

Grand Traverse Audubon Club

Board Meeting Minutes

Nov 27, 2023

Attendees

In Person: Kathy Flegel, Leonard Graf, Kirk Waterstripe, Kathie Wiley, John Imboden, Jared Gugnitz

Via Phone: Tom Comfort, Sharon Benjey

1. Kathy F. called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm
2. Discussion about changing the name of the group to remove the word Audubon.
 - a. National group is not changing their name.
 - b. Detroit has changed their name.
 - c. State group has not changed, but are asking local organizations for their thoughts on the matter
 - d. Further discussion to take place in the future.
3. Acceptance of minutes from the last meeting. All in favor, none opposed
4. Treasurer report - Kathie Wiley
 - a. We have received a sales tax form from the state of Michigan
 - b. 7 hats sold so far, for a profit of \$70
 - c. Paypal has updated the QR code on their form. This makes it a lot easier to accept credit card payments. Kathy is going to investigate the possibility of adding a paypal form to our website.
 - d. Bluehost is now offering unlimited storage space, but we are currently nowhere near our current capacity, so we don't really need it.
 - e. \$40 for data recovery of historical treasurer documents at Best Buy. Kathie would like to be reimbursed for this expense.
Motion passed.
 - f. Balances:
 - i. Main account: \$4678.35
 - ii. Walter Hastings: \$1456.24
 - iii. We owe \$7.91 in taxes for the year

- g. We have 122 paying members, 55 of which are paid through 2024, so 67 still need to pay
 - h. Kathie bought Christmas cards to send to people who have helped out the club, spoken at meetings, property owners who have let us bird on their land, etc. These will be signed from the GTAC. Kathy F. said she would send out the cards.
 - i. Kathie is going to mention those who have donated to the Walter Hastings fund in an end of the year email. The initial thought was mention the names at the next membership meeting, but the board decided an email was sufficient.
 - j. Tom requested a copy of the budget and expenditures for the year. **Kathie to provide.**
 - k. At the member meeting in January, there should be a year-end recap of activities and budget topics prepared by the Treasurer and Secretary. **Jared and Kathie to collaborate on this.**
5. Free Library at Medalie park
- a. Kirk is working on putting together a little library full of birding resources at Medalie park.
 - b. Kirk to check with the township to make sure it's OK**
 - c. Books would come from donations, and then would hopefully be self-perpetuating. People should leave a book if they take one.
 - d. Tom thinks we should have a little library on the NMC campus, and also is volunteering to construct the box for the library(ies). Kirk said NMC is working on a master plan, so it might be a few years before they would be ready for this, but would also like to include some bird housing in that plan.
6. Liaison responsibilities
- a. Tom is in discussions with Molly at the Michigan Audubon to get some ideas about what the responsibilities of the Liaison position would be. The idea would be to have the Liaison interact with other clubs in the state, and then provide reports to the GTAC board.
 - b. Kathy F. suggested that this position could keep an ear out for programs that might be of interest to club members.
 - c. Michigan Audubon is going to start hosting chapter networking opportunities, which the Liaison would attend.

- d. Kathie suggested that the Liaison could maintain the list of GTAC activities on the Michigan site.
 - e. **Tom to look into whether GTAC is covered under the Michigan liability insurance.**
 - f. **Tom to draft a list of responsibilities for the Liaison and present it to the board next meeting.**
7. Secretary Responsibilities
- a. Board Meeting minutes
 - i. Email the minutes to the board once completed
 - ii. Email the board the previous minutes for review prior to the meeting
 - b. Membership Meeting minutes
 - i. Email the minutes to the board once completed
 - c. Email Walter Hastings donors to thank them for the donation
 - d. Maintain Bird alert email list membership – this is a google email group
 - e. Maintain club membership list – this is a spreadsheet
 - f. Solicit members to remind them to pay for the upcoming year
 - g. **Jared to draft a list of responsibilities for the Secretary and present to the board next meeting.**
8. 2024 events
- a. TADL Earth day April 20th 10AM-2PM, at Civic Center
 - i. Do we want a GTAC booth at this event?
 - ii. What would we have at a booth?
 1. Hats to sell
 2. Brochures
 3. Posterboards
 4. Sample birdhouses
 - iii. Kathie to find out when TADL needs a commitment
 - iv. Board to discuss at next meeting. **Board to bring ideas for this booth**
 - v. Need to budget for this
 - b. Bird Surveys at specific locations
 - i. Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy
 1. GTRLC would like an inventory of the birds on their properties, and are interested in GTAC's help

2. They don't want to just rely on ebird, due to the possibility of bad data from Merlin
 3. We have some reliable checklists already from Sunday bird walks
 4. Should we suggest they pursue becoming a bird sanctuary? This might be more than they are wanting to take on. Right now they're just asking about an inventory of birds on their properties.
 5. Kathie to send Kirk contact info for the GTRLC
- ii. Power Island
 1. We had a request from the ranger at Power Island. They would like this done in Summer 2024
 - iii. Grass River Natural Area
 1. Tom expressed an interest in seeing if Grass River would be interested in this
- c. Upcoming club meetings
 - i. January 26th -
 - ii. February 22nd -
 - iii. March 21st – 3rd Thursday instead of 4th Thursday – Scott Sneed waterfowl. **Kathy F to verify that the room is available on the 3rd Thursday.**
 - iv. April 18th – 3rd Thursday instead of 4th Thursday –
 - v. **Kathie to verify speakers for upcoming member meetings**
 - d. Kirtland's Warbler walk in Grayling
 - i. Kathie has volunteered to lead a walk in the Grayling area on June 15th
9. We have a shirt to give away from Boardman river cleanup
 - a. Kathy F will take the shirt and will be saved for a future giveaway.
 10. Webmaster changing hands
 - a. Don F is transitioning away from being the Webmaster
 - b. Kathie, Lauren, and Jared to take over the website. Board formed a website committee.
 11. Donations from the Walter Hastings Fund
 - a. Kirk proposed that we look for ways to contribute to the DNR

- i. Maybe a birdathon, fundraiser, or we could donate from the Walter Hastings fund.
 - b. Tom proposed we make a donation to the Michigan Young Birder's camp
 - c. **Kathie to provide a list of incoming donations and past donations for the next board meeting. Also look at the history of transferring funds from Walter Hastings to the General fund.**
- 12. New President/Vice President
 - a. John Imboden would like to contribute, and President seems to be a good fit and is a current need. John is willing to try it for a year. Motion carried. John will be the President for 2024.
- 13. Leonard has volunteered to manage the "bird on the back" event at the December 21st membership meeting at 7 PM. Kathie and Althea will have snacks, and Kathie will have Gift Certificates available for purchase.
- 14. Next Board meeting
 - a. January – date TBD

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45.