**MRVAC Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**Dec. 7, 2023, 6 p.m. via Zoom**

**Present:** Avery Blumenthal, Bob Brereton, Dani Collier, Rob Daves, Lee Ann Landstrom, Matthew Schaut, Steve Weston. The meeting began at 6:05 p.m.

**Welcome, introductions and agenda approval – Rob**

* Rob and Lee Ann wrote a letter to the governor that they will show to the board.

**Trumpeter Report – Sam**

**Charitable Organization Update – Rob**

* Rob renewed MRVAC’s 501(c)(3) filing with the state.
* Rob attended an Audubon webinar on how to fill out the new annual report spreadsheet, which can be shared with board members. MRVAC has until March to finish the report.

**Secretary’s Report – Avery**

* Avery will send a document with a list of action items after each meeting. On Dani’s suggestion, the action items will be an editable Google document so that board members can make updates when tasks are completed.
* On Lee Ann’s motion and Bob’s second, the October minutes were unanimously approved at 6:10 p.m.
  + Steve will send an updated amount of money that the new membership structure brought in (it is more than $400) and that figure will be changed in the minutes.

**Treasurer’s Report – Walt (absent)**

**Website/Social Media Report – Rob/Dani**

* A CBC message was posted on Facebook and has generated several shares.
* Rob made edits to the “About” section on the website, including updating the list of board members.

**Membership Report – Steve**

* Membership has grown to 120 due to renewals. The email list has grown to about 1200.
* Nine people have joined at the $100 membership level, and MRVAC has raised more than $2,000 in membership revenue.

**Programs Report – Steve**

* Lee Ann will likely be the January speaker if Steve cannot book someone else who he is trying to.
* Dani has a friend who is an ornithologist who has done talks before and could be a presenter, possibly for an in-person meeting next year.
* February - June speakers are booked. Steve is working on getting speakers for September and October.

**Old Business (board champion):**

**Grants:**

* Grant contacts (Lee Ann & All)
  + We need to get the word out for people to send grant applications to MRVAC.
  + Dani can post about past grants but needs photos and information about what was done with the grant money.
  + Lee Ann will write a blurb for the MOU newsletter saying that we have funds for our grant program.
  + Walt will look at who has applied for grants regularly in the past and reestablish those contacts.
  + Lee Ann talked to Sparky about the sign at Sax-Zim and suggested that MRVAC can give grants for other conservation purchases.
  + Nine Mile Creek Watershed District has talked to Kennedy High School about a pollinator garden, so we might receive a grant request for that.
  + Hillcrest Elementary School in Bloomington might be starting a conservation program that could use a grant.
  + Someone contacted MRVAC board members about how Bloomington high schools building new stadiums and the nighttime lights during migration could disrupt birds and asked if we would like to get involved.

**Non-grant old business:**

* Audubon Update (Rob)
* Conservation updates (Lee Ann)
  + The Saint Paul chapter president sent an email suggesting that we create a coalition of metro Audubon chapters for conservation purposes.
  + Rob received a message from Saint Paul and Minneapolis Audubon chapters asking MRVAC to sign a letter to the governor asking state agencies to do more for conservation. Rob and Lee Ann thought we should not sign on as MRVAC.
* Cass County spring birding trip (Matthew/Steve)
  + Deep Portage Learning Center is excited for this event and proposed the last week in June as the date. Matthew asked if there are other potential dates and has not heard back.
  + Once we settle on a date, the trip should be added to the MRVAC calendar and posted in the MRVAC newsletter and social media.
  + MRVAC will be sponsoring the trip.
  + We should decide about this trip soon. Everyone should learn more about the center. Previous MRVAC and MBW trips there have been good.
* Name change/EDI (equity, diversity, inclusion) (All)
  + Rob spoke with the Saint Paul chapter president who is bringing in professionals to lead discussion with the board on EDI.
  + Rob asked if any board member would like to take the lead on this. Rob will keep us posted on this.

**New Business**

* New committee? Volunteer coordinator (Rob)
  + When people renew their membership, Rob receives a form with a checkbox on how people want to contribute to MRVAC. We want to have a way to slot people into something that excites them and benefits MRVAC.
  + Rob wants to call new members who want to help and ask if they would be interested in being a volunteer coordinator. It would be best if the volunteer coordinator joins the board as well.
* The auction cookbook received good comments. Rob lost the comments from the doc, but Dani has them and Rob will make changes based on those comments.
* Rob is now the MOU Vice President, but he will continue on the MRVAC board and serve as president for at least one more year.
* The homeowner who allowed visitors to see the Anna’s Hummingbird is a MRVAC member. Rob could write her a thank-you letter on behalf of MRVAC.
* Our next board meeting is on January 25th at 6:00 p.m. Dani suggests that we publicize the meeting more than one week ahead of time so that people can plan for it. Steve can send the meeting information to us as soon as he knows about it.

**Adjournment**

* On Bob’s motion and Steve’s second, the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

*Minutes taken by Board Member Avery Blumenthal.*