

WEMINUCHE AUDUBON SOCIETY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
May 1, 2023

- I. **Call to Order** - Board President Jean Zirnhelt called to order the regular meeting of the Weminuche Audubon Society Board of Directors at 4:04 p.m.
- II. **In Attendance** - In person: Jean Zirnhelt, Keith Bruno, Anne Stevens, Diane Cirksena, Brenda Breeding. Via Zoom: Herb Grover, Loretta Stewart, Lisa Tedder. Absent: Becky Herman.
- III. **Approval of Minutes** - The minutes of the April 3, 2023 were corrected to indicate Anne was not at the Monte Vista Crane Festival on Sunday. The amended minutes were accepted and approved.
- IV. **Treasurer's Report** - Treasurer Anne Stevens reviewed the April 2023 Treasurer's Report. Income \$654.22 (Donations, refund from owl project, City Market Rewards, membership dues, t-shirt sales, National Audubon). Expenses \$2260.07 (GGP Environ Film Festival, Just Click bird list printing, San Juan conservancy wildflower seed, American Bird Assoc. Bird camp, Durango Nursery NPG plants). Total Balances \$58,637.90 (checking, savings, Ed Jones CDs, petty cash and membership supplies). Anne mentioned that our Ed Jones CDs management will move from John Mills to Kelly Maestas. Anne will investigate one year vs. six months CD rates for when the current CDs mature. Diane has been actively encouraging friends to sign-up for City Market Rewards to benefit WAS. Jean reported that the private donors for the dog park and bird sanctuary at the Yamaguchi South Project backed out since those projects do not seem to be moving forward.
- V. **New Business** -
 - A. **Board Elections** - Three Board member terms are up for re-election - Anne, Lisa and Brenda. All three agreed to stand for election for another term.
 - B. **Pagosa Area Trails Council Meeting Invitation** - WAS is invited to attend the meeting on May 3 at 4:00 p.m. at the PLPOA Clubhouse. Diane and Brenda will attend as WAS representatives.
 - C. **Monte Vista Refuge and Alamosa Refuge Shore Bird Survey** - Keith, Jean and Pat Bremer were given a private tour of both refuges as part of the Audubon Shore Bird Survey. Scott Miller, who manages the refuges, and Doug Ouren, President of the Friends of San Luis Valley National Wildlife Refuges, escorted them and explained their current need of support since U.S. Fish and Wildlife are discussing the possible closure of Monte Vista Refuge because of the high cost of irrigating the fields to grow grain for the migrating birds. USFW is currently demolishing the administration office at Monte Vista and moving all offices to the Alamosa site. Herb suggested that the issue should be presented to the Audubon

Colorado Council and Daly Edmunds and the Arkansas Valley Audubon Chapter. It was also mentioned that the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce and the Friends of San Luis Valley National Wildlife Refuges should also be involved in discussing this potential change. The WAS members were able to sight some shore birds while visiting, but they mentioned it might have been a little early to see the migrating birds.

- D. Review of the April Volunteer Meeting** - Attendance was low at this meeting. The Board discussed how to attract more people to the meetings. Some potential interesting speakers could be Scott Miller to talk about Monte Vista Refuge, Doug Clark, Del Norte US Forest Service employee, to talk about the Canada lynx reintroduction project. Perhaps WAS could arrange a showing of The Big Year movie. Keith mentioned the Audubon After Dark Story Hour he has participated in as another interesting idea.
- E. Jackson Mountain Landscape Project Update** - Herb reported that the project had been put on hold. Keith attended a San Juan Headwaters meeting where District Ranger Josh Peck explained the decision to postpone based on environmental concerns over the gravel pit and also the potential negative impacts the mountain biking trails could have on elk migration. The Forest Service will continue to search for a better location for the trails. Fire mitigation will continue in the area.
- F. Birding by Ear** - The May chapter meeting topic will be Birding by Ear. Herb will write an article about the bird monitoring project and how people can train to help monitor by attending the Birding by Ear class. Keith and Herb will organize an outing to practice birding by ear on May 20. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Junction Restaurant. The May meeting will be moved to Thursday May 18 so people can attend the Plumtaw Fire film being shown on May 17.
- G. Global Big Day** - For Global Big Day, May 13, Charles Martinez is willing to lead bird watching at Capote Lake.
- H. WAS T-shirts for Riverwalk Naturalists** - Jean suggested offering t-shirts to the volunteers who lead the Naturalist Tours on the Riverwalk.
- I. Bat Talk at San Juan Outdoor Club Meeting** - Mylea Bayless will speak about bats at the SJOC meeting May 4 and Kitty Neal will demonstrate the bat detection devices that will be used on the Riverwalk Tours after the meeting at Vista Pond. All are invited.
- J. Project Updates** -
- 1. Native Plant Garden** - Anne reported that new plants are being planted at the garden. The river water is not yet hooked up so watering is being done with city water for now.
 - 2. Pagosa Wetland Partners** - Diane reported that Riverwalk Naturalist training is ongoing for both current and new guides.
 - 3. Dipper monitoring** - no news on this project.
 - 4. Owl Monitoring** - Keith reported that he and Kurt are working on the data analysis from the SD cards they have collected from the owl monitors. No owls have been detected thus far.

VI. Adjournment - The next Board meeting will be held on Monday June 5 @ 4:00 p.m. at the Methodist Church. Meeting adjourned at

Minutes submitted by Lisa Tedder