

Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society
Board Meeting, Monday, November 19, 2012, 6 p.m.
Sandwich Delites, Berea, Ohio

Present: Gayle Albers, Kit Birch, Nancy Brewer, Mark Hofelich, Don Howell, Nancy Howell, Kurt Miske, Penny O'Connor, Mary Anne Romito, Tom Romito, Stan Searles

1. During this meeting, all present assembled the WCAS annual appeal mailing. Thanks to everyone who participated in the "Stuffathon"

2. Preparation for Potluck and Silent Auction: Tuesday, December 4. WCAS will provide turkey and ham. Penny will place the order with GFS in North Olmsted for 14 lbs of sliced turkey and 5 lbs of sliced ham. Mary Anne will pick up the meat from GFS. Kit will get centerpieces. Will use the nature center's table cloths. Another board member will bring the pop. Mark is supplying pencils. Mary Anne will bring bid sheets for the auction.

3. Finances: The treasury stands at \$16,796.70. WCAS received a dues share of \$2,580 from the National Audubon Society. The dues share is based on national dues from 1,000-plus national members in the ZIP codes served by WCAS. At the end of the meeting, Tom Romito announced that WCAS is the recipient of \$10,000. from the estate of Myron Davies, which increases the treasury by that amount.

4. Engaging a Coach for the Board:

This was a long discussion. The board agreed in to have a 3-4 hour session, focused on building a strategic plan. Board President Tom Romito emphasized that it should be a consensus to go ahead with the session. Board President Tom would like to engage Susan Cucuzza who visited the Board at the October meeting. Her fee would be \$1,000, which Tom indicated is a great reduction from here usual daily fee of \$2,500. One dissent to the fee was Penny O'Connor, who feels that the fee is much too high. Kit Birch abstained from both decisions. Tom asked a go-ahead to proceed.

Some points from the discussion: Nancy Howell likes the idea of working with someone from outside our board. Mark Hofelich noted that coaches from the corporate world can be quite expensive. Guidance for motivated members can be a great advantage. We might get guidance for bringing in new members. It could help to forge a vision going forward. Kurt Miske wanted to know if we had worked with such a coach before. If no, would we have embarked on the IBA project. Tom mentioned that Rick Bohan facilitated a session with partner organizations, midway through the IBA project. He emphasized that no facilitator will bring any group new

information, but rather draw out ideas. Gayle Albers echoed Mark's concerns. She the advantage that a coach might help build capacity, inspire other members to the board, foster involvement, and help with tools to participate at a higher level. Mary Anne Romito hopes that a coach could make the board more efficient. WCAS is known statewide as a terrific organization. Stan Searles sees the coaching as critical and necessary, and would not mind spending money. Penny O'Connor would like the board to be grounded in our mission and in our service area, and to focus on valuing and serving our members. Nancy Howell sees this as a way to give members more opportunity. Tom asked if there may be other ways to gain involvement. Tom mentioned committees reflecting areas of interest. Kit suggested that the board should focus on something concrete and bird-related, like the bird survey. She suggested a membership survey to determine member interests. Mary Anne and Stan pointed out that survey response can be low. Penny suggested that a survey could be part of what we do to take a strategic plan forward. There was discussion of the divide between growing the group and involvement of members already with WCAS. Nancy Brewer, not a board member, would like to see proactive projects that help birds. Before our planning session, Mark Hofelich would like for Susan to give us an idea of what to expect and sound out the board on priorities and ideas.

5. Status of IBA Final Report: Tom reported that Franke Chung is almost finished with a near-final version of the report. Tom did some additional of his own editing based on comments from Gayle, Penny and Kurt. He will let us know when he has the prototype ready from Berea Printing.

6. Sponsorship of David Krasovic at the Hog Island Audubon Camp: David Krasovic is an educator with Elyria schools and Lorain Community College. The Hog Island camp cost \$995. tuition. WCAS will offer \$250, COAC group of Ohio Audubon Chapters will offer \$250, and National Audubon Society will offer \$250. The Board would like to have a presentation, either to Board or to the membership from Mr. Krasovic after he attends. Tom will send a letter and the checks.

7. WCAS newsletter: Kurt's deadline is January 4, 2013. Christmas bird count will be one article. Buzzer board created by scouts (see item 9 below) Also an article on the donation from the estate of Myron Davies. Other articles?

8. Coffee: Kit asked for quantities of coffee needed for rewards and for sales in December. We receive a discount on the coffee.

9. Buzzer Board: Nancy reports that scoutmaster Jay Ryan has the buzzer board ready. She will bring it to a future meeting.

10. Graphics for the bird box trail at the Zoo: Gayle reported that the signage now reflects the involvement of Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society, the Boy Scout troop, and the Nestwatch volunteers.

11. Next meeting: The Board agreed no need for a meeting in December. For the Christmas bird count December 30, Tom and Mary Anne, Nancy and Penny will bring chili. The next meeting is Monday, January 21, 2013 at 6 p.m. at Sandwich Delites, Berea, Ohio.