

MRVAC Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
March 23, 2023
6 p.m. via Zoom

Present: Steve Weston, Rob Daves, Walt Stull, Bob Williams, Sam Warren, Douglas Mayo, Lee Ann Landstrom, Dani Collier, Avery Blumenthal, Pam Albin. The meeting began at 6:07 p.m.

Welcome, introductions and agenda approval – Rob

The agenda was approved at 6:08 p.m.

Trumpeter Report – Sam

The Trumpeter is doing well. Sam will be in Texas when the next article comes out (April 15) but should be able to work on it. Pam sent a note about a date mix-up; dates will be checked in future issues. An article about a lights out initiative or window collisions could be added to a spring edition of the Trumpeter. Rob added a message about lights out/window collisions on the website. The deadlines for the Trumpeter could be moved up.

Secretary's Report – Matthew

Lee Ann is not on the auction committee and needs to be removed from that in the February minutes. On Steve's motion and Rob's second, the board unanimously approved the corrected minutes at 6:16 pm.

Website/Social Media Report – Rob/Dani

- Rob put news articles on the website and added Dani as a contributor/editor to WordPress. Dani will eventually take over for Rob in uploading to the website.
- Some people who have administrative rights to the website but are no longer active have been removed. Dani is now a frequent contributor to Facebook.
- Someone posted a video to Facebook with no text. Dani reminded everyone to add text when posting a video to give context. People can email Dani requesting that she add a caption if they do not want to add a caption themselves.
- Dani will start creating events on Facebook. It would be good if people shared on Facebook that they are attending events.

Treasurer's Report – Walt

- **MRVAC monthly budget**
 - There has been little activity in the past month. The national numbers were included. Walt will correct the top line to read February, not January.
- **Decision on 2023-2024 annual budget**
 - The equations were corrected.
 - Walt subtracted organizations that we are no longer giving grants to. We have budgeted \$9,200 for grants as opposed to \$8,500 last year. Mailchimp and Zoom

were added as separate categories. Bob noted that the Birdathon is still on there and said that if we want to do it, someone else will have to run it, not Bob.

- The budget is not balanced. Rob prefers a balanced budget so that we do not have to explain to others why it is not balanced. Walt agreed that it is better to balance the budget when reporting to the state. Walt will balance the budget.
- Audubon Adventures will be removed.
- On Doug's motion and Steve's second, the board unanimously accepted the updated budget proposal at 6:30 p.m.

Membership Report – Pam/Steve

- **Numbers**

- There are 141 members. The email list grew from 1,179 to 1,196.
- 1,188 emails were sent out for the meeting tonight. 57.6 percent of recipients opened the email, which is a great percentage.

- **Renewal reminders**

Programs Report – Steve

In April, Dr. Charles Foley will present on setting a Big Day record for mammals. Dr. Foley works at Lincoln Zoo in Chicago and visits Africa. In May, Hope Flanagan will present on foraging in the Twin Cities. There is no speaker set for June; we need to find somebody by April 15. Rob said that Dawn Tanner is an option and forwarded their contact info to Steve. 105 people attended Scott Weidensaul's talk last month, but there was a problem with the email that went out because it was copied and pasted with an old Zoom link. The link is now on Facebook and the website so it should be easier to find.

Old Business (board champion):

Grants:

- **Red-headed Woodpecker Recovery Project (All)**

- Sam wondered if the project submitted a report and if there is something to add to the Trumpeter about how they used the grant money. There is an informational brochure to add to the Trumpeter. Steve will let the Woodpecker project know that if they want more money, they should submit another grant request after June. On Lee Ann's motion and Walt's second, the board unanimously approved the RHWO Project request at 6:40 p.m.

- **Waldorf School (All)**

- Dani said that the response to the last question about pictures is confusing, and it would be great if the school could send photos or a logo to post on Facebook. Rob will ask Olivia to send the information along. On Steve's motion and Lee Ann's second, the board unanimously approved the request at 6:42 p.m.

- **Increasing grants/fundraising (All)**

- A long-term goal is to increase grant and fundraising amounts. Rob said that if board members know of a good cause, we should encourage people to submit a grant request through the website. Steve said that we sponsor the Salt Lake

Birding Festival and Steve will ask Ken Larson and Jason to see if they need any money. Lee Ann has a potential grant for next year (Oak Grove Elementary for a pollinator garden, rain garden, and a soft landing, which involves leaving duff underneath trees and so that insect larvae have an undisturbed place to stay).

Non-grant old business:

- **MRVAC credit card (Steve, Walt)**
 - We now have a debit card. The credit union does not provide business credit cards, so we are using a debit card. Walt can easily take care of things with the debit card rather than giving the card information out to people.
- **Mailchimp (Steve)**
 - Pam is working on signing up.
- **Auction (Need champion)**
 - We need a volunteer for this. Steve will check with the people who have put it on in the past.
- **Audubon Update (Rob): National name change decision, chapter leaders meeting**
 - Rob will attend a meeting with other Minnesota chapter leaders to discuss the National Audubon Society's decision not to change the name.
- **Conservation updates (Lee Ann)**
 - Lee Ann posted about a pollinator project. The Friends group submitted a disorganized grant last spring. Lee Ann can contact them to see if they have made progress on this.
- **Trumpeter Award (Rob)**
 - Rita agreed to assemble a committee of past Trumpeter Award winners to discuss if there is somebody to give the award to. Anybody can submit nominations. Dani will post on Facebook about this.

New Business

- **Board/officer elections and membership (Rob)**
 - Next month, Rob will have to give Steve the slate that is being assembled because Rob will be out of the country.
 - On Rob's motion and Bob's and Steve's seconds, the board unanimously approved Dani as a new board member.
- **EDIB (equity, diversity, belonging) (All)**
 - Many chapters have an EBID initiative. We will discuss this in more depth during a future meeting.
- **Earth Day meetings with elected officials (Need champion)**
 - The Earth day rally at the capital is a "no-go" at this point. Minnesota Audubon urged people to meet with their elected officials to promote the current conservation bills.

Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Minutes taken by Avery Blumenthal.