

BCN Executive Committee Meeting

December 16, 2020

Online Video Conference

In attendance: Sonny Cohen, Matt Igleski, Charlotte Pavelka, Steve Constantelos, Tim Balassie, Vera Leopold, Diane Hicks

Sonny Cohen called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Trends analysis. Igleski reported that we're still pulling the data together—Matt became aware that previous years' data needed to be gathered as well as this year's data. There will be a meeting soon to clear things up and get things rolling more rapidly again. He is in communication with all involved parties, including Judy Pollock, Chris Monaghan, and our data analyst, Valerie Steen. Steen has been provided an initial data set.

BCN Survey/Monitors. Pavelka, who is also the Lake County monitor coordinator, suggested an annual report of the monitoring to describe what sites were monitored, who monitored, issues, etc. She'd like to work with Balassie and others to pull together better data on sites, monitors, etc. Leopold suggested a shared Google document with this information.

Bob Fisher has initiated an effort to have a Zoom meeting for monitors in January or February with the initial presenter being avian ecologist Michael Ward's lab at the IL Natural History Survey. This will include some bird breeding behavior and climate change findings. This would be a nice gesture to volunteers in lieu of the annual picnic and help to keep our monitors both engaged and rewarded. ExCom thought it was a good idea and Cohen will help Fisher make it happen.

Balassie added that sharing preliminary trends analysis results with land managers is another idea we should pursue.

Balassie has heard from the Chicago Park District, who has come back with 10 top priority sites they want monitored. Three or four willing monitors have also been identified for these sites, plus the current monitors we have for some of these sites. CPD agreed to our protocols, so a lot of progress is being made to work with CPD.

Balassie is working on language for BCN member organizations to share with their members for recruiting new monitors. He's also working on a document to share with county coordinators to help them in recruiting, etc.

Trends analysis funding. Cohen's funding solicitation letters went out this week. He's heard that many of our member organizations are now considering the request, and so far some donations have come in from a few BCN reps as individuals. BCN also won a \$200 grant from

Thorn Creek Audubon, plus have recently rec'd donations from Kane County Audubon and Lake County Audubon.

2021 Officers. Sonny Cohen (Pres), Diane Hicks (VP), and Charlotte Pavelka (Treas) are on the slate as officers for next year. Secretary is still open and open to suggestions and volunteers—contact president@bcnbirds.org. In 2021, Igleski will continue to bring the trends analysis to its conclusion. In spite of the effort to define a slate of officers, all positions are open to any individual who wishes to hold an office. Nominations and elections will be held at the January meeting.

Activism and Communication. Leopold asked how can we make sure that BCN, as an all-volunteer organization representing many groups, can better communicate the advocacy we do so all of the groups are aware of what we're doing. This goes especially for the more local advocacy and/or when BCN writes its own letter or position statement.

Pavelka said if we summed up each meeting into a few bullet points that needed to be shared with member orgs, that would make it easy for reps to share and they would have a greater likelihood of following up and do so. Balassie added that specific calls to action/how-to's would also be helpful. Issuing press releases is another idea.

Cohen confirmed that advocacy is one of BCN's main pillars and he'll make that a big portion of his work in 2021. Communication with all BCN stakeholders—monitors, reps, organizations, land managers, press, etc. is also a key goal for 2021.

2020 Achievements. Cohen presented an initial list of 2020 achievements to be reviewed at our January meeting. The initial list includes:

- Trends analysis initiative
- Nesting Bird Survey in June/July
- Meetings with land managers
- Virtual meetings (more ExCom meetings, well-attended quarterly meetings)
- Advocacy initiatives:
 - Obama Center (bird collision meeting with subject expert)
 - Hanson Material (observation)
 - Watersmeet (monitor support)

BCN meeting agenda. The next meeting will be on January 23 at 1 pm, via Zoom. Topics will include electing 2021 officers, a review of 2020, goals for 2021, monitoring and trends analysis, advocacy updates, and more. A zoom link will be provided at a later date.

Cohen thanked everyone for attending and the meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Constantelos
BCN Secretary