

MRVAC Board of Directors Minutes
Jan. 26, 2023
6 p.m. – Via Zoom

Present: Rob Daves, Matthew Schaut, Pam Albin, Steve Weston, Lee Ann Landstrom, Bob Williams, Avery Blumenthal, Walt Stull, Sam Warren (Trumpeter Editor).

Welcome and agenda approval – Rob

Trumpeter Report – Sam

Most recent issue has been published and the paper subscriptions have been mailed out. Submissions for the next issue are wanted by Feb. 15 for the March/April issue, which will have information on the most recent Christmas Bird Count. MRVAC sponsors Bloomington and Excelsior, and is involved in Cedar Creek as well. Sam has plans to modernize the look of the Trumpeter. Positive feedback for having more focus on environmental conservation, and from Lakeville, Mich., where a bird club appreciated information MRVAC had shared on bird friendly plants.

Secretary's Report – Matthew

- 2022 June, August, October minutes need approval. Those minutes were reviewed. Rob reports various and sundry misspellings he will correct before posting. Lee Ann wants some wording changes; Steve plans to also take another look. Motion made to approve the three minutes: Steve makes the motion; second made by Bob. Board approves the three meeting's minutes.
- In the absence of a quorum in December, via Zoom and email the Minnesota Youth Bird Club grant request was approved in December (Rob). The amount of the grant: \$1,500.
- Auction (Bob & Lee Ann) --

Website Report – Rob

- New service agreement with June Bird Creative (Christine Tierney). She will be paid an hourly rate for any additions or improvements above and beyond the maintenance plan. Discussion of pros and cons of posting the meeting links on the website. Concern that ill-meaning entities might disrupt meetings. Board will seek Christine's thoughts on whether the link should be shared on the website.

Treasurer's Report – Walt

- MRVAC monthly budget: Walt is watching for a time when interest rates rise in order to put our assets into accounts with a higher yield. MRVAC was recipient of some generous donations, including a \$100 donation in memory of Becky Lystig.

Membership Report – Steve/Pam

143 local members are paid up through the end of the year 2023. MRVAC is still in need of a better system for prompting membership renewals. Steve plans to send out an email in the next couple of

months. Rob suggests we make a practice of sending out membership renewal reminders at regular intervals and times, such as the middle of every third month. Steve attests that when MRVAC does send out membership renewal reminders “we have tremendous results.” 1174 emails are being sent out for each issue. We sent 113 by USPS for the last issue, with seven returned by the USPS.

Programs Report – Steve --

Tonight the presenter is Linnea Rowse, American Bird Conservancy. Topic: Collaborative Approaches in Forest Management for Bird Conservation. Next month’s speaker is Scott Wiedensaul. Speakers are needed for May and June.

Old Business (board champion):

Non-grant old business:

- There are no active grant proposals.
- In the absence of a quorum in December, via Zoom and email the Minnesota Youth Bird Club request was approved in December (Rob).
- Auction (Bob & Lee Ann) – Suggestion for using Richardson Nature Center for a 2023 MRVAC auction. Monica Rauchwarter, former MRVAC board member, has offered to host the Auction. Board is all in favor of reserving this space. The date of the Auction is November 16, 2023.

Non-grant old business:

- Christmas Bird Counts: Bloomington, Cedar Creek, and Excelsior CBCs (Steve). Highlight was a first LeConte’s Sparrow at Bass Ponds. Results will be soon available on the MRVAC website. The link to the CBC results will also be added to the website. It is hard to find the link on the National Audubon website. The data is also accessible via the Minnesota Ornithological Union (MOU).
- Audubon Update (Rob): Minnesota, national chapter report. Topic 1) Rob asks if all board members are receiving the same emails that Rob gets? Rob reports getting emails 3-4 times/week. –Do Board Members get the emails that go to Chapter Leaders? Rob does not respond to all of the emails, but some do pique his interest. Should MRVAC Board members go through Audubon’s training to get local ordinances and proclamations done at the city level? Topic 2) Regarding Audubon Minnesota, MRVAC Board agreed in principle to back a slate of Audubon Minnesota legislative initiatives. Rob does sign the letters we’ve received. One legislative initiative – legumes to lawns – has now been voted out of committee. – Topic 3) National Annual Chapter Report to be submitted to National Audubon. Due January 31, 2023. Rob needs the list of names and contact information for MRVAC board members and committee chairs.

New Business

- Steve recently applied for an MOU Savaloja grant for himself to write about the Christmas Bird counts for national publication. One grant question asks if he has any financial sponsors. Steve will put together a proposal. He is asking only for institutional sponsorship, not for financial support.

- Lee Ann is concerned that thus MRVAC hasn't received any grant requests. She is planning to make contact with one school principal, whose school has a history of engaging in environmental initiatives. Rob will invite grant proposals at tonight's members meeting.
- Rob will be polling board members about their plans to either continue or retire from the board. Some members have not attended in some time.
- Rob also advocates for the resurrection of the Trumpeter award.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Bob, seconded by Steve. Motion approved. Meeting adjourns at 7 p.m.

Minutes taken by Matthew Schaut, edited by Rob Daves