



Bird Conservation Network

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Friday, Dec. 18, 2009, 11:30am
105 W. Madison Ave., Chicago, IL

Present: Judy Pollock (president), Joan Bruchman (vice president), Glenn Gabanski (treasurer), Chris Van Wassenhove (at large), Donnie Dann (advocacy, via telephone), Mary Lou Mellon (secretary)

Absent: Bob Fisher (past president, head of nominating committee)

The meeting was called to order by Judy at 11:40am.

Nominating Committee

Judy reported for Bob Fisher: The persons slated for the BCN Executive Committee for 2010 are Joan Bruchman, president; Mary Lou Mellon, vice president; Glenn Gabanski, treasurer; Diane Rosenberg, at large. The position of secretary is still open. A number of people were suggested for the nominating committee to check to fill this vacancy. Judy will pass these along to Bob.

It was noted that neither Bob nor Donnie will be on ExCom in 2010. Their many years of service to BCN are greatly appreciated and they will be sincerely missed. It's hoped that perhaps Bob will be persuaded to stay on as an advisor, but Donnie is definitely departing after 10 years of dedicated service. Thanks and farewell, Donnie.

Dispersal of Funds

Glenn reports that at the present time BCN has a net income of \$912.58 that needs to be disbursed if BCN is to avoid paying income tax on it. The following items remain to be paid in 2009:

- The reprinting of the brochure. This is expected to cost approximately \$225 and should be accomplished before Dec. 31st. The edited brochure was looked at and approved. Judy will contact Eric and tell him to move forward on ordering the brochures. It was agreed to print 2500 new brochures. We will distribute them to the member organizations at the January 9, 2010, Quarterly Meeting.
- The Birds of Concern list is to be produced in early 2010, but will not be ready before the end of this year.

- The question of covering a person's expenses when he is acting on behalf of BCN was addressed. Joan suggested that if BCN requests that a person to do a presentation, his or her expenses should be covered; for a normal presentation that a member volunteers to do of his or her own volition, expenses will not be covered. This plan was adopted. Bob Fisher will be asked to write a statement of policy to this effect. Lee Ramsey's expenses for his trip to Peoria to do a monitor's presentation to Peoria Audubon will be covered, as he was acting on behalf of Donnie, who could not fulfill the commitment that he had made to that member organization. Lee's expenses are \$110.55.

Glenn also questioned if we want to stick with our policy of not paying income tax, which means that we don't increase our ready funds. It was determined that for now we will stay with our present policy. Accumulating funds is not our present goal.

Ideas were offered for the balance of the funds. Joan had suggested that BCN contribute to Operation Migration, in view of the vandalism that their storage facility had sustained. Dolph Williams of Lake Cook also had made this suggestion to Judy; however Mary Lou pointed out that the operation had requested no more funds earmarked for the vandalism, as it is now taken care of. Nonetheless, Operation Migration still needs money for funding the ultra-light flight to Florida leading the young whoopers. Judy made several suggestions: Kim Ramirez of Midewin has requested funds for high school teacher Dawn Sasek, who has a group of eager students who are doing restoration work at Yankee Woods, Tinley Creek, and Bartel Grasslands. Sasek would like to provide field guides and binoculars for her students. Also plugs are needed for Bartel Grasslands for our spring Give Back to the Birds Day. Another suggestion from Judy was the North Branch Restoration Project, which is attempting to remove all buckthorn along the banks of the Chicago River and needs funds with which to purchase native shrubs to replace it.

After discussion, it was agreed to split the remaining funds between the school project and the North Branch Restoration Project. Judy will work the details out with Glenn to get all funds disbursed before the end of the year.

BCN Phone Message Monitoring

ExCom members are being considerably inconvenienced in order to monitor the BCN phone line at the Audubon Chicago Region office on a daily basis, year-round. For the most part, there are no messages, so this is deemed a waste of time, but the problem remains of what to do with the phone line, which is free to BCN, courtesy of Audubon Chicago Region.

After lengthy discussion, Judy said that the Audubon office could answer the phone during the day, if there is someone there. If no one can answer the line, any message left could be routed to Judy's voicemail for handling. This was deemed a worthwhile change, which will take place effective January 1, 2010. Many thanks to Judy for stepping up and solving this dilemma.

Conservation Forum Option for BCN Website

Eric has proposed that BCN instigate a Bird Conservation Forum on the website in addition to BCN Net. This is something that he can set up easily. It could have a wind power page, a TNR page, etc. Mary Lou pointed out that the reason these sort of operations succeed is that there is an administrator who gives the project energy and validity. No one on ExCom is interested in becoming the administrator. It was decided to propose this at the upcoming Quarterly Meeting and see if anyone would like to take on this project.

Los Angeles Under Pressure to Appeal TNR Court Ruling

Donnie pointed out that the recent superior court ruling in favor of a coalition of conservation groups to halt the controversial practice of Trap, Neuter, and Release (TNR) of feral cats in the city of Los Angeles has spawned a pressure campaign by cat advocates for the city to forgo the environmental review of TNR, and to appeal the court ruling. Bird conservationists, particularly those living in LA, need to weigh in on this matter and all are encouraged to contact any friends who live in the L.A. area.

Calls should be made to the mayor of Los Angeles at 213-978-0600. Say that you support an environmental review of TNR and request that the city of Los Angeles immediately implement the decision made by Judge Thomas McKnew suspending the city's illegal support of TNR.

Ask friends who are L.A. residents to please call their Los Angeles city council member (<http://www.lacity.org/yourgovernment/citycouncil/index.htm>) and ask him or her to support an environmental review of TNR per Judge McKnew's decision.

New BCN Budget

Glenn needs to prepare a new budget for 2010. He said he would assume no special contributions but asked if the \$120 we pay Eric for the management of the database would stay the same. He will check with Eric to see if an increase is in the picture. The CD matures in February; it was agreed that Glenn will just let it roll over.

New Appointment to DNR

Judy announced that Dr. Jim Herkert, former director of science for The Nature Conservancy, has been named Director of Resource Conservation for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. This is a great appointment for the birds.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:55pm

Mary Lou Mellon
Secretary