

BCN ExCom Meeting
January 10, 2022
Online Video Conference

In Attendance: Sonny Cohen, Diane Hicks, Charlotte Pavelka, Rita Renwick, Eric Secker, Diann Bilderback, Vera Leopold, Tim Balassie, Tom Mulcahy

President Sonny Cohen called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm

BCN Roster Changes:

Nat Miller and Jenny Vogt with Audubon Great Lakes have moved. Diann Bilderback will replace Tom Mulcahy as a rep for Dupage Birding Club. Jim Giocomo is a new rep for American Bird Conservancy. Daniel Suarez is a new rep for Audubon Great Lakes.

Treasurer's Report - BCN Meeting - 12/31/2021-Pavelka

1) Membership Report - 2021 membership paid by 20 organizations/2 individuals

Prairie Woods disbanded & American Bird Conservancy joined.

2) Treasurer's Report

2021 Income - YE:

Dues: \$ 2,070.00

Donations - General: \$ 81.69 John Petoskey, Amazon Smiles,
John Lang, Mandel Goodkin

Donations - Trends: \$ 2,432.90

Grant - Trends: \$ -

Annual Transfer from General: \$ 500.00

Total: \$ 5,084.59

2021 Expenses - YE:

Trends Analysis- Data - 1st/2nd/3rd \$ 7,200.00

Trends analysis - Website Update \$ 1,740.00

Annual Transfer to Trends: \$ 500.00

Dues to Other organizations \$ 200.00 IEC, Chicago Wilderness

Printing \$ -

Secretary of State - Annual \$ 10.00

Webhost & Retainer Fees \$ 567.88

Bank Service Charge \$ 3.00

Total \$ 10,220.88

2021 Net Income - YE: \$ (5,136.29)

Checkbook balance - 12/31/2021: \$ **9,072.44** Total

Trends Analysis Reserve: \$ 826.60 Reserve + Grant/Donations - Exp

General Funds Balance \$ 8,245.84 Balance net of Trends Analysis

2022 Proposed Budget for Bird Conservation Network

2022 Proposed Budget for Bird Conservation Network									
	General Fund	Trends Analysis Fund	Total						
INCOME									
Membership Dues	\$ 2,070.00		\$ 2,070.00	Assumes 20 Organization (excludes Midewin) and 2 Individual memberships.					
General Donations To BCN	\$ 100.00		\$ 100.00	More promotion recommended					
Transfer from General to Trends Analysis		\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00						
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 2,170.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 2,670.00						
EXPENSES									
Program Expenses									
Trends Distribution		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00						
Monitor Training & Recognition	\$ 500.00		\$ 500.00						
BCN Web Site	\$ 600.00		\$ 600.00	Web Hosting fee \$200; Webmaster Retainer fee \$400;					
Dues/Fees to other organizations	\$ 200.00		\$ 200.00	Chicago Wilderness \$50; Illinois Environmental Council \$150					
Administrative Expenses	\$ 150.00		\$ 150.00	Printing, Postage, \$10 State Fee, Misc.					
Transfer from General to Trends Analysis	\$ 500.00		\$ 500.00						
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 1,950.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,950.00						
NET INCOME (INCOME - EXPENSES)									
	\$ 220.00	\$ (500.00)	\$ (280.00)						

Pavelka discussed the 2021 Year End Report, 2022 Proposed Budget and 2021 Actual vs. Budget reports (See attached file to view Actual vs. Budget). We always transfer \$500 yearly into the Trends Analysis account. We did not spend all funds for Trends Analysis in 2021 and have a balance of \$826.60. We also had no expenses for monitor training and recognition, canceled due to Covid. These two items with other decreased expenses resulted in being \$1460 ahead of our budget, when we expected to be \$700 under.

The 2022 Budget would include the \$500 transfer from General Fund to Trends Analysis Account, \$1,000 for Distribution of Trends Analysis, and keeping Monitor Training and Recognition funding. Overall, we would be even or slightly under budget.

In October of 2021, BCN approved \$3,000 for Website redevelopment. At that time, BCN also approved up to \$5,000 to further communication of the Trends Analysis. Diann Bilderback will be doing some pro bono work to create the Trends Analysis message, so total expenses for a complete roll-out may be about half of the approved amount. Amount to be adjusted, as necessary.

It was noted that donations to the General Fund have declined greatly over the years. Pavelka stated that we should be promoting donations and perhaps a yearly appeal should be sent to members/monitors.

Cohen stated that he, Secker, and Bilderback have discussed raising the visibility of BCN to encourage contributions and donations.

3) Government Reporting

State of Illinois Annual Report Submitted -
12/23/2020 Federal Tax Filing e-postcard
990N filed - 1/21/2021 Renewal for Tax-
Exempt status- received 9/1/21

BCN Website Revision - Cohen, Secker

Cohen reported that he and Secker met and agreed to begin BCN's website revision with an analysis of content. Eric pulled every page and he and Cohen have been communicating back and forth and have completed the content analysis with a goal of completing the revised website within the first quarter. Going through the website and going through every page reveals that a lot of work went into the website in '07.

Trends Analysis Update - Diann Bilderback

Diann Bilderback expressed her enthusiasm in joining BCN. She has volunteered to develop a Trends Analysis message to be communicated to several audiences. Interviews with ten people from the science advisors group and those critically involved in the TA process are nearing completion. She will endeavor to build working hypotheses focused by habitat, rolling out what she is hearing from people, speculation, and informed viewpoints on what is happening with species.

Research questions have been captured, i.e., why are chimney swifts doing better here than nationally? Are species moving north due to climate factors? The data is helping Diann think about messaging and messaging platforms:

1. Land managers-plans to have Zoom video conferences in six counties
2. Stakeholders, Birding Community including other organizations (Cornell, etc.)
3. General public

She envisions a press kit, news announcements, B roll for broadcast media - all preparation for an impressive roll-out.

The final message will be put together with a small team, revised, then expanded for discussion with a larger group as the project advances. By the end of this month, she feels that content can be created for distribution.

Monitor Recruitment-Balassie

Balassie stated that he wanted to mention monitor recruitment at the Quarterly Meeting so members can get their groups thinking about the coming season. Cohen responded that monitor recruitment will explicitly be a component of the TA message being developed – a main objective.

Trends Analysis Message/Recruitment

Leopold asked if we would need an outside consultant in addition to the work Diann is doing to get the word out. Diann stated that by the end of January she would have a detailed plan. She writes content, but another person will need to get the message out. A free-lance person who has contacts with media, reporters, covers certain beats, is needed. Within BCN there may be people who have contacts. Secker commented that we may need a RFP and decide when to seek such a person. Diann stated that there will be media to go out.

The return on investment (ROI) will be measured in increased visibility-more monitors and more dollars in the budget through donations. People like to be involved in groups who have a reputation for getting things done. Monitors would want to be affiliated with a purposeful organization.

Advocacy:

Colleen Hintz (colleen.hintz@sbcglobal.net) contacted BCN to alert us to a proposed 7 story development on the 400 block of S. Austin Ave in Oak Park across from Columbus Park. Colleen expressed a number of concerns but specifically that this building would have considerable glass, none of which would be bird safe. Regrettably BCN was contacted after the project was passed, with controversy, by the plan commission and headed to the village trustees in a matter of weeks.

The BCN executive committee considered this appeal and authorized Sonny to send a letter to the village trustees based on a document that Colleen agreed to draft. The executive committee agreed that, at minimum, resistance to the plan as conceived would be educational for the village if not actually effective in modifying the project. Colleen also started a petition and asked BCN to share it with its representatives. The link is: <https://chnng.it/bRPVDN4yYp>

Recognition:

Balassie stated that BCN should have a way to recognize individuals who contribute in extraordinary ways to the mission of BCN. Pavelka agreed. Cohen stated that there is a Birder Tributes page on the existing BCN website recognizing Jerry Kumery and Jim Landing - resolutions noting their contributions to the birding community, but nothing added since 2008.

Other Business:

Secker stated that he would like to revisit work done a few years ago to change wording in BCN by-laws regarding membership with the goal of attracting more individual members. Currently, members are the birding groups who have joined BCN. The major change would

be to call member groups affiliates. Affiliates would have representatives and members would be a separate category. By-laws revisions would be necessary.

Secker thanked Cohen for his accomplishments as President -completion of the Trends Analysis, productive meetings, and the refreshing change he has brought to BCN.

Next Meeting:

Annual and Quarterly Meeting will be via Zoom Conference Saturday, Jan. 29, 2022 at 1pm.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:22 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rita Renwick
BCN Secretary