

Bird Conservation Network

BCN ExCom Meeting Minutes October 1, 2007, Giordano's, Westchester

Attendees: Dick Riner (president), Donnie Dann (past president), Joan Bruchman (vice-president), Glenn Gabanski (treasurer), Mary Lou Mellon (secretary)

- 1. Wooded Island Meeting**—Joan reported on this meeting attended by her and Dick. Zhanna Yermakov, Natural Areas Manager, Chicago Park District, reported on a 3-year plan to restore and enhance the man-made island, with an eye to ridding the area of the majority of the buckthorn and other invasive species and recreating good habitat and establishing vistas. Although the plan met with objections from some of the parties present, Rebecca Blazer, Director of the Forest Preserve Initiatives, Friends of the Park, assured everyone that all suggestions were welcome & would be taken into consideration. The work is scheduled to begin this fall. Joan and Dick both think the plan is a good one. We agreed to support this project. Dick and Joan are working on a position paper.
- 2. Lakewood Olympic Equestrian Center** (Lake County)—Donnie reported that Anne Flanigan Bassi, Lake County Commissioner, announced the Forest Preserve District's plan to use Lake County's Lakewood Forest Preserve for the Olympic venue. The business community supports the concept despite what has to be the negative environmental impact. Donnie read a piece pointing out the pitfalls, including the fact that thus far the plan doesn't include space for parking at least 1000 cars. Andy Kimmel, Deputy Executive Director of Lake County Forest Preserves will give a presentation on this project at the Nov. 3rd BCN Quarterly Meeting.
- 3. Bird Agenda**—Dick. Joyce Coffee, of Chicago's Department of the Environment, will give a presentation on this project to the Quarterly BCN Meeting on November 3rd. The Bird Agenda group, which includes Donnie, Dick and Glenn, continues to meet to monitor the progress toward the goals of the Bird Agenda.
- 4. Chicago Wilderness Grant update**—Glenn. Progress was delayed in August when one of the independent contractors failed to complete the work on time. That work has been largely completed now and things are moving forward again.
- 5. Financial Status, membership**—Glenn. BCN now has 18 member organizations and 3 individual members. Dick is hopeful of re-establishing lapsed members Prairie Woods and Will County Audubon.
- 6. Spending down the treasury**—Glenn. BCN should have about \$600 to dispose of before the end of the year to avoid tax liability. Possible recipients of the funds suggested were the ABA, or ABC or Birder's Exchange. ABC's Cerulean Warbler Reserve in Columbia, S.A., was nominated as the recipient of the funds (\$600) for this year. The Cerulean Warbler project purchases land and manages habitat on behalf

of this seriously declining species, an uncommon-to-rare migrant and breeder in this area. In future years, we will ask for proposals from our member organizations for dispersal of funds. Note: Subsequent to the meeting Joan suggested that Mary Hennen's Peregrine Project could benefit from additional funds. Via email ExCom discussed and voted to split the funds between the Cerulean Warbler Reserve and the local Peregrine project.

7. Legislation affecting birds—Donnie. The much anticipated I-Space project is mired in the middle of downstate politics. There is no way to know how or if it will go forward.

8. Nominating Committee for 2008 officers—Judy Pollock will head up this committee.

9. Cook County Board Separation—Dick will include a reminder to member organizations to come to the November 3rd Quarterly Meeting prepared to vote on supporting the separation of the Cook County Board and the board of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County.

10. Making BCN more visible—Donnie. BCN needs to respond to articles or TV features in support of bird conservation. When the issue is one that doesn't require a vote from the membership, BCN should send a letter responding appropriately. Since all ExCom members read and listen to different things, we should each notify the rest of ExCom when we see, hear or read something that BCN should respond to. An officer should write up the response and forward it to all ExCom members for editing and approval. An edited, finalized response should be sent out under the president of BCN's name.

11. Deer Culling—Donnie. Donnie has asked Bob Fisher to help him with this position paper. It should be ready to present to the membership at the November 3rd meeting.

12. Miscellaneous items—

From Randi Doeker: the City of Westchester is petitioning for a dog park in the Forest Preserve.

It was noted that the BCN website doesn't currently have a link to the new Bird Calendar. Joan will organize one and send it to Eric for inclusion on our page.

After a discussion on how to get BCN mail in a more timely fashion, it was decided that Donnie would ask Judy to send BCN mail to him weekly. Post meeting this was countered by Dick via email, who prefers that the mail should come to him, since he is president of BCN and since Donnie will be out of town the majority of January and February. Dick will contact Judy to establish weekly forwarding of BCN's mail.

Submitted by
Mary Lou Mellon
Secretary