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 **MRVAC Board Meeting Minutes: Nov. 18, 2021**

Present via video teleconference: Rob Daves, Lee Ann Landstrom, Doug Mayo, Matthew Schaut, Walt Stull, Steve Weston, Bob Williams.

Documents distributed ahead of time: Treasurer’s report, October minutes. Matt called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.; there was a quorum.

Secretary: On Rob’s motion and Doug’s second, the motion to accept the revised minutes was unanimous.

Website report: Rob reviewed recent website activity, mostly news articles.

Treasurer: Walt reviewed the submitted report and indicated little income and expense activity, although he said we’re doing well with field trip revenue. September income is $802 and expenses, $406. We have $33,365 in our checking account and $20,953 in certificates of deposit. He sent out $100 checks to the 10 affiliate groups. He met with Star Choice Credit Union bankers to investigate moving our funds there. Based on a number of criteria, including better interest rates and an interest bearing checking account, he recommended we move the funds from U.S. Bank to the credit union, and move the unmatured CDs there when they mature at various times in 2022. On Bob’s motion and Matthew’s second, the board unanimously approved the transfer to Star Choice Credit Union.

Membership: Steve reported that Pam Albin agreed to maintain the local membership spreadsheet; he will continue to maintain the Mailchimp email list. He did not report current local membership numbers, but there are 725 email subscribers.

Trumpeter: Rob suggested that we have an article in the next Trumpeter soliciting board membership. He also suggested that Matthew poll the inactive board members to determine their intent to serve.

Programs: Tonight’s program is on birding on Attu Island. The Christmas Bird Count is scheduled for Dec. 18, with similar protocols to 2020. Steve will be lining up the specifics for the rest of the year’s programs before the next Trumpeter’s deadline. Potential speakers he’s contacted include Kim Eckert, Don Kroodsma (birdsong), Kara Snow (chicadees), Emily Pavolic (feathers), Sharon Stiteler. (An aside: The Minnesota Ornithologists Union’s paper session is Dec. 4.) Walt will get a $200 honorarium to Sax-Zim for the recent presentation. Matthew will cancel the subscription to GoToMeeting because it hasn’t been working for our programs; we’ll use Zoom for future virtual presentations.

Old Business:

 Grants:

* Friends of Sax-Zim Bog – Lee Ann has received no response on her attempts asking them for a grant proposal.
* Grasslands Uprooted – Bob reported that Pheasants Forever provided suggestions for sites that we could work to preserve. MRVAC could be one of several donors to help preserve these grasslands, which might include planting native plants and removing drain tile at Strom Lake WPA. Bob will continue researching potential sites, focusing on those in the Minnesota River Valley.
* Earthwatch – Rob reviewed Earthwatch’s financials and programs and expressed some concerns about the lack of specificity for metrics of success and whether it’s local enough for MRVAC. After discussion, the board’s consensus was to find a better candidate for our grant. Matthew will let them know.
* Osprey Wilds – We haven’t seen the proposal they said they would send.

Christmas Bird Count – We’ll hew to the same protocols as last year for the Dec. 18 according to Liz Stanley’s recent email to 2020 participants.

On Walt’s motion and Steve’s second, the board unanimously approved adjournment at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Daves, secretary