion and Bob’s second, the board unanimously rejected the proposal. Matthew will contact the sponsor.
* Red-headed Woodpecker Recovery Project ($5,000, plus the prior request for $3,000): On Steve’s motion and Matthew’s second, the board unanimously approved $5,000. Steve will contact the project leaders and get clarification about the earlier $3,000 request.
* Hastings Public Schools ($3,000) – The board deferred the grant decision so Rob could get answers about the high costs of the kiosk, how the schools will deal with potential vandalism and upkeep, and how much already is funded.
* Boy Scout Troop Bluebird houses – $593. Lee Ann said Burnsville had monitors in place to keep up the houses. On Rob’s motion and Bob’s second, the board approved with one dissenting vote that we grant $600 for the project.
* Friends of the Minnesota River Valley National Wildlife Refuge campus habitat project ($2,500) – The board has not received clarification about measures for success and about the conflation of MRVAC and Friends sponsorship of projects MRVAC has funded.
* Normandale Community College Birdstrike Mitigation – The board deferred discussion until an actual request is submitted.

New Business:

* Rob suggested better ways to distribute grant proposals. The board will consider the issue in April.

On Matthew’s motion and Lee Ann’s second, the vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Daves, secretary